FINAL REPORT:
Commerce City: Action Plan

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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AngelouEconomics
GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ACTION PLAN INTRODUCTION

The *Economic Scan* and *Target Industry Analysis* reports shed light on several of Commerce City's greatest economic strengths including a rapidly expanding and increasingly capable workforce and a strategic location astride major transportation corridors, and being adjacent to one of the largest airports in the United States.

The Commerce City Action Plan comprises a set of strategies that capitalize upon these unique strengths. It sets a framework for connecting, networking and leveraging important economic development, education, workforce and industry assets to attract new employers, strengthen existing companies, encourage entrepreneurship and foster community collaboration all while making the region more competitive for industries.

This action plan focuses on four core strategy areas:
- Carry out a targeted marketing and business development program
- Expand support to existing businesses and entrepreneurs
- Help put appropriate real estate options and infrastructure in place
- Elevate educational and technical training skills

COMMERCE CITY PROJECT WORK TO DATE

The first project report (*Economic Scan*) examined the common and unique characteristics of Commerce City, and identified the underlying economic factors that define it as a viable economic "region." It identified a series of demographic and labor market trends and challenges and laid the framework for which to examine new target industry opportunities. Additionally, AngelouEconomics (AE) facilitated five focus groups, conducted more than 30 interviews and received additional input from online community and business surveys.

Report Two - *Target Industry Analysis* report examined five target industry opportunities for Commerce City: Denver International Airport (DIA) Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics and Distribution, Business and Professional Services, and Retail/Hospitality/Leisure. For each target industry, the report describes the industry and its national growth trends; regional strengths and potential as related to broader trends and specific industry niches; relevant regional economic and workforce development assets; and occupations and skill sets required within the industry and available in the region.

This document serves as the City of Commerce City *Action Plan* that identifies strategies and initiatives to strengthen the local economy and increase the community's competitiveness.

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TARGET INDUSTRIES SUMMARY

The *Target Industry Analysis* report provides an in-depth analysis of key strengths, opportunities, and areas for improvement in the region as it attempts to build strong industry clusters in five target areas: Denver International Airport (DIA) Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics and Distribution, Business and Professional Services, and Retail/Hospitality/Leisure. Through supplier connections, shared workforce requirements and mutual business activities, these target opportunities, and specific niches, share a symbiotic relationship. They represent both traditionally strong regional industries as well as important emerging opportunities that can help the region become a much more competitive location.

DIA TECHNOLOGY

DIA Technology is a category created specifically to address the assets possessed and challenges faced by Commerce City. This multiple-industry target is essentially designed to help Commerce City target projects, not specific to just a single industry, to be located along the E-470 corridor, a 12 square mile area that practically borders the Denver International Airport and is currently undeveloped. Types of projects in this category overlap all four targeted industries identified in this report. Ideal projects include, but are not limited to, time sensitive manufacturing and distribution, third-party logistics firms, e-commerce fulfillment, office complexes that house air-travel intensive professionals and hotel and exhibition complexes.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

The advanced manufacturing sector is defined by a set of high-tech industries that focus on the design, manufacturing, and assembly of the chemicals, electronic, and mechanical parts, machinery, and products that provide the basis of modern telecommunications, transportation, health care, and energy supply. The sector includes the highly-diverse industries of chemical manufacturing and oil-based energy supply; machinery and metal product manufacturing; computer, electronics, and electronic equipment and components manufacturing; composites manufacturing, transportation equipment manufacturing; and medical supplies and devices manufacturing. While these industries diverge in the products they create, they are defined by the design, manufacturing, and assembly process as well as a common set of workforce requirements, including a dependence on technically trained workers with computer-aided and highly-technical manufacturing and machinery operation skills.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING	
SECTOR COMPONENTS	
NAICS	*Description*
324	Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing
325	Chemical Manufacturing
326	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing
332	Fabricated Metal Products Manufacturing
333	Machinery Manufacturing
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing
335	Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing
3391	Medical Equipment and Supplies Manufacturing

Advanced manufacturing companies can further be defined by their productivity factors, continued reliance on technical upgrades, a commitment to research and development to refine their products, as well as the highly-specialized production lines that are required to knit these firms and their suppliers together in global webs. Because of the specialization within the industry, a complementary industrial focus in logistics and distribution often accompanies advanced manufacturing firms, ensuring that high-quality, competitive-cost parts are sourced from around the world and delivered just in time for final assembly.

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The business and professional services sector is comprised of primary services including legal, architectural, engineering and consulting and real estate firms, as well as secondary services such as back-office support operations, accounting and payroll services, and processing facilities. Together, these services provide not only highly technical and specialized support services for virtually every sector of the U.S. economy, but also services to handle the routine, day-to-day activities of other companies. Business and professional services firms exist both as subsidiary operations for parent firms as well as outsourced third-party service providers. Back office operations, which interact primarily via electronic communication, often integrate a variety of functions such as customer relations, centralized accounting, and administrative services under one roof, while legal services, real estate, and technical consulting services are often located in independent branch offices.

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	
SECTOR COMPONENTS	
NAICS	*Description*
5412	Acct, Tax Prep, Bookkeeping & Payroll Services
5413	Architectural, Engineering and Related Services
5415	Computer Systems Design and Related Services
5419	Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
5511	Management of Companies and Enterprises
5612	Facilities Support Services
5613	Employment Services
5614	Business Support Services
5615	Travel Arrangement and Reservation Services
5616	Investigation and Security Services
5617	Services to Buildings and Dwellings
5619	Other Support Services

RETAIL / HOSPITALITY / LEISURE

The Retail/Hospitality/Leisure industry is defined as both the sale of goods directly to consumers as well as the accommodations, entertainment, and recreation opportunities to tourists, visitors, as well as residents. The industry is primarily comprised of service jobs, with an emphasis on producing live performances of music, theater, dance, or other entertainment; providing recreational and sports opportunities for visitors and residents alike and providing customers with lodging and retail. The hospitality and leisure industry seeks new and innovative ways of entertaining visitors through cultural experiences, unique museums, live music and shows, or other attractions, and is increasingly focusing on serving trade conventioneers through accessibility to these diversions. While this industry offers low wages, it does provide employment opportunities and contributes significantly to the city's tax base.

RETAIL / HOSPITALITY / LEISURE	
SECTOR COMPONENTS	
NAICS	*Description*
44-45	Retail trade
711	Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries
712	Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions
7139	Other amusement and recreation industries
721	Accommodation
722	Food services and drinking places

LOGISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION

Logistics is the process of planning, implementing, and controlling the efficient flow of goods and services through the supply chain from producer to consumer. Distribution includes all freight carriers (air, sea, trucking, and intermodal) and warehousing. Until recently, most manufacturing firms took responsibility for the warehousing and coordination of their flow materials. Now these services are often outsourced to develop advanced just-in-time (JIT) delivery systems. The integration of international trade, logistics, and

distribution into one continuous and extensive supply chain driven by global free trade has put this industry at the forefront of economic growth.

LOGISTICS & DISTRIBUTION	
SECTOR COMPONENTS	
NAICS	*Description*
481	Air Transportation
482	Rail Transportation
4841	General Freight Trucking
4842	Specialized Freight Trucking
486	Pipeline Transportation
488	Support Activities for Transportation
492	Couriers and Messengers
493	Warehousing and Storage
541614	Process, Physical Distribution, and Logistics Consulting Services

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES REVIEW

Findings from the quantitative baseline demographic and economic data in the Market Assessment section were combined with the qualitative baseline data (focus groups and interviews) collected during Phase I to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) in the community. Focus groups were held with the following stakeholder groups: the Commerce City Business and Professionals Association, the Derby Business Association, City Staff, the Citizen Advisory Committee and the Technical Advisory Group. In addition, over 30 subject matter experts were interviewed.

We define the four aspects of "SWOT" in these terms:

- **Strengths**: Issues or characteristics that can be built upon to advance current and future economic growth opportunities in Commerce City.

- **Weaknesses**: Issues or characteristics that, if not addressed effectively, could limit current or future growth opportunities.

- **Opportunities**: Assets, events, or trends that offer Commerce City the potential for economic growth and attraction of new industry.

- **Threats**: Obstacles, events or trends that, if not addressed effectively, could threaten the City's economic potential and its ability to attract new industry.

As the region positions itself to take advantage of these industry opportunities, foster innovation, and build a pipeline of skilled workers, it must address critical issues – represented here as both challenges and opportunities for the region.

The following issues and challenges are most critical to the success of economic development in Commerce City:

- **Pressing need for retail and hospitality establishments**
  Grocery stores and "sit down" restaurants were at the top of the list of requested businesses from the surveys and focus groups results. These needs were identified by both residents and businesses. The presence of such establishments, as well as other desirable retailers and service providers, is an important quality of life consideration for area residents. Plus, they are an important location consideration for many of the businesses identified as targets.

- **Low educational levels**
  Commerce City is served by two school districts, Adams 14 and 27J. Historically, Adams 14 has had extremely low high school graduation rates, and 27J has lagged behind state averages, resulting in low levels of educational attainment in the Southern Core of the city. Both districts are making changes for the better; especially noteworthy in 27J is the 90% graduation rate of Prairie View High School's first graduating class. However further improvement is needed and if substantial progress is not made, the community's low educational attainment levels will limit the number of new jobs filled by residents. This is already low with less than 6% of jobs within Commerce City filled by residents. Many of the target industries employers' requirements are for higher skill sets including high school diplomas, higher education and technical training. Education and training are a necessary prerequisite for higher quality economic activities, a core objective of this Strategy.

- **Negative perceptions of Commerce City**
  The issue of Commerce City's negative image and perception arose in most focus groups and was a major challenge identified in the community and business surveys. Such negative perceptions both inside and outside of the region can have major ramifications for economic development efforts. Yet, our experience in Commerce City and the Denver region revealed many positive attributes and successes. These assets and successes, if more widely communicated, can help improve the community's image.

- **Insufficient real estate inventory to meet market needs**
  Promising opportunities exist for attracting more office and retail employers. Yet, the great majority of employers within these sectors prefer to lease space in existing developments. Such space is in scarce supply. A major thrust needs to be the encouragement of private sector retail and office development. In addition to office and retail facilities, attention must be paid to vacant parcels to ensure a sufficient pipeline of shovel ready sites for a variety of commercial uses.

- **Limited array of Commerce City-specific business and civic support organizations**
  Commerce City benefits from the dedication of business and civic support organizations in addressing local needs. However, the number of such organizations is relatively small and their membership numbers are also limited. Some of this is related to Commerce City being part of the larger Denver region and sharing critical organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce with other communities. Non-profits are crucial to solving community problems and taking advantage of opportunities. Approaches to encourage volunteerism and additional non-profits should be explored.

- **High property tax rates in certain areas of the community**
  Taxes are an important decision factor for many developers and economic development projects. Participants in several focus groups and interviews mentioned concerns about high property tax rates in certain areas of the community relative to competing jurisdictions. An in-depth examination of competiveness and ways to bring tax rates more in line with competing jurisdictions needs to be undertaken. The tax audit process should also be examined to ensure a positive business climate.

Numerous Competitive Advantages

Commerce City fortunately possesses an impressive array of strengths to help solve these challenges. Rapid growth of its population and labor force creates new markets presenting fresh opportunities for suppliers of goods and services. Growth also ensures an increasing workforce to satisfy the demands of area employers.

Exceptional freeway access provides substantial advantages to the many local companies within the transportation and logistics field. Freeway access advantages are augmented by service by two major railroads for those companies reliant on rail service. Furthering its location advantages, a strategic location adjacent to Denver International Airport provides excellent opportunity to fully compete in the global economy.

Rounding off these strengths is a proactive City government willing to take the steps necessary to tackle challenges. A complete summary of the SWOT analysis can be found on page 7.

COMMERCE CITY, COLORADO SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths
- Existing industrial base
- Diverse population
- Strategic location near downtown Denver
- Proximity to Denver International Airport
- Good transportation access to and from the City
- Population and labor force growth
- New Dick's Sporting Goods Park and soccer facilities
- Outdoor amenities including hike-and-bike trails and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and access to Barr Lake
- Affordable housing available
- City government is pro-active
- Major research institutions within the region
- Only 25 minute commute to Boulder via E-470

Weaknesses
- Prairie Center to the north and Stapleton to the south are large retail centers that limit retail opportunities within Commerce City
- Low levels of educational attainment; K-12 schools underperforming
- Poor road connectivity within Commerce City
- Lack of economic diversity
- Low innovation indicators, such as patent activity, venture capital funding and R&D spending
- No local job training programs
- Limited close-by community college / university options
- Disconnect between local workforce and local employers
- City does not operate the water utility
- Neighboring cities are at a competitive advantage in terms of the office and retail markets
- Lack of retail, restaurants and hotels
- Insufficient public transit options
- High property taxes, especially when compared to the greater MSA

Opportunities
- Development along E-470
- Land availability
- Integrate north and south sides of town
- Potential to attract green energy / renewable industry
- Expand current industrial and logistics base
- Carve out niche markets
- Reinvestment in older residential neighborhoods
- Expand retail offerings
- Create office real estate options
- State-of-the-art high school facility opened Fall 2009
- New community college offerings located in Adams City high school
- Proposed FasTracks station in Commerce City
- Mile High Greyhound Site and Event Center redevelopment opportunity
- Do more with public/private partnerships

Threats
- Perceived negative external image of Commerce City, although improving
- Limited support system for entrepreneurial activities
- Growing skills gap due to limited educational opportunities for local workforce
- Position as a weak player in the larger region
- Number of jobs in the area has contracted in recent years
- Infrastructure in some areas of the City needs improvement
- Low participation in business associations among some employers
- Lack of a clear, focused community identity
- Not capturing retail dollars of residents and commuters

COMMERCE CITY VISION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL ONE: IMPLEMENT A TARGETED MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN IN CONJUNCTION WITH REGIONAL ALLIES

The recruitment/attraction of new businesses within a wide array of diverse targeted economic clusters ranging from retail to high technology is extremely important to Commerce City's economic vitality. Commerce City's Economic Development Division has taken solid, initial steps towards implementing a more proactive marketing program and has collaborated well with regional allies. It needs to further strengthen the program while closely collaborating with county, regional and state programs in order to fully leverage benefits of those broader efforts. Further staff training within the field of economic development, sales and marketing will help sharpen effectiveness within these relatively new areas of emphasis.

External marketing efforts should include participation at selected target industry association events, specialized trade shows, symposiums or events to personally promote the area to prospects and site selectors. Efforts should include well-planned, regional prospecting missions to areas where target companies reside. Cooperative missions should be planned that coincide with trade shows, etc. in order to realize cost savings. The Economic Development Division should also join appropriate industry organizations and attend industry events supported by targeted decision-makers. In addition, Commerce City should continue to build upon relationships with site selection consultants. These executives are valuable partners when conducting business attraction activities.

Commerce City should consistently engage key community stakeholders during prospect visits. City representatives should continue to participate in regional and state sales missions to key geographies with a heavy concentration of target industry businesses that could likely relocate to the area.

Growth of the Retail/Hospitality/Leisure cluster, one of the five targeted clusters, is particularly desired by the community. Because of its importance and the uniqueness of the retail business location process relative to other industries, it is treated as a separate strategy. However, it is still imperative that there be congruence between marketing efforts to all targeted economic clusters.

Strategy 1.1: Focus business development efforts on the targeted industries of DIA Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics and Distribution, Business and Professional Services, and Retail/Hospitality/Leisure.

The most effective business recruitment programs are generally those that are proactive rather than reactive and that direct resources towards specific types of businesses. Collaboration with regional groups will help leverage resources in proactively marketing towards target businesses and industries. However, there will be periodic need for Commerce City-specific initiatives in order to connect to businesses and industries not targeted by regional efforts.

- Participate in selected target industry-specific conferences and tradeshows such as Medical Device and Manufacturing, Aviation Industry Expo, National Wind Conference, CORENET, etc. Participate where possible in conjunction with Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation, Adams County, and other regional/state organizations to reduce costs.
- Initiate a relationship marketing campaign to members of the Greater Denver commercial real estate industry specializing in office and industrial markets.
- Participate with the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation in key sales missions to meet with company executives in targeted clusters and geographies.

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- Update collateral materials and develop succinct pieces on the specific advantages that Commerce City provides for companies within the targeted industry clusters.
- Initiate a periodic e-mail update campaign on C3 economic opportunities and development activity to be sent to commercial real estate executives, site selectors, existing businesses, regional economic development professionals and other significant stakeholders.
- Continue successful relationship building activities with key site selection consultants. Dedicate particular attention towards site consultants specializing in bi-lingual customer service and processing centers.
- Implement a direct mail campaign followed by telephone contact to the initial list of companies identified within the target industries (to be provided by AngelouEconomics following completion of this strategy). Periodically expand and otherwise update the list with desirable companies.
- Use social networking sites such as LinkedIn and Twitter to support business retention and recruitment efforts. Staff LinkedIn networks should include site selectors, local brokers and prospects. Maintain a Twitter feed and consider industry-specific Twitter messages, as well as organizational updates, that can augment the email campaign.
- Organize all budgeted marketing and business development activities into an annual marketing plan with a calendar of events.

Strategy 1.2: Develop and carry out a comprehensive retail recruitment strategy

Commerce City lacks many types of retailers within its borders and experiences tremendous leakage of residents' spending dollars. The crucial importance to the community of attracting additional retailers necessitates a multifaceted retail strategy that builds upon the current efforts underway and uses various proven approaches to connect to prospective new companies.

- Bolster retail recruitment efforts by participating in at least two retail-focused trade shows or sales trips per year including continued attendance at the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) RECon convention. Emphasize face-to-face appointments with retailers and retail developers.
- Develop impactful marketing collateral pieces describing the rapid growth of Commerce City's consumer base and disposable income as well as other retail advantages.
- Continue to call on local retailers to identify and help resolve their concerns.
- Expand the contact management database of desirable retailers.
- Connect with retailers and project influencers through the e-mail newsletter campaign.
- Augment the demographic information available supporting retail locations - including The Retail Coach study estimates of retail leakage by sector.
- Carry out a relationship marketing campaign to members of the commercial real estate industry representing retailers.
- Connect with developers of retail space within the Greater Denver and Great Plains regions to encourage investment and development. Provide special focus on Prairie Gateway and developers/retailers with experience in retail development surrounding sports stadiums.
- Meet with representatives of community banks to help tell Commerce City's story.
- Analyze retail incentive programs to ensure that they are competitive with adjacent communities. Pay particular attention to prevailing levels of sales tax rebates.
- Develop a retail marketing element as part of the overall marketing plan/calendar.

Strategy 1.3: Establish an Economic Development Advisory Group and include representatives of each of the target industries.

 AE has developed and outlined specific target industries for the region to focus upon to achieve the maximum results for economic development and the creation of high quality jobs. In order to become the most successful in attracting these targeted industries, AE recommends tapping into the vast knowledge and resources of regional business executives within these industries and other knowledgeable people to help identify opportunities and further define specific messages and activities that could attract these industries. The group would serve in an advisory capacity.

- Engage business executives representing the target industries whose main purpose is to supply trend information, identify possible target companies, develop strategies for attracting industry, and develop key messages concerning each industry.
- Include others who can add value to the efforts of the Economic Development Advisory Committee including Commerce City citizens, workforce development professionals, utilities, academic partners and research labs, etc.
- The group should meet at least quarterly to discuss industry strategies while focusing on specific outcomes for targeted industry initiatives, value chain opportunities and other industry intelligence.

Strategy 1.4: Identify and promote an updated, positive community image congruent with target industries' requirements.

Interviews and focus groups consistently mentioned that Commerce City has a negative image that impedes economic growth. Yet, it was also pointed out that that image is dated and inaccurate and doesn't reflect many positive changes which have occurred in the community. An up-to-date brand can help convey the positives to improve the external image of the community

- Collaborate with the City's Marketing Department and other City decision makers on development of a positive encompassing brand for the community.
- Test potential messages both within the community and outside.
- In potential messaging, consider more fully capitalizing on the presence of Dick's Sporting Goods Park, working in conjunction with Kroenke Sports Enterprises.

Strategy 1.5: Strengthen the economic development section of the City of Commerce City website.

Businesses consult websites more than any other source for the information required to make decisions to establish facilities. It is imperative that information that is relevant, current, and targeted to businesses' requirements be included. Recognizing that an upgrade to the City of Commerce City website is currently under way, the following items should be included in the final product.

- Increase the amount of material demonstrating the benefits of business location within Commerce City.
- Include information specifically pertaining to the identified target industries, including a list of local companies within those sectors.
- Construct a section depicting commercial real estate land and building options with maps.
- Expand demographic data.
- Broaden the material on State of Colorado incentive programs, and add language describing City programs.

- Add more in-depth market data to support retail recruitment needs, including population and income projections, traffic counts, findings from The Retail Coach study, and maps.
- Include a "site selectors" tab/section with specific information that pertains to your target industries and site selector needs.

Strategy 1.6: Utilize the retention and expansion program to help identify suppliers and related companies for possible recruitment

The Business Retention and Expansion Program has grown into a solid program in its less than three years of existence. One area of increased emphasis should be identifying suppliers to local businesses that are good candidates for recruitment to Commerce City. Many communities successfully use their retention and expansion programs to help identify suppliers and other related firms for possible recruitment. Area industries often know of companies that are candidates for relocation and they themselves would often benefit from having connected businesses in closer geographic proximity.

- Expand the Business Retention and Expansion program to add more emphasis on questions identifying suppliers and other related firms that could be recruitment candidates.
- Use local business conferences such as the Business and Development Summit for assistance in supplier identification.
- Follow up with these identified companies by sending cluster specific marketing materials and engaging where possible the connected local firms.

Strategy 1.7: Consider refinements to the City's tax policies to ensure an optimal business climate.

Tax policies and the audit process are very important to the business climate of any city. Concern about high property tax rates in certain areas of the community were cited in several interviews and focus groups. Property tax rates vary within Commerce City and include levies by other jurisdictions, but are particularly high in the Northern Range where improvement districts have been used by developers as a way to finance infrastructure development. In addition to property taxes, the city's sales/use tax audit process and policies have also been identified as potential barriers to future and existing business. Ways to bring tax rates more in line with competitive jurisdictions need to be examined. Successful economic development can help expand the tax base enabling rate reductions.

- Undertake an in-depth examination of tax competiveness and ways to bring tax rates more in line with competing jurisdictions.
- Prioritize the attraction and expansion of high capital investment facilities with the ability to measurably elevate assessed valuation.

Strategy 1.8: Consider refinements to the City's incentives policies to ensure competitiveness for strategic, targeted businesses.

Incentives have become increasingly important decision factors in recent years for economic development projects. Commerce City's staff has some incentive tools at their disposal, however these options can be strengthened.

- Continue rebating development fees, sales and use tax, as well as using tax increment financing, for important projects and explore new, more aggressive ways to incentivize projects of economic development significance.

- Add fast track permitting as a competitive tool.
- Consider ways to increase utilization of property tax abatement through Adams County for critical projects in order to help mitigate the impact of Commerce City's high property taxes and examine further subsidizing property tax for targeted businesses.
- Examine establishment of a low interest revolving loan fund to assist worthy projects. This program should also include the possibility of loan forgiveness for those strategically important industrial or retail projects that can demonstrate substantial return on investment thru tax revenues derived from their new or expanded operations. Such programs are often seeded with annual contributions over multiple years. An annual contribution of $200,000 for four years is recommended. Consider partnering with a local bank to assist with review of this fund.

Strategy 1.9: Promote and leverage recent success.

The image of Commerce City was pointed out as a leading negative by focus group participants. It is much more difficult to successfully recruit new industries with such a perception. Yet, there are numerous success stories within the community. It is crucial to get the word out about these successes.

- Publicize business and other economic success stories and assets.
- Utilize websites, newsletters, social media and local/regional media in dissemination of this information.

Strategy 1.10: Shorten development review process times for strategic prospect companies.

Businesses seeking new locations and expansions are often concerned about the need to reduce red tape and the amount of process time required. Municipalities able to quickly process permits have a competitive advantage over cities with more cumbersome processes, and the word can spread quickly through the development community. Although Commerce City processes appear to work well overall, a comparative assessment with competitor communities could sharpen competitiveness in this area.

- Assess Commerce City development review times compared to those cities most competed with for desired projects.
- Ensure expeditious development review process times for new or expanding companies.
- Publicize the ability of companies to go through Commerce City development review processes in much shorter time than surrounding communities.
- Examine Commerce City's development fees relative to competing jurisdictions.
- Continue to include input from participants about the development review process and costs as part of the Business and Development Summit.

Strategy 1.11: Consider development of a community wide Sustainable Economic Development Initiative

Forward thinking communities consider wider and longer term ramifications of economic growth on the community and environment. It would be timely to further explore sustainability including opportunities within the renewable energy and conservation fields. This encompassing effort can be linked with the existing energy audit and other new initiatives already underway.

- Assemble a broad-based group of businesses, educators, conservationists, and other community representatives to develop a cutting-edge, community-wide Sustainable Economic Development Initiative.

- Look at exceptional models such as that used in Coconino County, Arizona.
- Connect efforts to the large and growing sectors of renewable energy generation and energy conservation within the community and region.

GOAL TWO: EXPAND SUPPORT TO EXISTING INDUSTRIES AND ENTREPRENEURS

Many local businesses remain at risk due to the weak state of the national and global economy. There are also numerous businesses with the capability to expand and add employment opportunities if provided with additional support. The City of Commerce City has a good existing business retention and expansion program which can be broadened to connect with more companies. It is particularly important during this challenging economic time that the reach of the community's and region's contact with business and support programs be elevated.

Strategy 2.1: Expand Business Retention and Expansion Program (BRE) outreach to existing industries.

BRE programs often serve as early warning systems of local business problems/issues. Ensure that strategically important businesses are being called upon and that findings are being systematically communicated to the City Council and City management and acted upon in a timely manner. Build upon the value of the BRE program by increasing the number of business retention and expansion visits and emphasizing businesses within the targeted industry clusters, including retail.

- Systematically track business issues/trends and periodically report overall findings to City management and the City Council.
- Add retail and hospitality businesses to the list of those visited.
- Gather additional business feedback about issues and concerns through the Business and Development Summit. Follow up on concerns about City audits and collection of sales and use taxes.

Strategy 2.2: Improve local and regional support to entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship is critical to helping to pull the city and region out of the current economic slowdown. A solid group of small business support groups is in place within the Denver region. Yet, feedback from interviews points out that some needs remain, including the need for clarification of sources of assistance and the types of assistance that they provide.

- Develop on the Economic Development Division website an inventory of regional entrepreneurial assets (venture capital firms, SBDCs, technology alliances, incubators, training programs, loan programs, funding sources, etc.) or link to a user-friendly web portal that includes such help in clarifying the complex array of resources.
- The portal should serve as an online one-stop shop providing direct access to service providers that can help navigate local, state, and national systems.
- Examine ways to encourage innovation including recognition of patent development.

Strategy 2.3: Actively participate in and encourage business participation in programs intended to increase the volume of government contracts performed by local companies.

Helping to connect area businesses to potential contract opportunities with governmental agencies and large corporations often leads to stronger companies with more jobs and investment within the community.

- Help connect more businesses to opportunities through communication of procurement fairs, reverse trade shows, etc.

- Monitor procurement opportunities to help scan for capabilities that could be provided by area industries.
- Build a database of business capabilities through the expanded retention and expansion program.
- Help communicate thru the BRE program governmental or large corporate procurement opportunities.

Strategy 2.4: Increase recognition of local business success stories.

Positive recognition of worthy endeavors is particularly important during periods of economic turbulence. Recognition helps restore faith in the future and provides role models for other businesses. It also confirms the genuine interest of local government in business support.

- Continue to carry out and expand the Commerce City business and entrepreneur recognition program. Consider recognition on a quarterly basis.
- Publicize recipients through City newsletters, website, and regional media.

Strategy 2.5: Encourage entrepreneurship from a young age through regional K-12 programs.

Seven out of ten high school students want to start their own businesses, according to the national Gallup Poll on entrepreneurship education. Yet, entrepreneurship education is not stressed enough in area schools.

- Participate with area K-12 leaders to share ideas and common challenges as a means to expand entrepreneurial programs throughout the region.
- Working with the Adams County Education Consortium, Commerce City Business and Professionals Association and other interested groups, encourage entrepreneurial project initiatives.

GOAL THREE: HELP PUT APPROPRIATE REAL ESTATE OPTIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN PLACE

The availability of land and building options is an important consideration for businesses seeking to expand or relocate. Businesses within the office and retail sectors are particularly interested in available lease space options. Commerce City has serious deficiencies in this area which will inhibit the ability of the community to get much desired employers as well as additional goods and services provided within the community. The City needs to work closely with the development community to develop appropriate facilities and sites to meet these needs.

Strategy 3.1: Prepare an updated master list of industrial, office, and retail sites and identify pressing infrastructure requirements.

Determination and frequent updating of existing commercial and industrial real estate land and building options, gaps and critical infrastructure requirements will help resolve real estate deficiencies in the types of product requested by new and expanding businesses. The amount of lease space within retail and office buildings is currently scarce.

- Build and maintain a database of industrial, office, and retail sites and buildings.
- Identify and prioritize any significant deficiencies in land parcel/building availability relative to target businesses' requirements.
- Discuss pressing needs with the development community.
- Estimate public infrastructure costs.
- Meet with utilities to discuss utility requirements for the sites as well as the estimated cost to provide that utility infrastructure.
- Convene with financial technical assistance partners to consider the amounts and sources of new financing required to meet public infrastructure needs.
- Dedicate City resources, including use of incentives, towards helping the development community address severe deficiencies for strategically important developments.

Strategy 3.2: Continue to build a stronger relationship with the Denver region's commercial real estate community by continuing and expanding the Business and Development Summit.

Collaboration with the real estate development community is essential to correcting deficiencies in land and building options. Close communication of market needs and conditions is an important starting point.

- Use the Summit to help gather input from the development community about market opportunities and challenges while jointly discussing and pursuing solutions.
- Set up panels of commercial real estate/development experts on key trends.
- Consider holding events in conjunction with a Colorado Rapids soccer game.
- Showcase community sites and buildings, perhaps part of an optional tour
- Pay particular attention to unmet uses related to the airport as well as ways to cultivate development of office and retail space.

Strategy 3.3: Develop a strategy for redevelopment of the former Mile High Greyhound Park site.

The Mile High Greyhound Park can be a major community asset if redeveloped in a manner consistent with community goals. U.S. Economic Development Administration programs are often an appropriate source of funds for such redevelopment projects, although they must be leveraged with local resources.

- Convene a working group to develop a vision for re-use of the facility.
- Consider use of U.S. Economic Development Administration resources to assist with re-use conversion. Possible uses of funds include planning and technical assistance as well as certain infrastructure improvements.

Strategy 3.4: Continue to push for provision of fiber optic service to key employment centers.

Broadband capability is essential to many of the targeted industries identified in this Strategy. Yet, most of the city is only served with copper-based telecommunications infrastructure.

- Identify and prioritize the most critical sites requiring fiber optic telecommunications infrastructure.
- Periodically meet with Qwest and other telecom firms to learn about the timing of improvements and to advocate for needed improvements.
- Investigate any opportunities to capitalize on existing, unused fiber.

Strategy 3.5: Collaborate with the Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroads on development of spurs for their rail-served parcels.

The City is served by both Union Pacific and Burlington Northern railroads. This is of value to those industries within the community reliant upon rail shipments of raw materials and final product. This rail service advantage would be even greater if there were more spurs in place to serve individual parcels as many potential projects within the newly identified industry targets will view rail as a site requirement.

- City to determine most critically needed spurs and desired timeline for their development.
- Periodically meet with the railroads to discuss the need for and timing of construction of spurs and other needed improvements to rail-served parcels.
- Jointly market rail-served parcels where of mutual interest.

Strategy 3.6: Continue to preserve and enhance transportation access for cars and truck traffic.

Transportation access is of paramount importance to many businesses within Commerce City, particularly the large number of firms within the Transportation and Logistics sector. It is in the community's best interest to closely monitor problem areas that affect access and to protect community interests potentially affected by I-70 relocation and other threats.

- Systematically utilize Business Retention and Expansion Program survey results to identify major transportation problem areas.
- Eliminate the primary traffic choke points with the help where possible of federal and state Department of Transportation, U.S. Economic Development Administration, and Enterprise Zone funds.

- To maintain the city's transportation advantage, closely monitor and protect the community's interests regarding connectivity and highway interchanges. This includes actively advocating for proper interstate egress and ingress, as well as other road improvements, as the plans for potentially realigning I-70 progress.
- Work with the Public Works Department to ensure that economic development priorities are addressed in the Commerce City Transportation Plan.

Strategy 3.7: Advocate for "over the fence" access to Denver International Airport as well as access to Pena Blvd. via Tower Road from Commerce City.

Both "over the fence" access and better access to Pena Road from Tower Road are required in order to more fully capitalize on Denver International Airport's proximity.

- Continue to actively serve on DIA's Advisory Board and advocate for Commerce City's interests.
- Stay abreast of airport business activity trends and develop industry relationships through appropriate venues including participation at a major industry conference/trade show such as Aviation Industry Expo.
- Examine other airport/community examples and help make an effective business case that "over the fence" access and improved access to Peña Blvd. from Commerce City sites serves the Airport's interests as well as those of Commerce City.

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GOAL FOUR: ENSURE APPROPRIATE WORKFORCE SKILLS ARE IN PLACE

Communities with the most capable workforces are generally the most successful in the worldwide competition for higher quality jobs. The quest to attract and grow better quality jobs will fail unless education and training levels improve. A series of actions are required for which the lead agencies will primarily be groups whose primary missions already involve improvement of education and workforce development. However, the City needs to play a support role.

Strategy 4.1: Conduct in-depth research to determine occupations and skill sets most in demand by the targeted industries.

Less than 6% of jobs within Commerce City are filled by residents. In order to help increase the number of current and future jobs filled locally, the U.S. Department of Labor should be approached by entities such as the Adams County Workforce Investment Board for funding assistance to better understand educational and technical competencies required by area employers. Identify current workforce capabilities, gaps and necessary training.

- Determine leading occupations and skill sets for each of the five targeted clusters
- Match requirements with existing skill sets.
- Work with the Adams County Workforce Investment Board, Adams County Education Consortium, Front Range Community College, Adams 14 and 27J School Districts and other appropriate groups to address areas of deficiency in training.
- Continue to train (and/or help relocate) new skilled workers that will match target industry needs.

Strategy 4.2: Ensure that employer feedback about workforce strengths and weaknesses is periodically gathered through City-employer programs and communicated to area workforce development providers.

The key to improvement in matching training resources to real workforce skill needs of employers is in quickly and effectively identifying and communicating information about employers' unmet needs. Continuing communication with businesses is very important given the recent economic turbulence with corresponding shifts in workforce requirements.

- Periodically include discussion about workforce issues in the Business and Development Summits. Ask about skill deficiencies and what actions employers would regard as helpful to their overall efforts to recruit and attract talent. Collectively explore the need for "basic skills" training (shop math, blue print reading, tape measure reading), as well as "soft skills" for potential job applicants.
- Include questions within the Business Retention and Expansion survey about employers' satisfaction with the local workforce as well as which skill sets are in short supply/abundance.
- Engage the industry representatives on the Economic Development Advisory Committee in monitoring cluster workforce issues. Examine the need for expansion of community college distribution and logistics training. Report results to the Adams County Workforce Investment Board and the appropriate local educational institutions. Monitor follow-up.

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Strategy 4.3: Elevate high school graduation rates and technical training among area residents.

Improving the very low local high school graduation rates in the Adams 14 School District boundaries, as well as improving rates in 27J, is extremely important to Commerce City's ability to move up the economic value chain. Most of the jobs of the future, including those within the targeted clusters, will require at the minimum high school diplomas with additional technical training.

- Work with area employers and education/workforce development organizations such as Adams County Education Consortium to help identify and communicate the types of skills required in new and emerging industries.
- Help increase the number of internship and co-op opportunities for students available within area businesses to elevate understanding of skill requirements and work environments.
- As a community, and in conjunction with Adams County initiatives, establish and attain aggressive performance objectives for high school graduation rates.
- Explore the use of Quality Community Foundation funds to help strengthen high school graduation rates.

Strategy 4.4: Increase local employer understanding and utilization of workforce development programs.

Workforce development resources are available to support customized training needs for employers. Yet, there is limited awareness in the business community of the types of programs available.

- Help communicate through the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program and other means the availability of workforce development programs to support business training needs.
- Include a question within the BRE survey rating the experience of employers that utilize the programs. Evaluate trends in program ratings and communicate results to the appropriate agencies.

PERFORMANCE METRICS

AngelouEconomics has identified some appropriate measures of economic performance. These are good indicators of the overall economic health of the community and its citizens. The Economic Development Division will choose metrics from this list of suggestions based on the priorities and needs of the program.

Performance metrics for the Commerce City Action Plan are listed below:

Economic Development & Marketing
- Number of new primary jobs
- Number of new primary jobs within targeted clusters
- Total investment
- Average salaries of new primary jobs
- Local, state, and national media positive mentions relating to economic development
- Prospect activity
- Conversion rates of prospects to new businesses
- Number of business startups
- Changes in web traffic on City website

Retail
- Retail sales growth
- Sales and use tax collections
- Number of retail establishments
- Retail employment
- Fulfillment of residents' needs for particular types of establishments
- Reduction in retail leakage

Business Climate
- Net firm creation
- Businesses served through the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program
- Ratings of overall business climate through BRE program

Workforce and Education
- Average wage growth
- Local employers' ratings of workforce
- Changes in high school graduation and technical training certification
- Utilization of workforce development programs

Sites & Infrastructure
- Amount of new office and retail space constructed
- Total valuation of commercial building permits

Strategy Implementation Plan Outcomes
- Successful completion of initiatives

Commerce City
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
Implementation Matrix

Primary responsibility with red "X"
Supporting role with black "X"

Task	Time Frame	City of Commerce City	Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (MDEDC)	Adams County	Colorado Department of Commerce	Adams School District #14	Brighton School District #27J	Adams County Workforce Investment Board	Front Range Community College	Metro North Chamber of Commerce	Business Community	Denver International Airport	Other
PROJECT PHASES					IMPLEMENTING ORG								
GOAL 1: IMPLEMENT A TARGETED MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN IN CONJUNCTION WITH REGIONAL ALLIES													
STRATEGY 1.1: Focus business development efforts on the targeted industries													
Participate in selected target industry conferences and tradeshows	Short-term	x	x	x	x								
Initiate a relationship marketing campaign to members of the Greater Denver commercial real estate industry specializing in office and industrial markets	Short-term	x											
Participate with the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation in key sales missions to meet with company executives in targeted clusters and geographies	Short-term	x	x	x									
Update collateral materials and develop succinct pieces on the specific advantages that Commerce City provides for companies within the targeted industry clusters	Short-term	x											
Initiate a periodic e-mail update campaign on C3 economic opportunities and development activity	Intermediate	x											
Continue successful relationship building activities with key site selection consultants	Short-term	x	x										
Implement a direct mail campaign followed by telephone contact to the initial list of companies identified within the target industries	Short-term	x											
Use social networking sites such as LinkedIn and Twitter to support business retention and recruitment efforts	Intermediate	x											
Organize all budgeted marketing and business development activities into an annual marketing plan with a calendar of events	Short-term	x											
STRATEGY 1.2: Develop and carry out a comprehensive retail recruitment strategy													
Bolster retail recruitment efforts by participating in at least 2 retail-focused trade shows or sales trips per year including continued attendance at ICSC	Short-term	x											
Develop impactful marketing collateral describing the rapid growth of Commerce City's consumer base and disposable income as well as other retail advantages	Short-term	x											
Call on an increased number of local retailers to identify and help resolve their concerns	Short-term	x											
Expand the contact management database of desirable retailers	Short-term	x											
Connect with retailers and project influencers through the e-mail newsletter campaign	Intermediate	x											
Augment the demographic information available supporting retail locations - including the Retail Coach study estimates of retail leakage by sector	Short-term	x											
Carry out a relationship marketing campaign to members of the commercial real estate industry representing retailers	Short-term	x											
Connect with developers of retail space within the Greater Denver and Great Plains regions to encourage investment and development	Short-term	x											
Meet with representatives of community banks to help tell Commerce City's story	Intermediate	x											
Develop a retail marketing element as part of the overall marketing plan/calendar	Short-term	x											
STRATEGY 1.3: Establish an Economic Development Advisory Group and include representatives of each of the target industries													
Engage business leaders representing the target industries	Short-term	x										x		
Include others who can add value to the efforts of this committee including Commerce City citizens, workforce development professionals, utilities, academics, etc.	Short-term	x												
This group should meet quarterly to discuss strategies while focusing on specific outcomes for targeted industry initiatives	Short-term	x										x		
STRATEGY 1.4: Identify and promote an updated, positive brand congruent with target industries' requirements													
Collaborate with the City's Marketing Department and other City decision makers on development of a positive encompassing brand for the community	Intermediate	x												
Test potential messages both within the community and outside	Intermediate	x												Community and region
More fully capitalize on the presence of Dick's Sporting Goods Park	Intermediate	x												Dick's Sporting Goods Park
STRATEGY 1.5: Strengthen the economic development section of the City of Commerce City website													
Increase the amount of material demonstrating the benefits of business location within Commerce City	Short-term	x												
Include information specifically pertaining to the identified target industries, including a list of local companies within those sectors	Short-term	x												
Construct a section depicting commercial real estate land and building options with maps	Intermediate	x										x		
Expand demographic data	Short-term	x												
Broaden the material on State of Colorado incentive programs and add language describing City programs	Intermediate	x			x									
Add more in-depth market data, including findings from the Retail Coach study, along with maps to support retail recruitment needs	Intermediate	x												
Include a "site selectors" tab/section with specific information that pertains to your target industries and site selector needs	Intermediate	x												
STRATEGY 1.6: Utilize the retention and expansion program to help identify suppliers and related companies for possible recruitment													
Expand the Business Retention and Expansion program to add more emphasis on questions identifying suppliers and other related firms that could be recruitment candidates	Intermediate	x										x		
Use local business conferences such as the Business and Development Summit for assistance in supplier identification	Intermediate	x												
Follow up with identified companies by sending cluster specific marketing materials and engaging connected local firms	Intermediate	x										x		

Commerce City Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Implementation Matrix *Primary responsibility with red "X"* *Supporting role with black "X"*	Time Frame Short-Term (0-12 months) Intermediate (1 - 2 years) Long-Term (2 years +)	City of Commerce City	Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (MDEDC)	Adams County	Colorado Department of Commerce	Adams School District #14	Brighton School District #27J	Adams County Workforce Investment Board	Front Range Community College	Metro North Chamber of Commerce	Business Community	Denver International Airport	Other
PROJECT PHASES	IMPLEMENTING ORG												
STRATEGY 1.7: Consider refinements to the City's tax policies to ensure an optimal business climate													
Undertake an in-depth examination of tax competitiveness and ways to bring tax rates more in line with competing jurisdictions	Short-Term	x											
Prioritize the attraction and expansion of high capital investment facilities with the ability to measurably elevate assessed valuation	Intermediate	x											
STRATEGY 1.8: Consider refinements to the City's incentives policies to ensure competitiveness for strategic, targeted businesses													
Continue rebating development fees, sales and use tax, as well as using tax increment financing, for important projects	Short-term	x											
Add fast track permitting as a competitive tool	Intermediate	x											
Consider ways to increase utilization of property tax abatement through Adams County for critical projects in order to help mitigate the impact of Commerce City's high property taxes	Short-Term / Intermediate	x		x									
Examine establishment of a low interest revolving loan fund to assist worthy projects	Long-term	x									x		
STRATEGY 1.9: Promote and leverage recent success													
Publicize business and other economic success stories and assets	Short-term	x											
Utilize websites, newsletters, social media and local/regional media in dissemination of this information	Short-term	x											Local/regional media
STRATEGY 1.10: Shorten development review process times for strategic prospect companies													
Assess Commerce City development review times compared to those cities most competed with for desired projects	Intermediate	x											
Ensure expeditious development review process times for new or expanding companies	Intermediate	x											
Publicize the ability of companies to go through Commerce City development review processes in much shorter time than surrounding communities	Intermediate	x											
Examine Commerce City's development fees relative to competing jurisdictions	Intermediate	x											
Continue to include input from participants about the development review process as part of the Business and Development Summit	Intermediate	x											
STRATEGY 1.11: Consider development of a community wide Sustainable Economic Development Initiative													
Assemble a broad-based group of businesses, educators, conservationists, and other community representatives to develop a cutting-edge, community-wide sustainable Economic Development Initiative	Long-term	x						x	x		x	x		Conservation groups
Look at exceptional models such as that used in Coconino County, Arizona	Long-term	x											
Connect efforts to the large and growing sectors of renewable energy generation and energy conservation products within the community and region	Long-term	x										x		

Commerce City Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Implementation Matrix *Primary responsibility with red "X"* *Supporting role with black "X"*	Time Frame Short-Term (0-12 months) Intermediate (1 - 2 years) Long-Term (2 years +)	City of Commerce City	Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (MDEDC)	Adams County	Colorado Department of Commerce	Adams School District #14	Brighton School District #27J	Adams County Workforce Investment Board	Front Range Community College	Metro North Chamber of Commerce	Business Community	Denver International Airport	Other
PROJECT PHASES	**IMPLEMENTING ORG**												
GOAL 2: EXPAND SUPPORT TO EXISTING INDUSTRIES AND ENTREPRENEURS													
STRATEGY 2.1: Expand Business Retention and Expansion Program (BRE) outreach to existing industries													
Systematize the tracking of business issues/trends and periodically report to senior City staff and City Council on overall findings	Short-term	x											
Add retail and hospitality businesses to the list of those visited	Short-term	x									x		
Gather additional business feedback about issues and concerns through the Business and Development Summit	Intermediate	x											
STRATEGY 2.2: Improve local and regional support to entrepreneurs													
Develop on the Economic Development Department website or link to a user-friendly web portal that includes an inventory of all regional entrepreneurial assets	Long-term	x											
The portal should serve as an online one-stop shop providing direct access to service providers that can help navigate local, state, and national systems	Long-term	x	x	x	x								
Examine ways to encourage innovation including recognition of patent development	Long-term	x											
STRATEGY 2.3: Actively participate in and encourage business participation in programs intended to increase the volume of government contracts performed by local companies													
Help connect more businesses to opportunities through communication of procurement fairs, reverse trade shows, etc	Intermediate	x		x							x		
Monitor procurement opportunities to help scan for capabilities that could be provided by area industries	Long-term	x		x							x		
Build a database of business capabilities through the expanded retention and expansion program	Intermediate	x		x							x		
Help communicate thru the BRE program governmental or large corporate procurement opportunities	Long-term	x		x							x		
STRATEGY 2.4: Increase recognition of local business success stories													
Continue to carry out and expand the Commerce City business and entrepreneur recognition program. Consider recognition on a quarterly basis	Short-term	x								x		x	
Publicize recipients through City newsletters and the website	Short-term	x								x			
STRATEGY 2.5: Encourage entrepreneurship from a young age through regional K-12 programs													
Participate with area K-12 leaders to share ideas and common challenges as a means to expand entrepreneurial programs throughout the region	Long-term	x								x			
Working with the Commerce City Business and Professionals Association and other interested groups, encourage entrepreneurial project initiatives such as Junior Achievement at middle and high schools	Long-term	x				x	x			x			Business & Professionals Assn

Table transcription

Commerce City Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Implementation Matrix *Primary responsibility with red "X"* *Supporting role with black "X"*	Time Frame Short-Term (0-12 months) Intermediate (1-2 years) Long-Term (2 years +)	City of Commerce City	Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (MDEDC)	Adams County	Colorado Department of Commerce	Adams School District #14	Brighton School District #27J	Adams County Workforce Investment Board	Front Range Community College	Metro North Chamber of Commerce	Business Community	Denver International Airport	Other
PROJECT PHASES	IMPLEMENTING ORG												
GOAL 3: ENSURE REAL ESTATE OPTIONS APPROPRIATE TO THE NEEDS OF THE TARGET INDUSTRIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE ARE IN PLACE													
STRATEGY 3.1: Prepare an updated master list of industrial, office, and retail sites with infrastructure needs identified													
Build and maintain a database of industrial, office, and retail sites and buildings	Short-Term	x											
Identify and prioritize urgent deficiencies relative to target businesses' requirements including the scarcity of office space	Intermediate	x											
Discuss pressing needs with the development community	Intermediate	x									x		
Estimate public infrastructure costs	Intermediate	x											
Meet with utilities to discuss utility requirements for the sites as well as the estimated cost to provide that utility infrastructure	Intermediate	x											Utilities
Convene with financial technical assistance partners to consider for the amounts and sources of new financing required to meet public infrastructure needs	Intermediate	x											Financing partners
Dedicate City resources towards helping the development community address severe deficiencies for strategically important developments	Intermediate	x											
STRATEGY 3.2: Continue to build a stronger relationship with the Denver region's commercial real estate community by continuing and expanding the Business and Development Summit													
Use the Summit to help gather input from the development community about market opportunities and challenges while jointly discussing and pursuing solutions	Intermediate	x									x		
Incorporate panels of commercial real estate experts on key trends	Intermediate	x									x		
Consider holding the event in conjunction with a Colorado Rapids soccer game	Intermediate	x											Colorado Rapids
Showcase community sites and buildings as well as real estate needs	Intermediate	x											
Pay particular attention to unmet uses related to the airport as well as ways to cultivate development of existing office space	Intermediate	x										x	
STRATEGY 3.3:Develop a strategy for redevelopment of the former Dog Track													
Convene a working group to develop a vision for re-use of the facility	Intermediate	x									x		
Consider use of Economic Development Administration resources to evaluate re-use options and help fund improvements	Intermediate	x									x		EDA
STRATEGY 3.4: Continue to push for provision of fiber optic service to key employment centers													
Identify and prioritize most critical sites requiring fiber optic telecommunications infrastructure	Short-term	x											
Periodically meet with Qwest and other telecom firms to advocate for needed improvements	Short-term	x											Qwest and other telecom firms
Investigate any opportunities to capitalize on existing, unused fiber	Short-term	x											
STRATEGY 3.5: Collaborate with Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroads on joint marketing of rail-served parcels													
City to determine most critically needed spurs and desired timeline for their development	Short-term	x											
Periodically meet with the railroads to discuss the need for and timing of construction of spurs and other needed improvements to rail-served parcels	Short-term	x											UP and BNSF
Jointly market rail-served parcels where of mutual interest	Short-term	x											UP and BNSF
STRATEGY 3.6: Continue to preserve and enhance transportation access for cars and truck traffic													
Systematically utilize Business Retention and Expansion Program survey results to identify major transportation problem areas	Intermediate	x											
Eliminate the primary traffic choke points with the help where possible of federal and state Department of Transportation, U.S. Economic Development Administration, and Enterprise Zone funds	Long-term	x											DOT
To maintain the city's transportation advantage, closely monitor and protect the community's interests regarding connectivity and highway interchanges	Short-term	x								x	x		
Work with the Public Works division to ensure that economic development priorities are addressed in the Commerce City Transportation Plan	Short-term	x											
STRATEGY 3.7: Advocate for "over the fence" access to Denver International Airport from Commerce City sites													
Continue to actively serve on DIA's Advisory Board and advocate for Commerce City's interests.	Short-term	x										x	
Stay abreast of airport business activity trends and develop industry relationships through appropriate venues such as participation at a major industry conference/trade show such as Aviation Industry Expo	Intermediate	x										x	
Examine other airport/community examples and help make an effective business case that "over the fence" access and improved access to Pena Road from Commerce City sites serves the Airport's interests as well as those of Commerce City	Long-term	x											

25

Primary responsibility with red "X"
Supporting role with black "X"

PROJECT PHASES	Time Frame (Short-Term 0-12 months / Intermediate 1-2 years / Long-Term 2 years+)	City of Commerce City	Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (MDEDC)	Adams County	Colorado Department of Commerce	Adams School District #14	Brighton School District #27J	Adams County Workforce Investment Board	Front Range Community College	Metro North Chamber of Commerce	Business Community	Denver International Airport	Other
					IMPLEMENTING ORG								
GOAL 4: ENSURE APPROPRIATE WORKFORCE SKILLS ARE IN PLACE													
STRATEGY 4.1: Conduct in-depth research to determine occupations and skill sets most in demand by the targeted industries													
Determine leading occupations and skill sets for each of the five targeted clusters	Intermediate	x						x			x		
Match requirements with existing skill sets	Intermediate	x						x			x		
Work with the Adams County Workforce Investment Board, Adams County Education Consortium, Front Range Community College, Adams and Brighton School Districts and other appropriate groups to address areas of deficiency in training	Intermediate	x				x	x	x	x		x		
Continue to train (and/or relocate) new skilled workers that will match target industry needs	Intermediate	x				x	x		x				
STRATEGY 4.2: Ensure that employer feedback about workforce strengths and weaknesses is periodically gathered through City - employer programs and communicated to area workforce development providers													
Periodically include discussion about workforce issues in the Business and Development Summits. Ask about skill deficiencies and what actions employers would regard as helpful to their overall efforts to recruit and attract talent	Intermediate	x									x		
Include questions within the Business Retention and Expansion survey about employers' satisfaction with the local workforce as well as which skill sets are in short supply/abundance	Short-term	x									x		
Engage the industry representatives on the Economic Development Advisory Committee in monitoring cluster workforce issues, Report results to the area's Workforce Investment Board and the appropriate local educational institutions and monitor followup	Intermediate	x				x	x	x	x		x		
STRATEGY 4.3: Elevate high school graduation and technical training among area residents													
Work with area employers and education/workforce development organizations to help communicate the types of skills required in new and emerging industries	Intermediate	x				x	x	x	x		x		
Help increase the number of internship and coop opportunities of students available within area businesses to elevate understanding of skill requirements and work environments	Intermediate	x				x	x		x		x		
As a community, collectively set and attain aggressive performance objectives for high school graduation	Short-term	x				x	x						
Explore the use of Quality Community Foundation funds to help strengthen high school graduation rates	Short-term	x											Quality Community Foundation
STRATEGY 4.4: Increase local employer understanding and utilization of workforce development programs													
Help communicate through the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program and other means the availability of workforce development programs to support business training needs	Short-term	x						x			x		
Include a question rating experience of employers that utilize the programs. Evaluate trends in program ratings and communicate results to the appropriate agencies	Short-term	x				x	x	x	x				