

Commerce City Aerotropolis

A COWLEY COMPANIES INVESTMENT



Third Creek

Community Stakeholder Input Sessions Combined

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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INTRODUCTION

The stakeholder input process for the Third Creek Master Plan consisted of stakeholder focus groups and a stakeholder brain thinking session. Through these meetings, participants shared their thoughts on current conditions as well as their vision for the future. The purpose of this report is to summarize the outreach effort conducted to date and the key findings that emerged from the process.

The key takeaways from the outreach process will be carefully considered as recommendations are developed.

OUTREACH PROCESS

The purpose of the Key Community Stakeholder Visioning Process is to gain input on the highest and best potential of the 1,360 acres at Third Creek, a parcel of land located East of Tower Road bounded by 96th Avenue to the south, 112th Avenue to the North, and Denver International Airport to the East, which is privately owned by the Cowley Companies.

Executive level stakeholders including public officials, area residents, business owners, and civic organizations were invited to participate in this collaborative effort.

Visioning Objectives

The following objectives were established for the process:

- To engage community stakeholders in the vision for Third Creek
- To obtain community input on the elements of future development that would contribute to the quality of life in the community.
- To develop strategies that will sustain or elevate the quality of life in the Commerce City Aerotropolis area.
- To define priorities for economic development/ business/employment, healthcare, housing, public safety, and community support services that will support and enhance the development effort.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS KEY TAKEAWAYS

It is evident from the stakeholder input process that Commerce City is a place where residents care deeply about their community. Those who participated all held a desire to see their community grow and thrive.

The following topics were noted as highest priority by participants in order of importance:

- **leverage DEN:** Stakeholders do not want to miss the opportunity to leverage the momentum surrounding the aerotropolis.
- **diverse, mixed-housing:** Hot button topics include aging in place, attracting young families, and offering a variety of price points.
- **public/private partnerships:** Stakeholders recognize that these partnerships create opportunities not realized unilaterally.
- **diversify industry/employment options:** Stakeholders want to see a decrease in the current dependence on construction and distribution sectors.
- **live close to work and play:** Stakeholders believe these type of environments are desirable to young families and the next generation workforce.
- **great schools:** Stakeholders want development to work with schools to help with obtaining more funding for school construction, finding suitable sites and partnering with business.
- **sense of place:** Stakeholders love the uniqueness and sense of community present within the neighborhoods of Commerce City. They believe this can be enhanced through themed residential developments.
- **transit and multi-modal:** Explore how the Third Creek development ties into transit and multi-modal opportunities in order to improve the ability to move within the community.

The Key Community Stakeholder Visioning Process included two specific opportunities for stakeholders to provide input and feedback.

Stakeholder Focus Groups

On January 16th and 17th, 2019, Cowley Companies hosted two executive level input sessions with stakeholders representing the following interests:

- Fire Protection
- Public Works / Utilities
- Planning Division
- Education
- Economic Development
- Open Space and Recreation
- Local Businesses
- Historic Preservation
- Residents Needs

These sessions focused on raising awareness of the future of the 1,300-acre, mixed-use Third Creek development as well as obtaining a diversity of viewpoints about issues and opportunities that will help shape the community and fill information gaps related to how the development best fits into the regional context of the Aerotropolis area. The session aimed to address questions such as:

1. What strengths/needs exist in the community?
2. Are there partnership opportunities that would benefit the development and the community?
3. How we can best work together for the success of the region, Adams County, Commerce City and the Third Creek development areas?
4. What does success look like?

Summary of Stakeholder Focus Groups

Generally, participants displayed optimism for the area's growth opportunities as a "blank slate" and expressed that Commerce City is "more ready" than it has been in the past — regarding both attitudes and infrastructure — to move forward with growth and compete with other jurisdictions already benefitting from the airport investment. Participants agreed the area's development and growth should be achieved through a thoughtful, strategic, collaborative, comprehensive planning process that ensures the greatest

benefit and value to the residents, city, developers and businesses.

The comments and concerns collected in the stakeholder focus groups were summarized into the following themes:

Celebrate what makes Commerce City a Great Community

Commerce City has many strengths. It is a good place to live, work and raise a family. Its neighborhoods have rich history, beautiful views, and active citizens. During our focus groups, stakeholders identified the following strengths of Commerce City. Building on these strengths is the focus of this community vision.

- Commerce City has a rich heritage, the site can be a blend of both the historic city and the new development areas. Build on this heritage and bring together what is best from both.
- Commerce City represents a friendly, open community that is non-pretentious and welcoming.
- The City is unique in its position of utilities & infrastructure resources - specifically as it relates to water availability for growth.
- The City represents the "Last Frontier" - Young families are going to continue to move here.
- The City stakeholders represent a mix of people in public and private roles who collaborate well - Attitude to get things done!
- "Don't try to be a better Denver." Differentiate with high level of service but small-town feel and sense of community and belonging.

Denver International Airport is an asset. Leverage it.

- Bring in companies that need immediate, quick access to airport.
- Planning should be collaborative with airport's growth (future e.g. northside entrance).
- Examine the intersection between aerospace, traditional transportation and urban population.
- Be thoughtful about residential.

Other Communities are Leveraging DEN & Benefitting.

- Recent missed opportunities shed light on where Commerce City is behind other communities where infrastructure exists.
- Aurora and Denver have seen significant growth around the airport due to available infrastructure often brought in by residential development.
- The airport is engaging in a multi-million campaign for on airport development upon which Commerce City can build upon and grow.

Build on convenient access to multi-modal transportation.

- Easy access to interstate system and rail that's not available in other communities.
- Explore how property ties into transit and multi-modal opportunities to improve ability to move within the community (north/south; eastside).
- Connect to multi-modal transportation with bike paths.
- Build on the City's investment in Tower Rd.
- Expand and diversify local job market so residents don't have long commutes.
- Take advantage of area's clean, natural beauty and scenic vistas with parks, open spaces, walking and bike paths, and other amenities that support active outdoor living.
- Housing/services should lend stability for aging community.
- Grow entertainment, dining and shopping options: outdoor concert venues, movie theater, pool, fun restaurants (not chains), experienced-based retail, outlet/mall.

Offer diverse, mixed-housing opportunities.

- Millennials and young families are a top market (they value technology, value, outdoor spaces).
- Housing should meet both entry-level price points and executive housing needs.
- Multi-generational neighborhoods offer sustainability and promote a dynamic services industry
- Think "smart" neighborhoods (e.g. Panasonic's smart mini city).

Grow industry and business space.

- Serve as an incubator accelerator for second stage companies "grow them and keep them."
- Technology companies will be attracted to Denver area/Colorado's air and space port.
- Identify industry gap: explore biotech, agritech, agribusiness, clean technology.
- Business park and office flex space/facilities to accommodate small businesses when they grow beyond the one-suite office space that's currently available.
- Diversify industry/employers to lessen area's current dependence on construction and distribution sectors.

Flexibility and adaptability are key.

- Build a framework that guides the development vision but offers flexibility to adapt to opportunities quickly, and at the same time avoids a "piece meal," "urban sprawl approach."
- Be "creative and bold, but not reckless." Aim to be a "benchmark" community.
- Flexible, mixed-use space that can adapt and evolve. (E.g. "market hall that's a hybrid of food hall/education/incubator space.")
- Work together with all the stakeholders to understand interests and needs to find creative solutions regarding funding, infrastructure design and investment, unique community design.

Encourage community engagement and collaboration.

- Bring communities together to strategically cross boundaries and link land planning.
- Invite existing residents/businesses to participate in the process and take ownership.
- Aerotropolis-area developers should work together as a whole as each project unfolds.
- Convene organizations that offer business services to identify gaps and overlap.
- Sell a community concept/story. Build excitement in around potential (city council, planning commissioners, citizens, business owners).

Public safety, schools, infrastructure, sustainability are top of mind.

- Consider fire protection needs (e.g. space for future fire station) and access for first responders as area grows.
- Build in phases to ensure required infrastructure (electric, sewer, gas, water, streets, connectivity) is financed and available.
- Plan for schools. Growing population means overcrowded schools. Explore adding a technical school and charter school.

Stakeholder Brain Thinking Session

On April 25, 2019, Cowley Companies hosted an executive level input session to refine the themes and ideas put forth in the January sessions. The purpose of this session was to create guiding principles that would inform the future of the Third Creek development. The five core themes for focus of the session included:

- Celebrate what makes Commerce City a Great Community
- Leverage DEN
- Build on convenient access to multi-modal transportation
- Offer diverse, mixed-housing opportunities
- Grow industry and business space

At the brain thinking session, project team members walked participants through two exercises, one geared towards refining and expanding the key themes developed from the January sessions, and one geared towards identifying priorities. The meeting was designed for attendees to participate in small groups completing the exercises in approximately 1.5 hours. Approximately 18 participants attended the session.

Presentation boards were organized into five theme topic areas, each topic had their own area and table with butcher paper to gather new insights and ideas. The boards presented imagery which reflected current items, but also included thought provoking future imagery.

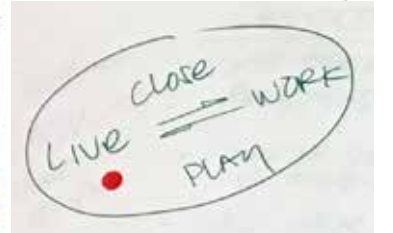
A project team member was assigned to each team and lead participants through exercises and facilitated one-on-one or group discussions.

The session began with a an overview of the themes that were developed from the focus groups, then the project team laid out the foundational information needed to complete the exercises. The participants then broke up into 5 predetermined small groups and rotated through each of the five themes. The following are the broad trends that were presented:

CELEBRATE WHAT MAKES COMMERCE CITY A GREAT COMMUNITY

Brain Thinking Theme Results:

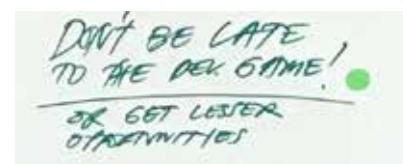
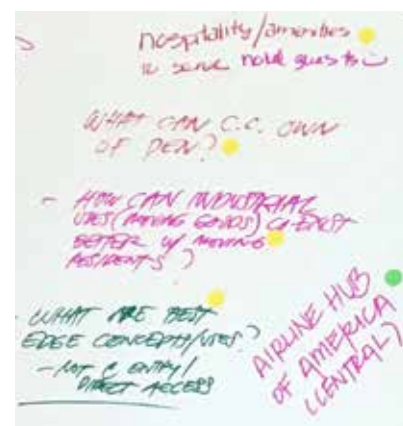
- Open space/trails
- Close to Denver CBD, airport - transportation options
- Lots of development happening east - "that's the last frontier"
- City's best days are still ahead
- Close live—> <—work play
- 5 day week schools
- Focus on STEM education
- Don't be something we're not (be authentic)
- How do we get the local village feeling?
- Redefine the 'commerce' in C.C.—> today's version!
- Lots of green space and trails
- Diversity
- Dick's Sporting Goods Park - The Rapids
- What are new residents looking for? How do we know?
- Build 'Old flavor' in contemporary way! Walk/bike/shop - SAFE!
- Walkable points retail/amenities
- People make it great!
- Commerce City is multicultural (colorblind)
- Gathering Areas - destination features - activities
- Connectivity! Trail connections
- Need more entertainment options - movies, theaters, museums, pools, bars, etc.
- Sustainable community is required - the city vs. region
- Small town feel - but with all the growth, I fear losing it
- Great schools but the growth is creating problems that the city/developers are not helping solve
- Arsenal's role in WWII - international memorial day parade
- Jobs & commerce
- Walking small biz strip
- Bel Mar need parking



DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IS AN ASSET. LEVERAGE IT.

Brain Thinking Theme Results:

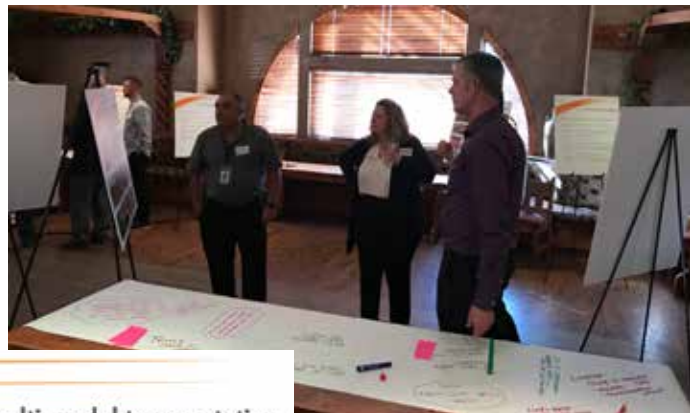
- Higher education?
- Healthcare? Higher Ed?
- Through the fence - can we do it? What is it?
- Commuter rail - E-470 - Bus RT
- Intense/dense development
- Less residential
- Tourism business uses
- Be patient with right deals
- Hospitality/amenities to serve hotel guests
- What can CC own of Den?
- How can industrial uses (moving goods) co-exist better with moving residents?
- What are best edge concepts/uses?
- Not at entry/direct access
- Airline hub of America (central)
- Tower Rd hotels started DEN??
- Don't be late to the dev. game! Or get lesser opportunities
- Don't want back of house uses
- Medical companies
- Hotels office
- Panasonic Gaylord
- Thru the fence
- 72nd & piccadilly
- DEN connect
- Global engineering companies
- E-commerce
- Bus next to E-470
- Buffer zone opportunities
- Indoor ski facility
- Space related training & entertainment



BUILD ON CONVENIENT ACCESS TO MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION.

Brain Thinking Theme Results:

- Connections
- Picadilly - unique cross section. Focus on 120th Ave E-W across airport
- 'Last mile +'
- Realities of bigger visions here?
- Focusing spending now on big roads (traditional) vs future-looking solutions (technology → plan ahead)
- Will ever be an urban core? (like other cities)
- Not ever enough ridership on buses today
- Urbanized density pattern is good for efficient trans.
- Options
 - Big roads divide neighborhoods
 - Bus RT
 - Pedestrian overpass over E-470
 - More connectivity to CC amenities
 - High speed rail- E-470
 - Trucking impacts are a concern
 - Careful about heavy rail
 - Autonomous car tech will impact in 20 years
- No billboards
- Citywide transit-bus service
- Connection from core commerce city
- Through the arsenal?
- Lack of ridership because we need diversity of buses
- Infrastructure needed in region that could be leveraged together - across jurisdictions



Build on convenient access to multi-modal transportation.



FUTURE TRANSPORTATION MIXES



MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION



MAJOR ROADWAY INVESTMENTS - E. 130th AVENUE



DEDICATED BIKE LANE



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT



LIGHT RAIL



HEAVY RAIL



BIKE LANES



ACCESS TO DEN



E-470




BUS TRANSPORTATION

OFFER DIVERSE, MIXED-HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES.


Brain Thinking Theme Results:


- How do you get that cool downtown feel at CC price? (not just housing topic)
- Skate to where puck is going -anticipate market
- Strong connectivity- roads (no cul-de-sacs) trails
- Create unique sense of (themes) place through residential developments
- Strong public places/spaces
- To involve residents
- Alley product
- Full range of prices: <350,000; >450,000
- Strong design, for all price points
- More civic centers
- Live/work spaces- incubators-> trademarks
- Park activity spaces
- Places for teens to "be" other than fast food restaurants. Teen centers & programs
- Need to push diversity
- Is water a constraint to density? No
- Trail connectivity, goes to a destination
- High heights. (density) east to west? Get dense
- Industrial/design is very trendy
- No shipping containers
- Education facilities
- Smaller classes
- School access & walkability
- Walkable neighborhoods
- Needs to be higher density area
- Needs services
- MF buildings








Offer Diverse, Mixed-Housing Opportunities



BELLA CREEK



WALKING PATHS



TOWNHOMES - ANTHEM



DUPLEX



JOGGING PATHS



SENIOR HOUSING



OLIVE STREET



SUBURBAN TOWNHOMES



BACK NINE AT REUNION



TRAIL SYSTEM


MULTI-GENERATIONAL LIVING


NORTHFIELD STAPLETON APARTMENTS


MAGNOLIA STREET


CONCERT IN THE PARK


REUNION

Strong design, for all price points

HOW DO YOU GET THAT COOL DOWNTOWN FEEL @ C.C. PRICE? (NOT JUST HOUSING TOPIC)

NEED TO PUSH DIVERSITY

IS WATER A CONSTRAINT TO DENSITY? NO

GROW INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS SPACE

Brain Thinking Theme Results:

- High quality design & architecture
- Less distribution/trucks
- Larger lot developments
- Unique "feel"/public space / sense of place
- Hospital/medical
- Convention center
- We Work - how to get this?
- High tech/vertical farming!
- Farming
- Efficient
- Water tech
- Art entertainment and maker spaces
- Incentive packages to small biz like there are for big biz
- What is job of tomorrow? How to plan for that?
- CC = hybrid past/future industry, Ag-> new technologies; opportunity of Ag -> authentic
- New skills coming into C.C. in new neighborhoods - leverage into local business (high tech, etc)
- Creation of districts -> arts, energy, tech, creative, environmental
- Environmental/sustainable/green/leed (garden garages - Japan)
- Agricultural companies
- Advanced manufacturing
- Wildlife Refuge is under leveraged
- Tourism
- Connect to Arsenal perimeter trail
- Nascar (not third circles)
- Missing medical/biomedical
- Aviation businesses
- Connect to E-470 trail and Barr Lake
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- No entertainment in Commerce City besides Dicks Sporting Goods Park



- high quality design
 Architecture
 - less distribution/trucks
 - larger lot developments
 - unique "feel"/public space
 sense of place
 - hospital/medical
 Convention center

PRIORITIZATION EXERCISE

As the final exercise of the session, participants were provided colored dots (1 red, 3 green, 6 yellow) asked to place a colored dot marking which ideas were the most important to them. The red dot indicated their highest priority, green next most important and yellow indicating important. Following are the results in order of importance:

The following items were identified as the **MOST IMPORTANT** to participants:

- Leverage Denver International Airport (2 Red Votes)
- Offer diverse, mixed-housing opportunities (1 Red Vote, 2 Green Votes)
- Public/private partnerships (1 Red, 1 Green Vote)
- Diversify industry/employers to lessen area's current dependence on construction and distribution sectors. (1 Red & 1 Yellow Vote)
- Live close to work & play
- Great schools, but the growth is creating problems that the city /developers are not helping solve
- Create unique sense of place through residential developments - themes
- Explore how property ties into transit and multi-modal opportunities to improve ability to move within the community (north/south; east side)

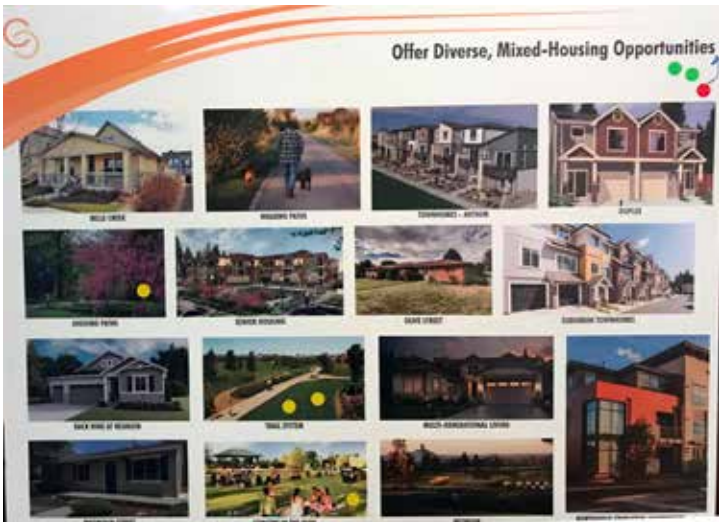
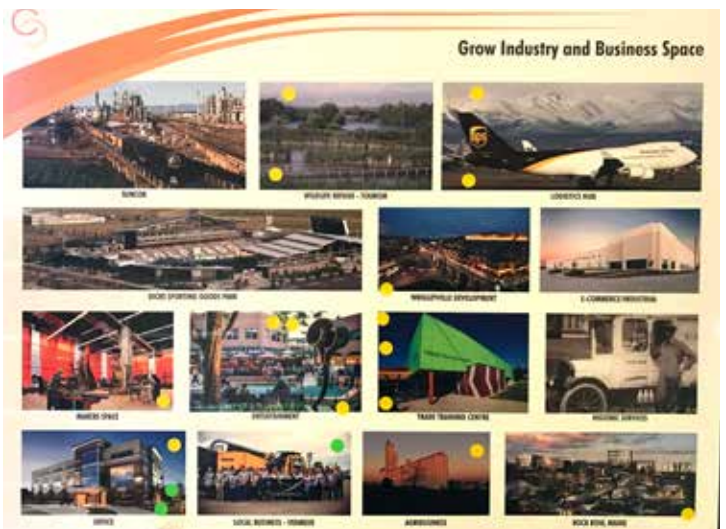
The following items were identified as the **NEXT MOST IMPORTANT** to participants:

- Through the fence- can we do it? What is it? (2 Green Votes, 1 Yellow Vote)
- Office (2 Green Votes, 1 Yellow Vote)
- Los Colinas, Irving, Texas (2 Green Votes)
- Transit Oriented Development (TOD) (1 Green & 3 Yellow Vote)
- Picadilly - Unique cross section. Focus on 120th Ave E-W across airport (1 Green & 1 Yellow Vote)
- Identify industry gap: explore biotech, agritech, agribusiness, clean technology (1 Green, 1 Yellow Vote)
- Build on convenient access to multi-modal transportation (1 Green & 1 Yellow Vote)
- High tech/vertical farming
- Open space/trails
- Need more entertainment options- movies, theaters, museums, pools, bars, etc.
- Sustainable community is required - of the city vs. region
- Airline HUB of America (central)
- Don't be late to the development game! or get lesser opportunities
- Good education is key, above most issues. Schools drive neighborhoods - weaves neighborhoods together! Critical!
- Local business
- Expand and diversity local job market so residents don't have long commutes
- Housing/services should lend stability for aging community
- Grow entertainment, dining, & shopping options; outdoor concert venues, movie theater, pool, fun restaurants (not chains), experience-based retail, outlet/mall
- Panasonic CITYNOW Headquarters



The following items were identified as the **IMPORTANT** to participants:

- Entertainment (3 Yellow Votes)
- Trade Training Centre (3 Yellow Votes)
- Healthcare? Higher Ed? (2 Yellow Votes)
- Trail system (2 Yellow Votes)
- Wildlife Refuge (2 Yellow Votes)
- Logistics HUB (2 Yellow Votes)
- Efficient (Biz/Industry)
- Less distribution/trucks
- Convention center
- Creation of districts - arts, energy, tech, creative, environmental
- Don't be something we're not. Be authentic.
- Small town feel - but with all the growth I fear losing that
- Hospitality/amenities to serve hotel guest
- What can Commerce City own of DEN?
- How can industrial uses (moving goods) coexist better with moving residents?
- Indoor ski facility/space-related training and entertainment
- Tower Rd. hotels
- Live/work spaces. Tradeworks incubators
- Pedestrian overpasses over E-470
- Jogging paths
- Concert in the park
- Housing should meet both entry-level price points & executive housing needs
- Grow industry and business space
- Serve as an incubator accelerator for 2nd stage companies. "Grow them and keep them"
- Technology companies will be attracted to Denver area/Colorado's air & space port
- Business park & office flex space/facilities to accommodate small businesses when they grow beyond the one-suite office space that's currently available.



PRIORITY ITEMS GROUPED BY THEME:

Business Drivers

- Airline HUB of America (central)
- Convention center
- Efficient (Biz/Industry)
- Expand and diversify local job market so residents don't have long commutes
- Business park & office flex space/facilities to accommodate small businesses when they grow beyond the one-suite office space that's currently available.
- Grow industry and business space
- Healthcare? Higher Ed?
- High tech/vertical farming
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- Los Colinas, Irving, Texas
- Office
- Panasonic CITYNOW Headquarters
- Technology companies will be attracted to Denver area/Colorado's air & space port
- Through the fence- can we do it? What is it?
- Tower Rd. hotels
- Serve as an incubator accelerator for 2nd stage companies. "Grow them and keep them"

Housing

- Live close to work & play
- Create unique sense of place through residential developments - themes
- Housing should meet both entry-level price points & executive housing needs
- Housing/services should lend stability for aging community
- Offer diverse, mixed-housing opportunities

Amenities

- Concert in the park
- Entertainment
- Creation of districts- arts, energy, tech, creative, environmental
- Diversify industry/employers to lessen area's current dependence on construction and distribution sectors.
- Grow entertainment, dining, & shopping options; outdoor concert venues, movie theater, pool, fun restaurants (not chains), experience-based retail, outlet/mall
- Jogging paths / Trail system
- Need more entertainment options- movies, theaters, museums, pools, bars, etc.
- Open space/trails

Multi-Modal Transportation

- Build on convenient access to multi-modal transportation
- Explore how property ties into transit and multi-modal opportunities to improve ability to move within the community (north/south; east side)
- Pedestrian overpasses over E-470
- Piccadilly
- Unique cross section. Focus on 120th Ave E-W across airport

Overall

- Don't be late to the dev game! or get lesser opportunities
- Don't be something we're not. Be authentic.
- Good education is key, above most issues. Schools drive neighborhoods- weaves neighborhoods together! Critical!
- Great schools, but the growth is creating problems that the city /developers are not helping solve
- Leverage Denver International Airport
- What can C.C. own of DEN?
- Public/private partnerships
- Small town feel - but with all the growth I fear losing that
- Sustainable community is required- of the city vs. region
- Wildlife refuge

SUMMARY FINDINGS

The Third Creek Stakeholder Vision Input sessions were a great way for the project team to gather input and feedback on existing conditions and future visions for the area and how it will fit into the greater Commerce City area.

The input sessions found that there is broad support for strengthening and protecting what makes Commerce City a great community. Stakeholders are interested in seeing employment, entertainment and recreation options that allow citizens to live close to work & play - without sacrificing their unique identity. Opinions were clear that a variety of innovative business options along with housing is needed to attract a diverse mix of residents that create thriving communities. However, stakeholders are concerned about the challenges growth brings and want to ensure the city and developers are being thoughtful about how new development affects the community.

How to leverage DEN continued to be an important topic of conversation throughout the sessions. Stakeholders struggled the most with how to leverage the momentum of DEN development while diversifying the type of industry that has historically defined the region. It was clear that stakeholders believe innovative concepts and public-private partnerships will be the driver for success.

Participants felt that there is a strong sense of community/identity in Commerce City. There was agreement that new development could unify different areas of the City that have historically lacked a central cohesion. By introducing creative employment and business solutions, these areas could leverage the best of a motivated workforce.

Stakeholders commented on how much they enjoy outdoor amenities in Commerce City, such as access to the Wildlife Refuge. They would like to see the development of more trails, for both recreation and transportation, to improve the ability to move within the community. Furthermore, stakeholders were interested in additional amenities throughout the City such as entertainment and dining options which are currently lacking and require residents to leave the area. Stakeholders want to see more public amenity space and recreational spaces that provide activities for adults and children.

