



Urban Land Institute – ULI Colorado Castle Pines Central Business District Technical Advisory Panel



A Report from a Technical Advisory Panel (TAP)
of ULI Colorado
March 12-13, 2018

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Castle Pines Central Business District Technical Advisory Panel

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Supported by:

City of Castle Pines
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Overview of ULI Advisory Services

Since 1947, the national ULI Advisory Services program has assembled 400+ ULI-member teams to help sponsors find solutions for issues including downtown redevelopment, community revitalization, and affordable housing, among other matters. In Colorado, ULI Advisory Services have provided solutions for such key sites as the Colorado Convention Center, Coors Field, Fitzsimons, and the Denver Justice Center.

Technical Advisory Panels (TAPs)

Technical Advisory Panels bring Urban Land Institute (ULI) Colorado expertise directly into communities to help solve tough real estate problems. TAPs provide advisory panels composed of ULI Colorado members who volunteer their time to offer unbiased, disinterested professional advice. Each are leading experts in their fields. Since 2004, ULI Colorado has been invited to conduct more than 60 TAPs throughout Colorado.



Executive Summary

On March 12-13, 2018, the Colorado District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI Colorado) convened a Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) to provide guidance on how to revitalize the auto-oriented central business district in Castle Pines.

After careful study of the site and interviews with local stakeholders, the panel concluded that while challenged, the central business district has the potential to become a vibrant gathering place, providing improved retail services and a new civic heart for this young and growing community.

The city has many assets that the panelists suggested leveraging for the revitalization of its existing commercial core, such as its relatively well-off, family-friendly community that loves the outdoors, beautiful mountain views and proximity to natural areas, and small town Colorado feel. Additionally, there is the broad community support for transforming the central business district into a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly community gathering place.

A key challenge is the city's current lack of financial resources to effectively incentivize and support reuse and redevelopment in the business district. Also, the addition of around 3 million square feet of new commercial uses in approved development projects around the city may leave the central business district behind—and more vulnerable to decline—if nothing is done.

Recognizing fiscal, political, market, and organizational constraints, the panel's recommendations, which are strategic and non-binding, are devised to be practical and achievable in the short and long terms. The panel's recommendations include:

- 1. Incrementally Retain, Revitalize & Redevelop the Central Business District:** Overall, panelists suggested an incremental approach to revitalizing the central business district, utilizing short-term tactical improvements to retain and revitalize the area around Village Square Lane and the King Soopers. They recommended a longer-term strategic approach to redeveloping the vacant Safeway site.

The City of Castle Pines requested that the panelists focus on the revitalization of its central business district. The area along Village Square Lane is primarily auto-oriented.

“The central business district has the potential to become a vibrant gathering place, providing improved retail services and a new civic heart for this young and growing community.”

2. **Define the Castle Pines Brand:** In both short- and long-term revitalization efforts, panelists recommended that the community identify and promote what is unique and interesting about the community—in other words, what attracts people there.
3. **Create a “There” There:** The panelists recommended getting started by creating a place where people want to linger in the business district. They suggested focusing on the redevelopment of the intersection between Village Square Drive and Village Square Lane, which serves as a gateway into the business district and could catalyze redevelopment around it.
4. **Coordinate and Lead Intentional Development & Redevelopment:** The city can help to shape development toward agreed-upon goals rather than simply accepting any development that comes along. Panelists broke down the implementation steps for a phased redevelopment of the business district. These steps include:
 - a. Coordinate with property owners and landlords to incubate uses at the catalytic intersection of Village Square Drive and Village Square Lane.
 - b. Invest in pedestrian walkways, lighting, banners, and wayfinding signs throughout the district.
 - c. Evaluate the city’s development guidelines to ensure that more walkable, bikeable development is encouraged.
 - d. Work with developers, landlords, and restaurants to create and enhance outdoor patios in the district.
 - e. Work with current retailers to improve their “curb appeal” with the addition of more attractive storefronts, outdoor seating and cafes, signs and branding, and landscaping.
 - f. Work closely with current property owners, landlords, and business owners to retain current retailers while improving the retail mix to provide more services.
 - g. Hire an Economic Development Coordinator to align interests in the business district and to attract businesses in target categories, such as local restaurants, specialty fitness, entertainment, health and personal care, local soft goods, and neighborhood convenience.
 - h. Create a “Pine-ifesto” (like Stanley Marketplace’s “Stanifesto”) stating community goals and aspirations for the business district that businesses sign on to as they join the district.
 - i. Work with the property owner to redevelop the former Safeway site in phases, introducing a mix of uses such as multifamily residential and with a fitness center in its first-floor retail.
5. **Forge a Path to Financial Resilience and Vitality:** Panelists recommended enhancing the city’s ability to support revitalization of the business district with the following financial tools.
 - a. Transition Castle Pines from a statutory municipality to “home rule” for greater local control over its financial destiny.
 - b. Explore increasing the sales tax, the proceeds of which could be used to hire an Economic Development Coordinator and fund improvements.
 - c. Investigate other grant and financial opportunities, such as DOLA Main Street Funding, DRCOG enhancement funds, and county coordination.
 - d. Get educated on the pros and cons of Urban Renewal Authorities and Downtown Development Authorities.
 - e. Work with the developers of the Canyons on potentially increasing the number of allowed residential units, which could increase demand for commercial development in the area.

“The addition of around 3 million square feet of new commercial uses in approved development projects around the city may leave the central business district behind—and more vulnerable to decline—if nothing is done.”

“With adequate resources, the city can help to catalyze change throughout the district.”

Panelists concluded that Castle Pines’ strong and growing residential base could support the transformation of the current central business district into the community gathering place that locals want. With adequate resources, the city can help to catalyze that change throughout the district.



Introduction

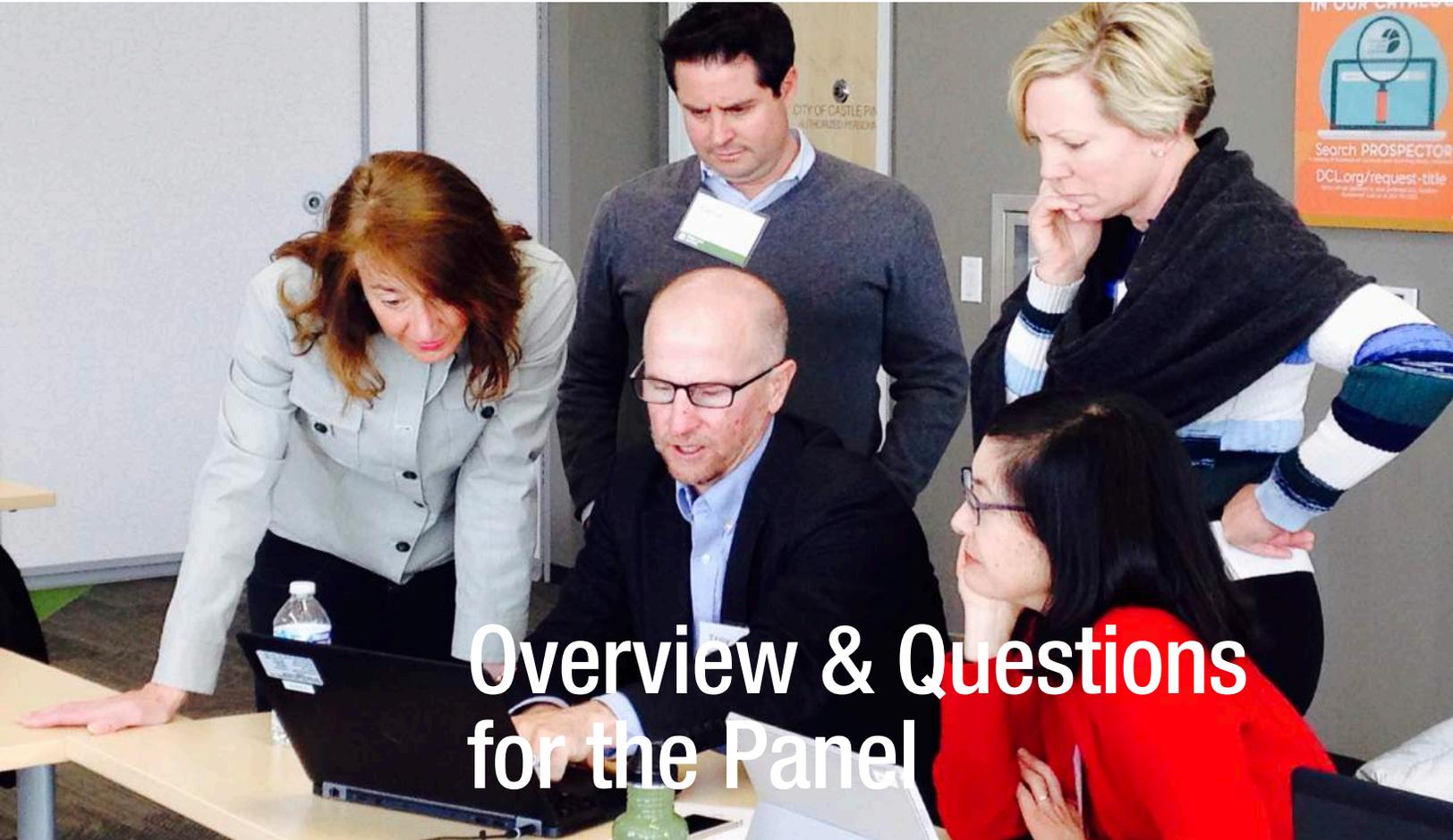
The City of Castle Pines exemplifies Colorado’s recent development trends and population growth. Incorporated in 2008, the young city is located just north of Castle Rock and south of Lone Tree, amid over 1,350 acres of protected open space. It has recently approved three major development projects—which would add over 3,800 residential units and around 3 million square feet of new commercial uses. Following the completion of its 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the city is now focused on implementing its vision to:

“Enhance our community’s unique character by ensuring excellent infrastructure, safe neighborhoods, maximum citizen participation and conscientious development that balances open space, residential and commercial uses.”

The city’s central business district is key to realizing this vision. Currently, locals use the auto-oriented commercial zone to shop at the remaining grocery store or to quickly stop by the library, but there aren’t many reasons to linger. Visitors pull off I-25 for a pit stop at a gas station or fast food joint. There are no signs that let people know where to find the central business district, which is set back and turned away from Castle Pines Parkway. Its former Safeway has sat vacant for several years, outpaced by the nearby King Soopers. Residents are not happy with the surrounding retail mix.

Fed up with an underperforming retail experience at the city center, residents and local leaders are calling for a Downtown Economic Redevelopment Plan that addresses their concerns and reimagines the central business district as the heart of the community. The City of Castle Pines invited ULI Colorado to convene a Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) to offer short- and long-term strategies for revitalizing its central business district.

Aerial photo of the Castle Pines central business district. Image courtesy of the City of Castle Pines.



Overview & Questions for the Panel

On March 12-13, 2018, ULI Colorado convened a Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) to provide guidance on how to revitalize the Castle Pines central business district. With the support of the City of Castle Pines and the Denver Regional Council of Governments, ULI Colorado assembled four land use, economics, design, and development experts (see panelist bios on page 25) who volunteered to offer objective advice. For the two-day TAP, the panel reviewed a detailed advance packet of planning and demographic data, toured the site, and interviewed local stakeholders, including city staff, elected officials, and longtime property and business owners (for a list of stakeholders interviewed, see page 26). The sponsors gave the panelists the following problem statement and questions to address during the TAP.

Panelists gather to discuss the site with interviewee Mary Hart of Alpert & Co (left).

The Problem Statement:

The City of Castle Pines Business District is in need of a “Downtown Economic Redevelopment Plan” that sets forth a cohesive vision for future redevelopment. The Plan should identify economic challenges associated with the city’s Business District and ways to overcome them. The city has partaken in several studies and activities to understand the public perception, vision, and shortcomings of the Business District. The city continues to address the inefficiencies and inadequacies of the Business District; to no avail. The issues that contribute to the downward spiral of the Business District include, but are not limited to, city resources, organization of the district, high CAM fees, high rents, outmoded physical layout, high vacancy rates, apathetic out-of-state property owners, lack of public ownership, inadequate public amenities, and no sense of place. These contributing attributes should be addressed with short and long-term strategies that retain, grow and attract new businesses and development opportunities.

Panelist answers to the TAP questions:

In answer to the questions posed by the TAP sponsors, the panelists provided the following advice.

1. With the changing retail landscape precipitated by the continued increase of internet purchases, can the current business district survive in its current form? If not, what form is a viable alternative?
 - If nothing changes, the vacancy and less than desirable retail mix will continue.
 - Without city support, the area will likely decline over time.
 - New mixed-use development will be more attractive to current and new residents.
2. What impact will the new mixed-use developments have on the current district if nothing, or very little, is done to address the current problems?
 - Without action, proposed commercial developments' performance will outpace the existing business district's.
 - However, this presents a competitive opportunity for the current business district.
 - Additional rooftops will also attract more and better retail opportunities to the area.
3. What role does a local government with limited resources have in a primarily private enterprise problem?
 - Local government can play an important role in determining the future of the business district and its success. It can set the vision and the tone for the area and support uses that actualize that vision.
 - The city has access to financial and regulatory tools to help incentivize uses that align with its vision. It can also work with other groups in the area to align interests.
4. If the long-term survival of the current business district requires significant redevelopment, how are current viable businesses "saved," and to a greater degree how does the city maintain its primary sources of sales tax revenue?
 - The incremental approach suggested would maintain current business activity through redevelopment.
 - The panel recommends investigating ways to increase sales tax revenue to pay for recommended improvements to the business district.
5. How does one overcome the lack of interest of the various ownership groups in making the investments necessary to ensure long-term sustainability?
 - The panel suggests hiring an Economic Development Coordinator, potentially through the Chamber, who can align the various landlords and property owners, and attract local uses that match the community's desires.

In addition to providing these answers to the panel questions, the panel focused on addressing findings with short- and long-term recommendations that could help the city advance toward its vision.

“ Local government can play an important role in determining the future of the business district and its success. It can set the vision and the tone for the area and support uses that actualize that vision. ”

“ The city has access to financial and regulatory tools to help incentivize uses that align with its vision. It can also work with other groups in the area to align interests. ”



Findings

Vacant 10-acre site

Through the review of the city’s previous plans and studies, as well as interviews with local stakeholders, it became clear that challenges in the business district are well documented. Many are also listed in the Problem Statement that the city gave to the panelists at the start of the TAP:

“The issues that contribute to the downward spiral of the Business District include, but are not limited to, city resources, organization of the district, high CAM fees, high rents, outmoded physical layout, high vacancy rates, apathetic out-of-state property owners, lack of public ownership, inadequate public amenities, and no sense of place.”

The panelists also took note of the area’s positive attributes, such as:

- Strong neighborhoods and residential areas
- Family-friendly community
- Love of the outdoors
- Proximity to natural areas and beautiful mountain views
- Relatively high incomes, with many residents working from home
- Described as “very Colorado” with a small, mountain town feel

Additionally, it’s encouraging that there is the broad community support for transforming the central business district into a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly community gathering place.

The city, however, currently lacks the resources to effectively incentivize reuse and redevelopment in the business district—which is a primary barrier to making this happen.

Map of Castle Pines’ central business district. Map and labels courtesy of the City of Castle Pines.

“There is the broad community support for transforming the central business district into a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly community gathering place.”

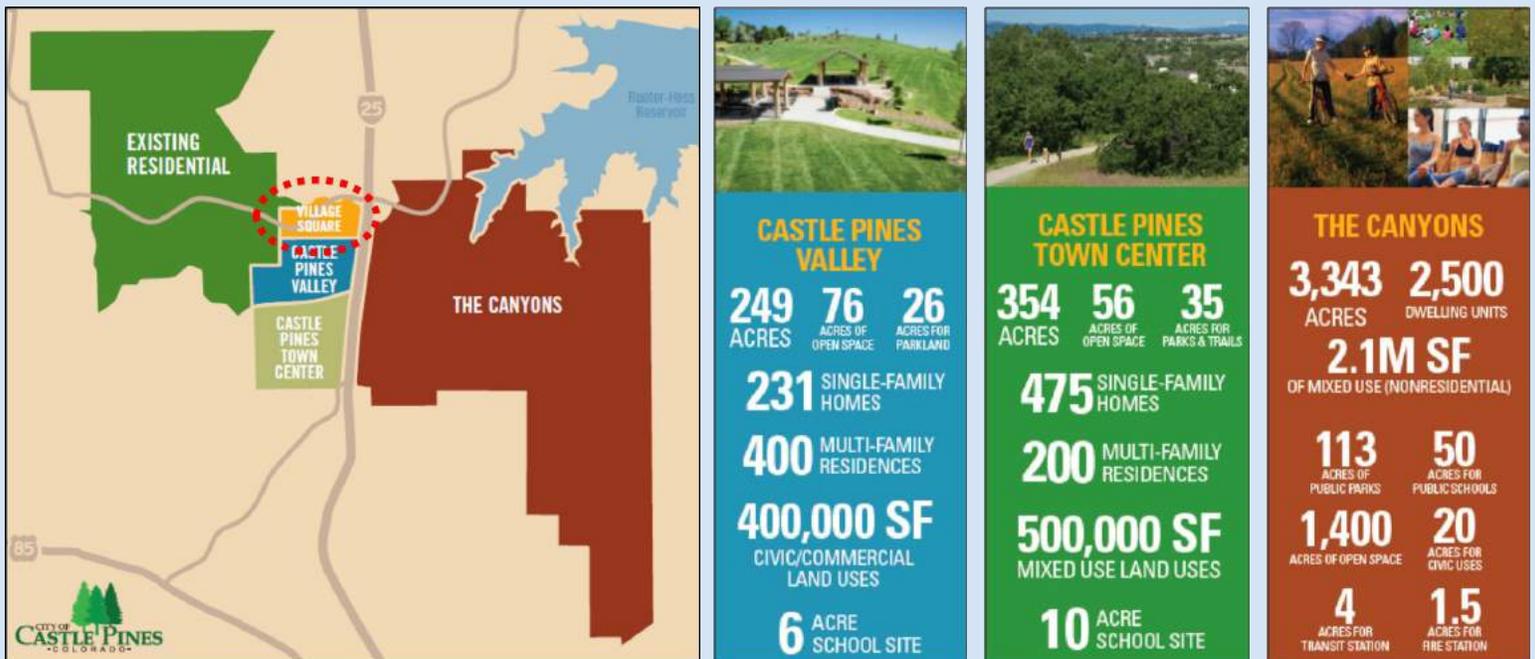
Another concern is that with the addition of around 3 million square feet of new commercial in the approved development projects around Castle Pines, the existing central business district may be left behind as residents prefer newer options, especially if nothing is done to improve the existing business district.

Planned developments in Castle Pines include:

- Castle Pines Valley:** Located just south of the Village Square commercial district, Castle Pines Valley is a 249-acre planned development that will include up to 231 single-family homes, 400 multi-family residences, 76 acres of open space, trails, civic uses, community uses, commercial and retail uses. Castle Pines Valley is currently under construction.
- Castle Pines Town Center:** This 354-acre planned development will include up to 475 single family residences, 200 multifamily residences, and around 500,000 square feet of mixed use/non-residential. The development will also include parks, open space, trails, schools, civic, community, commercial, retail, and agricultural uses. Several stakeholders have stated concern over the name of this development, especially if its commercial and retail developments compete with the city’s existing central business district.
- The Canyons:** The Canyons is a 3,343-acre master planned development that will include at least 2,500 residential units and around 2.1 million square feet of mixed-use commercial and retail. Parks, open space, trails, schools, civic, community, commercial, retail, and agricultural uses are also included in the plans. The project is intended to embrace mixed-use development principles to create a live, work, shop, and play community. Depending on demand, the developers are considering the addition of more housing units, which could support the planned commercial and retail developments in the area.

New Development in Castle Pines

Castle Pine’s central business district is in the area dubbed Village Square. Approved developments in Castle Pines Valley, Castle Pines Town Center, and the Canyons are currently under construction. Images courtesy of the City of Castle Pines.



How will these planned developments impact the central business district?

Opportunities:

- Additional rooftops in Castle Pines will attract more and better retail opportunities for the business district.
- Currently, only about 4% of Castle Pines’ population is 20 to 29 years old, which is an important demographic of young professionals that supports vibrant retail. Additional residential and commercial opportunities could attract more young professionals, as well as visitors, to the city.

Threats:

- New mixed-use developments will be more attractive to current and new residents, leaving the existing business district behind.
- Without city support and action, the central business district will likely continue to decline over time.

Without action, these planned commercial developments will outperform the existing business district. However, these new developments also present a competitive opportunity for the central business district. Competition can be an important driver of performance and innovation, which the central business district desperately needs.

Also, there may be opportunities to better physically connect between the new commercial developments, as well as to encourage each development to differentiate with distinct types of commercial and retail uses, so that they generate mutually supportive niches.

The City of Castle Pines has come a long way since it was incorporated ten years ago. Its recently completed Comprehensive Plan sets a vision for the growing city, and now is the time to implement that vision.

“There may be opportunities to better physically connect between the new commercial developments, as well as to encourage each development to differentiate with distinct types of commercial and retail uses, so that they generate mutually supportive niches.”

Recommendations



Recognizing fiscal, political, market, and organizational constraints, the panelists provided the following recommendations, which are devised to be practical and achievable in the short and long terms.

1. Incrementally Retain, Revitalize & Redevelop the Central Business District

The Comprehensive Plan’s third economic development goal (Goal ED-3) is: *“Retrofit Village Square to create a stronger mixed-use downtown feel with unique sit-down restaurants, office, retail, and housing.”*

To accomplish this goal, the city must tackle a variety of challenges, especially related to the varied private ownership of land parcels and the existing urban design. That urban design is the bone structure of streets, buildings, and environment that any new development must take into account.

Also, while the city and community can have a say in the scale and design of new development, there must be consideration of not only what currently exists there, but also what role the central business district plays in the larger context of Castle Pines.

2. Define the Castle Pines Brand

Many stakeholders, including city staff, have stated that the central business district lacks a unifying identity. One stakeholder said during their interview, “I don’t think we have a brand or an identity. That’s the first step: deciding who we want to be and then we can create a plan from there.”

Panelists brainstorm recommendations for the business district.

Scales of Urban Design

Small Towns:

- Quiet with areas of buzz
- Predictable with occasional surprises
- Familiarity and recognition
- A place to stay
- Casual

Urban Areas:

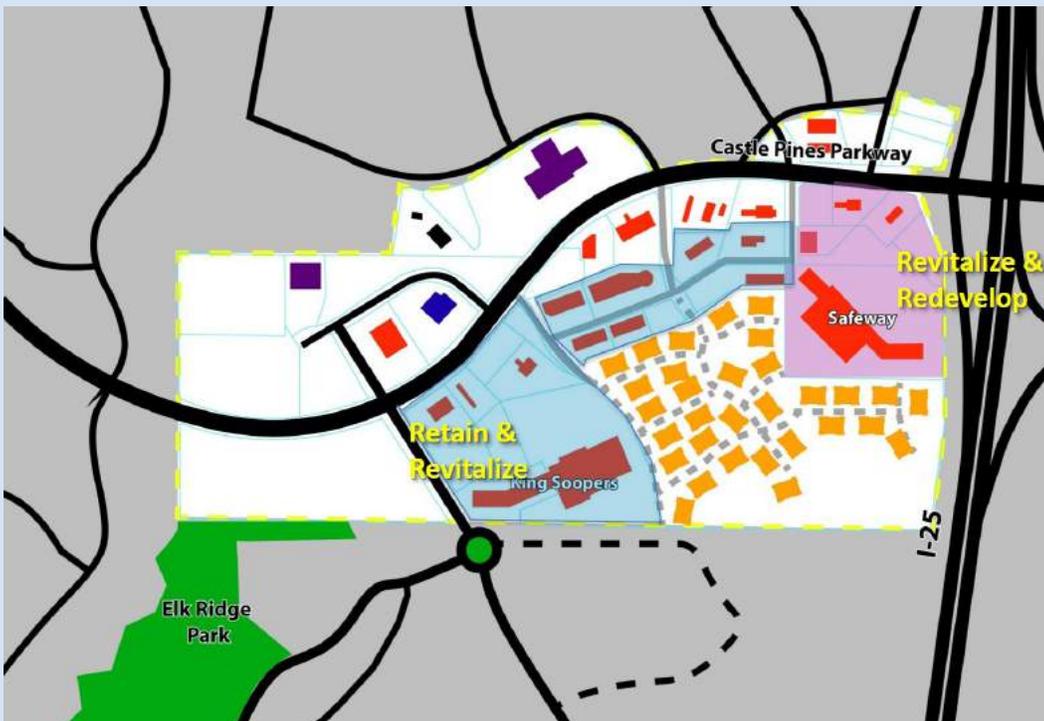
- Lively with areas of serenity
- Constantly changing with a few holdouts
- Anonymity and cosmopolitan
- A place to try out
- Urbane

The Comprehensive Plan lays out a broad vision for the city, but revitalization of the central business district presents the perfect opportunity to define the Castle Pines identity in the heart of the city. Determining the Castle Pines identity, or brand, is a matter of identifying what is unique and interesting about the community—in other words, what attracts people there.

Place branding can take many forms, but it can be easier to determine if you think about how other cities have embraced what makes them distinctive. The panelists suggested leveraging Castle Pines’ small-town vibe (in the business district’s development scale and design), local artisans (in the kinds of retail products and

“ Determining the Castle Pines identity, or brand, is a matter of identifying what is unique and interesting about the community—in other words, what attracts people there. ”

Panelists suggested this incremental approach to revitalizing the central business district:



Panelists suggested focusing on retaining and revitalizing the central business district with short-term tactical improvements in the light blue areas indicated on the map. They recommended longer-term redevelopment of the former Safeway site, indicated by the pink area on the map. Map of the business district by Troy Russ.

1. Retain and revitalize the central business district with short-term tactical improvements:

- a. Tactical improvements, like adding lighting, public art, and signs along Castle Pines Parkway and in the blue zones indicated on the map above, will have long-term payoffs for relatively low cost.
- b. Retaining existing businesses in the blue areas will also be important for the ongoing economic stability of the central business district while it is undergoing strategic reinvestments outlined in the upcoming recommendations. The city could coordinate with current property owners, landlords, and business owners to help retain current retailers while attracting others to improve the retail mix.

2. Revitalize and redevelop the former Safeway site with longer term strategic investments:

- a. The former Safeway site presents an opportunity for longer-

term reinvestment and redevelopment, due to its current vacancy and large scale.

- b. This site, highlighted in purple in the map above, could feature mixed-use development with both housing and retail. Retail, on the ground level, could include a significant reuse of the space. Since there is demand for a community recreation center, fitness center on the ground level could help address that demand at a lower cost to the city.
- c. This area is also adjacent to the I-25, which presents an opportunity for adding Castle Pines branding and signage as part of a gateway into the city. Infrastructure, such as the bridge over I-25, can also be used to help define the city’s brand.
- d. CDOT’s Castle Pines Park-n-Ride is also on this site, which presents an opportunity to add a more robust multi-modal transit hub once there is more demand from the community.

Ideas on unique local assets to highlight through branding:

- **Bison:** Castle Pines can leverage its proximity to the Daniel’s Park wildlife refuge and its iconic bison residents to start a public art campaign that has positive emotional impact.
- **Pine trees:** Castle Pines already uses pine trees in its city logo and could add these to its gateway, wayfinding, and public art.
- **Golf:** Golf in Castle Pines is renowned, which could be highlighted by the city’s branding and marketing efforts.
- **Colorado Proud:** If Castle Pines embraces locally made products and local artisans in its central business district, this could be a great rallying point for the city.



Photo by Garland Simmons.

shops courted), and nearby bison in Daniel’s Park (in the city’s public art) to establish a vibrant core that attracts both residents and visitors alike.

3. Create a “There” There

Creating a place where people want to linger is key for supporting economic development in Castle Pines’ central business district. The longer people stay in an area, the more they tend to spend—supporting local retail and city coffers with sales tax dollars.

But how can Castle Pines transform the existing business district into a place where people will want to meet up and linger? “You don’t need much,” said panelist Daniel Aizenman, “just a lot of different things.” Things like branded signage and wayfinding to help people find Village Square Lane, warm lighting, pedestrian crosswalks and sidewalks, plantings, public art, good food, and outdoor patios and seating.

The panelists suggested getting started by focusing on the redevelopment of a key intersection: Village Square Drive and Village Square Lane. The revitalization of this intersection could catalyze redevelopment throughout the business district since it is centrally located, and it serves as a gateway into the district for those driving from Castle Pines Parkway.

4. Coordinate and Lead Intentional Development & Redevelopment

The panelists suggested a phased approach to redevelopment of the business district, which breaks down implementation of the larger-scale development plan into doable components.

What’s needed to create a great place? Succeed Socially, Local Pride, Walk More, Be Exceptional



Before & After – Village Square Drive Today and What Could Be



View from intersection of Castle Pines Parkway and Village Square Drive, looking south into the business district. Image from Google Maps Streetview.



Rendering of what the business district could look like from Castle Pines Parkway. Rendering by Daniel Aizenman.



View from Village Square Drive, looking south into the business district. Image from Google Maps Streetview.



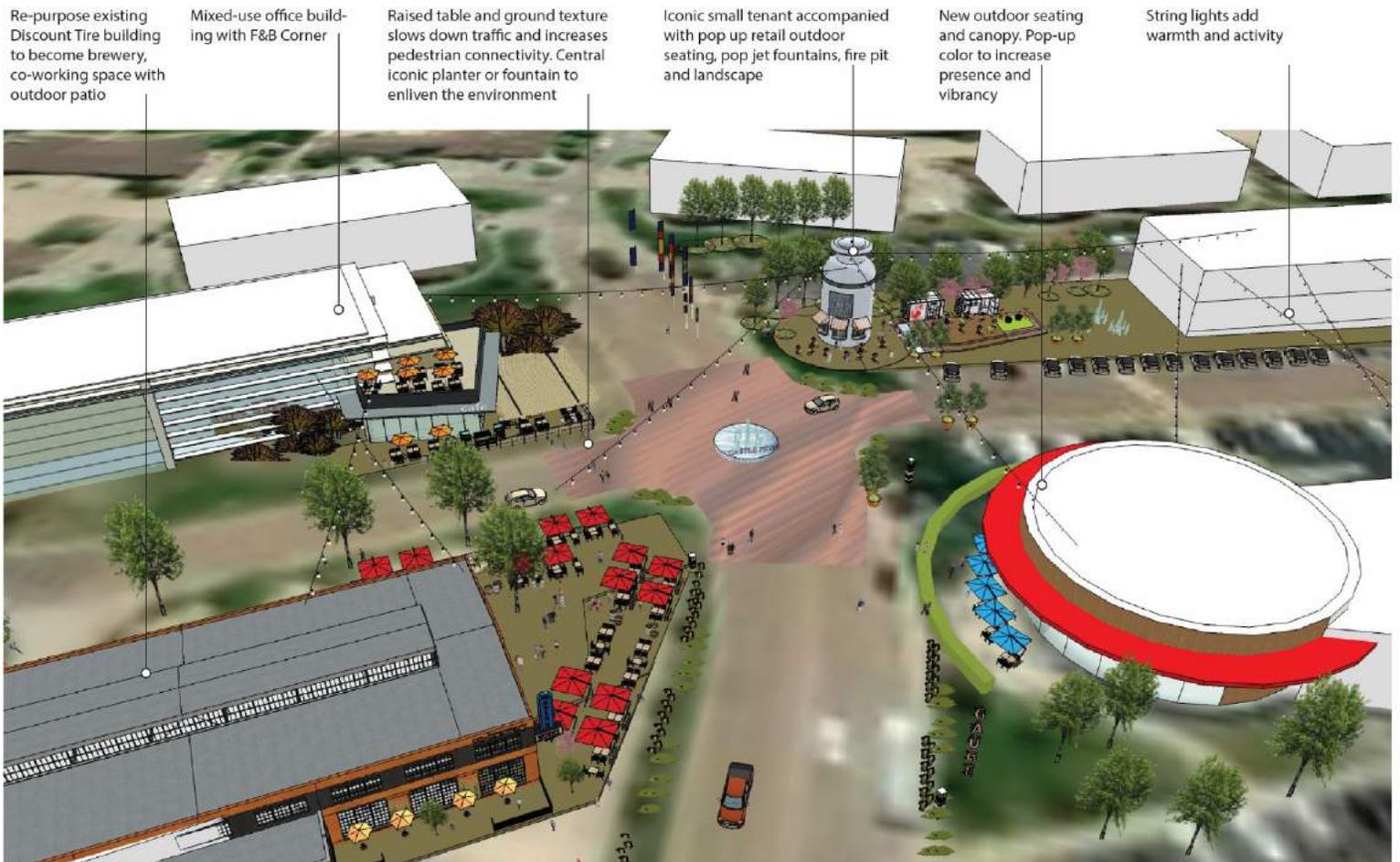
Rendering of what the business district could look like from Village Square Drive. Rendering by Daniel Aizenman.



View of intersection between Village Square Drive and Village Square Lane, looking south. Image from Google Maps Streetview.



Rendering of what the business district could look like at the intersection of Village Square Drive and Village Square Lane. Rendering by Daniel Aizenman.



A heart to catalyze the town center:

As mentioned earlier, the panelists recommended starting with the focused revitalization of the intersection between Village Square Drive and Village Square Lane. Making this into a catalytic intersection that sparks vibrancy in the district could buoy all the retail and commercial land uses around it. This intersection is also a great place to start because sites around it are ready for redevelopment.

Rendering of potential uses at the intersection of Village Square Drive and Village Square Lane that could catalyze redevelopment throughout the district. Rendering by Daniel Aizenman.

Here's how:

- **Work with landlords to incubate uses in the four corners of this catalytic intersection:**

- **NE Corner** (vacant Discount Tire store at 7520 Village Square Drive):

Short-term: The city could work with the landlord of this site to incubate new uses, such as a local artisan pop-up store, in the vacant storefront. Local artisans can be found through [Denver Handmade Homemade](#) and by searching Etsy.com (search "[Handmade in Colorado](#)," for example). While artisans could potentially split the rent, it may be necessary for the city to help subsidize their use of the space, keeping it affordable for artisans. Incubating tenants in this way could help to activate the entire business district in the short term.

Long-term: In the long term, the panelists envisioned this site being redeveloped as a brewery on the ground level with a large outdoor patio and co-working space above. Several breweries have already expressed interest in the site. The city could work with the landlord and/or commercial brokers to reach out to these and other breweries to see if there are any specific barriers, such as site cleanup, to their reuse of the site that the city could potentially



"Fall for Local" pop-up store for local artisans and small businesses in Vancouver. Photo by Michael Ashley.

help remediate. They could also work together to attract a developer of co-working space, such as WeWork or Office Evolution, to redevelop the site. Since many stakeholders mentioned that many Castle Pines residents work from home and that coffee shops are typically full, there is probably pent up demand for coworking space.

- o **NW Corner** (Duke’s Steakhouse at 363 Village Square Lane):

As one of the most successful restaurants in Castle Pines, Duke’s Steakhouse can be leveraged to further activate this catalytic intersection. The city can work with Duke’s to add a colorful awning or bright umbrellas to its patio, planters, and outdoor heaters during colder months to encourage year-round outdoor seating.

- o **SE Corner** (vacant pad site at 7438 Village Square Drive):

A large vacant plot of land is available for development on this corner. This site could be ideal for attracting a company’s offices to Castle Pines. The panelists envisioned this site being used for a mixed-use office building, with offices on the upper floors, food and beverage retail on the ground level, and patios and pedestrian facilities all around. Attracting a corporate office may involve working with commercial brokers and negotiating with companies on tax incentives.

- o **SW Corner** (lawn at 7439 Village Square Drive):

This small landscaped lawn could be activated with an ice cream kiosk where the “Village Square Office” sign is currently located. The panelists imagined a Little Man Ice Cream on this site, which adds an iconic milk-jug shaped shop, as an example. While there are other potential uses that could work, a food kiosk may work well due to the small size and landscaping of the site.

- **Transform the intersection to be more pedestrian-friendly:**

- o The panelists envisioned making the intersection into a roundabout with sidewalks and crosswalks, as well as a different pavement texture, such as brick, to slow traffic. The center of the roundabout could include plantings, a fountain, signage, and/or public art. Transforming this intersection will affect the speed of cars, the safety of pedestrian crossings, and the attractiveness and comfort of the entire business district.

- **Invest in pedestrian walkways, lighting, banners, and wayfinding signage throughout the district—especially leading into this intersection:**

- o Stringed lights draped between buildings attract people and create a warm ambiance.
- o Wayfinding signage can help people find public parking so that they can walk around the district.
- o Banners can identify the district and promote upcoming events.
- o Pedestrian paths should connect throughout the district and can include trees and other plantings to make them more attractive and to make the district feel less auto-centric.

- **Work with developers, landlords, and restaurants to create and enhance outdoor patios:**

- o The city can work with landlords to allow for more flexible and/or shared parking requirements and for the creation of parklets (temporary patios built over street parking) as an intermediate step toward enhancing outdoor patios in the business district. Temporary



WeWork co-working space in Culver City. Photo by Kat Wickstrom.



The patio of Duke’s Steakhouse could be leveraged even more to entice people to sit outside. Image from Google Maps.



Little Man Ice Cream in Denver. Photo by Danielle Lirette.



A roundabout at the intersection of Village Square Lane and Village Square Drive could make the area more pedestrian- and bike-friendly. Image courtesy of Moose Lake Star Gazette.

parklets allow the city to test the value of outdoor patios for both local restaurants and the city. Parklets can be made into permanent patios—as they were in Louisville, Colo.—if the value proves worth the effort.

- o Residents of Castle Pines have said that they love the outdoors and business districts with large outdoor patios tend to attract higher-end restaurants, which could make the addition of patios a win-win for the business district.

Catalyzing redevelopment in the core of the business district in these ways could lead to more private investment in the area and will likely attract higher-end tenants, creating a virtuous cycle of both economic and social development—leading to the community gathering place that residents are calling for.

A centralized approach to attracting tenants:

While the “build it and they will come” method of development can work in some circumstances, it’s best to be proactive in tenant attraction and curation. Currently, landlords in the business district lack a unified strategy for courting tenants and they end up competing with one another, incentivizing tenants to switch spaces within the district rather than attracting new and different tenants. Without coordinating, they are also bringing in duplicate land uses. Panelists suggested a more centralized and comprehensive approach to align interests and attract the kinds of tenants that residents desire.

- **Hire an Economic Development Coordinator:**

- o In its 2012 report, Downtown Colorado, Inc. recommended the creation of a downtown improvement organization to manage economic development initiatives in the central business district. Since the creation of a new organization may be difficult, this role could be housed within the local Chamber of Commerce, which is well-positioned to serve in this capacity, or potentially at the city.
- o The Coordinator would work with local property owners and landlords in the business district to gather appropriate data for attracting tenants, reduce duplication of efforts, and align interests for curating top tenants for the business district. The goals would be to have a centralized



Office space with a ground level café could help to activate the streetscape. Image courtesy of the San Francisco Planning Department.



Design Lighting lit up Larimer Square in Denver with LED lights, which use more than 80 percent less energy than traditional light bulbs. The company noted that if the new bulbs were left on 24 hours a day, it would be about 10 years before they would need to be replaced. Photo courtesy of Larimer Square.

Louisville Parklets Transform Downtown

The City of Louisville, Colo. has used parklets to transform its downtown since 2009. The Louisville Downtown Business Association, an all-volunteer organization, began a seasonal pilot program in 2009 that lined the 800 block of Main Street with parklets (which they dubbed patios). The parklets/patios are in place every year from around Memorial Day through the first week of November. The experiment proved to be wildly

successful, luring customers from near and far to spend money at downtown restaurants and retailers and padding municipal budgets with an impressive injection of much-needed sales tax revenue. New business growth followed. In 2013, the City of Louisville officially took over the downtown patio program. The seasonal patios have become a permanent part of Louisville’s landscape. Images courtesy of Modern Cities.

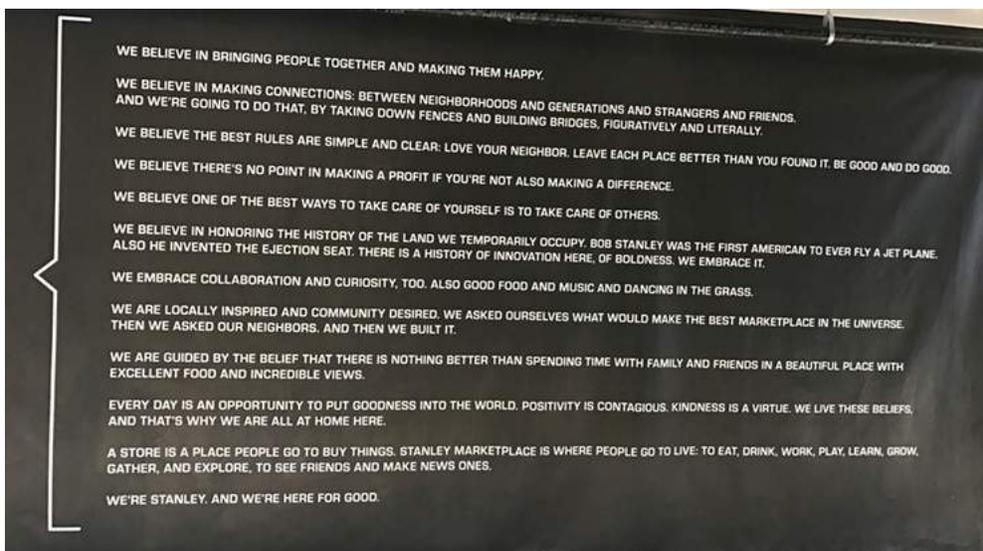


approach for attracting desirable tenants to the district and reducing competition between landlords. They could also coordinate with new commercial developments in Castle Pines Valley, Castle Pines Town Center, and the Canyons, to assist in the creation of unique retail experiences at each location.

- In terms of attracting tenants to the central business district, the Coordinator could focus on reaching out to small businesses that are successful in similar communities and that are interested in growing—and inviting them to visit Castle Pines. The Coordinator could then work with potential tenants to find appropriate space for their business and interface with the city on potential incentives for tenant improvements for older spaces.
- The Coordinator could also work with current retailers to improve their “curb appeal” with the addition of more attractive storefronts, outdoor seating, signs and branding, and landscaping.
- Another key function of this position would be to manage public relations and communications on behalf of economic development for the business district. For this reason, it may be that the role could be fulfilled by two part-time positions—one for communications and outreach, and the other for working with landlords and tenants. Public relations could include coordinating with the Chamber and the Master Association on public events in the central business district.
- This role could be funded through a sales tax increase (more information about this included on page 22). As a nonprofit organization, the Chamber could also fundraise to support economic development activities.
- **Create a “Pine-ifesto”:**
 - More than a few stakeholders noted how much they enjoy the Stanley Marketplace near Stapleton, and how the central business district could use equally great local businesses and food options. Part of what makes Stanley Marketplace unique from other food halls is that it has what it calls the “Stanifesto” (Stanley Manifesto). The Stanifesto, which can be found on their website (stanleymarketplace.com), is the written expression of creator Mark Shaker’s vision for the market and it is what many business owners cite as the reason they wanted to be a part of the project.
 - The Stanifesto includes statements like, “We are locally inspired and community desired. We asked ourselves what would make the best marketplace in the universe. Then we asked our neighbors. And then we built it.” Businesses sign onto the Stanifesto when they sign their lease.
 - Panelists suggested that the Castle Pines central business district could create a “Pine-ifesto” with a similar strategy of attracting tenants with a unified vision for the

“ Panelists suggested hiring an Economic Development Coordinator to align interests and attract desirable tenants to the district.”

“ Panelists suggested that the Castle Pines central business district could create a ‘Pine-ifesto’ to attract tenants that are aligned with the vision and values of the district.”



The Stanley Marketplace "Stanifesto" is written into the lease of every business at the new indoor market. Photo by Susan Froyd.

district. This works particularly well for local businesses that align with the vision and values put forth in the manifesto.

Phased redevelopment of Safeway site:

Attract local businesses in targeted tenant categories.

While national retailers may be more attracted to the newer commercial and mixed-use developments around Castle Pines, where they could have the option to design their own space from

scratch, the existing central business district could be ideal for local, unique businesses.

Panelists suggested the following tenant categories to target:

Small local restaurants and bars



This small cafe in downtown Louisville contributes to the area’s quaint feel. Photo courtesy Bittersweet Cafe.

Specialty fitness



Specialty fitness options like cycling, yoga, and pilates studios can be very popular. Photo courtesy Cyclebar.

Health and personal care with street front component



Spa and massage centers could fit well with the health care uses in the district. Photo courtesy Pixabay.

Local soft goods



The Brass Bed Fine Linens and Furnishings store in Cherry Creek is a successful example of a soft goods store. Photo courtesy Cherry Creek North.

Entertainment and activities



Lincoln Station in Lone Tree offers coffee, pizza, and live music. Photo courtesy Performance High Vocal Training and Artist Development.

Neighborhood convenience



Specialty pet supply shops can work well in areas like Castle Pines. Photo courtesy Princeton’s Finest Local Pet Food and Pet Accessory Boutique.



Soft goods shops can sell local artisan goods. Photo courtesy Charlotte Peterswald Sydney.



Upstairs Circus in Denver’s LoDo provides people with classes and opportunities to make crafts with food and drinks. Photo courtesy Upstairs Circus.



Locals stated that they would enjoy having a local hardware store. Photo courtesy Ace Hardware.

The vacant Safeway site could house a much larger redevelopment than the rest of the business district. The panelists suggested tackling the redevelopment of this site in phases. They suggested starting with the land fronting I-25, adding denser development at the city edge where it is visible from the highway.

Within the site, they suggested introducing a mix of uses including multifamily residential and first floor retail. The vacant Safeway and in-line retail could be redeveloped as a whole, which could allow for different formations of development and a continuation of the street grid, or the existing Safeway space could be reused and the in-line tenant spaces could be improved over time. Panelists suggested reuse or redevelopment by a fitness center or movie theater, for example. Since there is demand for a community recreation center, attracting a private sector gym could be a viable, less expensive alternative for the city.

Office space could also be included on this site, although co-working space and corporate office space is suggested for the intersection of Village Square Drive and Village Square Lane as well. Panelists thought that small-scale office space for local businesses and those who currently work at home, and/or medical office space could be successful in the area.

Evaluation of development guidelines to encourage more walkable, bikeable development:

Panelists recommended that the city review its development guidelines to ensure that pedestrian-oriented and bike-friendly development is encouraged. Specifically, they suggested these elements of district design:

- Since Castle Pines residents love the outdoors, patios should be supported for restaurants. To make this happen, reevaluate parking requirements so that more space can be used for outdoor patios, which will attract higher-end restaurants and more people to the business district. A shared parking plan could be managed throughout the district, as opposed to making each use plan for its own parking.
- While drive-thrus are popular, they are detrimental to a walkable environment.
- Encourage tenants to create engaging window displays, open doors, and bring merchandise outside to encourage people to move through streets on foot.

The city can play an important role in determining the future of the business district by encouraging land uses that align with the community’s vision. City Council can empower staff to actively negotiate with developers and landlords on parking ratios, sidewalks, landscaping, and patios, for example, as well as on the scale, design, and connectivity of desired development.



Panelists investigate the vacant Safeway site and inline retail around its large parking lot.

In Greenwood Village, residents get “Recreation Reimbursement” for their gym passes. For more information, visit greenwoodvillage.com/1246/Recreation-Reimbursement.



Larger uses, such as a gym like Lifetime Fitness or a movie theater like Denver’s Alamo Drafthouse Cinema, could work well on the vacant Safeway site.

Shared Parking:

Shared parking makes spaces publicly accessible rather than reserved for a particular tenant or property owner. It may be privately constructed and operated, depending on a contractual agreement, but should remain within the government’s jurisdiction for long-term transport planning purposes.

5. Forge a Path to Financial Resilience and Vitality

The City of Castle Pines currently lacks the financial resources to effectively support reuse and redevelopment in the business district.

The figure below depicts city government roles in incentivizing development relative to their market context. Where the market is strong, cities can play a more traditional role. Where the market is weaker (moving to the right of the chart), cities can play a more proactive economic development role from providing incentives, to assembling parcels for redevelopment, to actively participating in development.

To date, the City of Castle Pines has acted in a relatively traditional role in terms of policy and regulation management, without the financial tools to provide significant incentives or to make active investments. The addition of the library to the business district, however, is an example of how the city has participated in redevelopment in the past and how they could in the future.

Overall, the panelists suggested that the current market context requires assistance and thus, moving more to the right of the chart and becoming more proactive in terms of incentivizing development would help support reuse and redevelopment in the business district.



The widened sidewalks and new landscaping in front of the library is a huge step toward making the district more pedestrian friendly. This sort of design could be extended along the rest of the street with the city's help.



Panelists noted that Castle Pines could benefit from moving more to the right of this chart. Image courtesy Troy Russ.

Panelists recommended enhancing the city’s ability to support revitalization of the business district with the following financial tools:

- **Transition Castle Pines from a statutory municipality to “home rule” for greater local control over its financial destiny:**
 - Allow city collection and enforcement of local sales/use taxes
 - Correct errors in state tax collections
 - Allow broader or narrower sales and use tax base
 - Allow additional types of excise taxes: admissions, entertainment, tourism, and lodgers’ taxes
 - Increase general obligation bond authority
 - Facilitate formation of special improvement districts
 - Subject to Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR)
- **Explore increasing the sales tax:**
 - Sales tax in Castle Pines is currently 2.75%
 - 3% would generate \$75,000 per year
 - Castle Rock and Larkspur currently collect around 3.9% sales tax
 - 4% sales tax would generate \$375,000 annually
 - Total sales tax would remain competitive: Castle Rock’s overall sales tax is 7.9% while Castle Pines’ is 6.75%
- **Investigate other grant and financial opportunities:**
 - Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) Main Street Funding (resources available on their website: www.colorado.gov/pacific/dola/main-street-story)
 - Denver Regional Council of Government (DRCOG) Transportation Improvement Program funding
 - County coordination on services and infrastructure enhancement
- **Get educated on the pros and cons of Urban Renewal Authorities and Downtown Development Authorities:**
 - Ask the Colorado Municipal League to do a presentation on Urban Renewal Authorities and Downtown Development Authorities
 - Downtown Development Authorities:
 - » Halt or prevent deterioration in property values or structures in the central business district
 - » Subject to a vote
 - » 5 Mills in property taxes or sales taxes
 - » Tax Increment Financing
 - » Board appointed by City Council
 - Urban Renewal Authorities:
 - » Findings of blight
 - » Property/sales Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
 - » Subject to vote
 - » Board appointed by City Council

Home Rule in Colorado

Colorado is one of 30 recognized as a Home Rule State, having amended its constitution to grant municipalities the ability to exercise local control of their individual governments. In Article XX of the Colorado Constitution, home rule gives local municipalities the power to make legislation relevant to their areas, exercising control over issues of “local concern” while minimizing state intervention in municipal affairs. Home rule allows for greater flexibility in other areas of municipal government, including local elections, organizational structure and municipal courts. A home rule charter that is specifically crafted and tailored to individual municipalities acts as the city or town’s basic governing document over local issues; however, when a dispute arises, whether an issue constitutes “local concern” must be determined by courts on a case by case basis, and certain state laws will prevail in matters of statewide concern. For more information, visit <https://www.ouraynews.com/node/1469>.



The new sidewalk outside the Douglas County Library is a great example of how the city has participated successfully in redevelopment within the district.

- **Work with the developers of the Canyons on increasing the number of overall allowed residential units:**
 - Currently, the Canyons will include 2,500 approved residential units and 2.1 million square feet of commercial development.
 - The number of residential units in Castle Pines currently only supports one grocery store anchored center. Developers of the Canyons are currently discussing the potential addition of more residential units. An additional 1,000 units (for 3,500 units) at The Canyons would support one additional grocery store anchored center at 15 acres.
 - Additional households and employment could help support all the planned commercial developments in the area, as well as provide a higher level of neighborhood services.



View of the business district along Village Square Lane.

Downtown Development Authorities

A Downtown Development Authority (DDA) enables businesses and property owners to work together to strengthen the central business district by generating funding from property and/or sales tax in the district that can be reinvested into projects and programs that benefit the area.

By legal definition, a DDA is a quasi-municipal corporation that is intended to halt or prevent deterioration of property values or structures in the central business districts. Funds can

be generated by a DDA through a variety of options, including:

- Tax increment financing on property,
- Tax increment financing on sales, and
- Up to 5 mil property tax for operations.

Unlike an Urban Redevelopment Authority (which also captures TIF increment but does not allow for a mil levy), creation of a DDA does not require a finding of blight.

Source: Downtown Colorado, Inc's 2012 report, pages 11-13.



Conclusion

Castle Pines has a strong and growing residential base that could support the transformation of the current central business district into the community gathering place that locals want. With adequate resources, the city can help to catalyze this change throughout the district.

The TAP panelists envisioned this commercial core as the place where Castle Pines creates a unique experience focused on local retail, artisans, and food, which could set it apart from newer commercial developments that are popping up around the city.

By working together across sectors, the community of Castle Pines can without a doubt make their vision for the central business district a reality.

ULI Volunteer Panelists



Panel Chair Arleen Taniwaki is Principal of ArLand Land Use Economics. ArLand Land Use Economics is a land use economics and planning consulting firm that provides economic, market, and financial feasibility studies, economic benefit, fiscal impact analysis, and implementation plans for land use plans (sub-area, comprehensive plans, regional planning efforts), Transit-Oriented Development, and transportation plans. Its findings and recommendations incorporate public policy considerations, opportunities for public-private partnerships, and an understanding of financial tools available for implementation. The firm has worked with a number of public agencies, private clients and non-profit organizations. Arleen has worked on dozens of small area plans including Denver Union Station, the Mariposa community at 10th and Osage, and the Welton Corridor. She is currently involved in market feasibility and planning activities at the National Western Center in north Denver. Arleen has worked on a number of suburban TODs, suburban master planned communities including Ken-Caryl and the (future) Aurora Highland, suburban and rural downtowns, and redevelopment areas. She was recently the Co-Chair of the ULI TAPs Committee and is also on the ULI Community Development Product Council. Arleen recently served a 6-year term on the Denver Planning Board. She has a Masters in City Planning from the University of California at Berkeley.



Daniel Aizenman is the Senior Principal of Buildings for Stantec. He brings his creative vision to the visitor experience for resorts, retail, mixed-use development, healthcare facilities, sports and entertainment, urban districts, and corporate offices. He leads a multidisciplinary design staff; has designed projects in over 35 countries; and experience in architecture, planning, placemaking, wayfinding, sustainable design, interior design, and healthcare planning. Daniel has won several ICSC design competitions on the future of retail as well an AIA award, and placement on ICSC’s 20 under 40, class of 2016. He’s known for delivering groundbreaking projects like Distrito Santa Fe, a 9.2 million square foot, mixed use development in Mexico City; Gran Patio Santa Fe in Mexico City, a 2.1 million square foot, mixed-use retail center in one city block; Cityset, Denver’s latest gastronomic hospitality village and Silver Medal for the ICSC US Design and Development Award in 2014 for Best Mixed Use project; and Commerce Square in downtown Philadelphia, where he shifted the paradigm of a corporate environment. Originally from Mexico City and fluent in English, Spanish, and Hebrew, Daniel uses his travel experiences to inform his design, bringing a love of culture to each of his projects. As a senior principal and architectural designer for their Visioning. Brands. Experiences. group, he creates tangible, memorable connections for the end user.



Amy Cara has worked with East West Partners since 1999, where she is now a Managing Partner. “Neighborhood placemaking,” are Amy’s words to describe what she and her team have done in the Riverfront Park neighborhood of Denver and The Landmark development in Greenwood Village. These two developments have created a contagious, positive spirit that gives everyone who lives there, or even visits, a true sense of place. Prior to leading the revitalization of The Landmark, Amy helped to create the Riverfront Park community and the Union Station redevelopment. When she is not working on the community projects, she is creating Denver’s first commuter bike station, connecting youth with artists to plan and produce bodies of work, and fostering good stewardship in development through her involvement at the Urban Land Institute.



Troy Russ, Urban Design and Transportation Practice Builder at Kimley-Horn, is a professional urban designer with 23 years of experience in community planning, public facilitation, and the integration of urban design and transportation. Prior to joining Kimley-Horn, Troy was the Director of Planning for Louisville, Colorado (2010-2016), where he led all land use, urban design, and transportation planning for the City. While in Louisville, among other things, Troy authored Louisville’s character based Comprehensive Plan; led the development of the nation’s first Divergent Diamond Interchange with exclusive Bus Rapid Transit lanes; and guided City’s Downtown Parking and Pedestrian Action Plan which contributed to the dramatic revitalization of one of Boulder County’s most livable downtowns. Prior to joining Louisville, Troy was a Principal at Glatting Jackson, a national transportation and urban design firm. Throughout his career, Troy has specialized in rethinking transportation conventions and leveraging their design and investment to create livable communities. Some of Troy’s more recognized projects include: leading the downsizing of Riverfront Parkway in Downtown Chattanooga from a limited access freeway to a two-lane urban parkway, directing the master planning of the Charlotte Area Transit System’s 52 miles of premium transit corridors and 64 station area plans, contributing to Denver’s Living Street Initiative, and guiding the Downtown Orlando Community Venues Master Plan, a fully-funded billion dollar program which built a new Performing Arts Center, renovated the Florida Citrus Bowl, and built the NBA’s Orlando Magic’s Amway Arena.

Interviewed Stakeholders

Chamber of Commerce:

- Amy Shanahan
- Dana Hall

City Council:

- Melissa Coudeyras
- Ben Price
- Tracy Engerman
- Deborah Mulvey

City Staff:

- Michael Penny, City Manager
- Sam Bishop, Community Development
- Brad Meyering, Public Works

Planning Commission:

- David Necker
- Lisa Glynn

Commercial Property Owners:

- Charles Lowen, Lowen Commercial Real Estate
- Steve Alkana, CNA Enterprises
- Barbara Teich, Castle Pines Marketplace
- Jason Howe, Zall Company
- Paul Zakovich, Sage Village Properties
- Mary Hart, Alpert Corporation

Homeowners Associations:

- Doug Gilbert, HOA #1
- Kim Maguire, Castle Pines North Master Association
- Anna Mallinson, CPN Master Association



ULI Colorado Leadership in Responsible Land Use

ULI Colorado is the 1,300-member District Council of the global Urban Land Institute. ULI Colorado consists of a four-person staff, 25-member executive committee, and 15 committees with more than 250 volunteers. More than 40 programs a year include advisory panels, leadership and mentoring programs, panels, project tours, publications, and community service. ULI is a non-lobbying educational and research institute supported by its members, sponsors, and foundations. Key issues include affordable housing, healthy communities, transit-oriented development, and sustainable design and planning.

Chair: Tracy Huggins, Executive Director, Denver Urban Renewal Authority

Vice Chair: Mike Zoellner, Managing Partner, ZF Capital

Treasurer: Mark Tompkins, Principal, Strae Advisory Services

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