



CASTLE PINES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN 2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY1
 - Plan Summary 1
 - Key Findings3
 - Recommendation Summary5
- INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND6
 - Purpose of the Plan6
 - Developing the Plan..... 7
 - Relevant Plans and Studies8
- CASTLE PINES OVERVIEW13
 - Background 13
 - Location and Regional Connectivity 14
 - Character and Place 15
 - Market Position 15
- COMMUNITY PROFILE16
 - Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile 16
 - Population and Household Growth 17
 - Housing Composition 18
 - Income and Purchasing Power 18
 - Employment and Commuting Patterns 19
 - Local Market Context20
- COMMERCIAL MARKET ANALYSIS21
- EMPLOYMENT MARKET ANALYSIS27
 - Defining a Realistic Employment Strategy27
 - Target Employment Opportunities28
 - Geographic Considerations: East and West28
 - Employment Strategy and Community Alignment29

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND CONSTRAINTS	30
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES	33
West Side Infrastructure and Investment Strategy	33
Public Space Framework and Design Expectations	35
Role of the City – Strategic Positioning and Targeted Investment	37
Economic Development Metrics and Performance Tracking	39
Civic Spaces as Catalysts for Private Investment	42
Branding and Positioning Strategy	45
SOURCES.....	49
APPENDIX A: ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY	50
Stakeholder Interviews	A:1
Community Open Houses	A:2
Community Survey	A:9



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLAN SUMMARY

Castle Pines is in a fundamentally different position than most communities preparing an economic development strategic plan, and this plan reflects a deliberate and intentional approach tailored to that reality.

In many communities, economic development plans are designed to attract activity in response to clear gaps, such as limited employment opportunities, slow growth, underperforming real estate, or underutilized commercial areas. Castle Pines does not face those conditions.

Development is occurring and opportunities are actively being realized. The market is functioning well, with strong commercial lease rates, and the City benefits from a high-income residential base and strong regional connectivity. As a result, Castle Pines does not require a traditional economic development strategy focused on business recruitment, job creation, or large-scale incentives.

Instead, the City’s opportunity is to adopt a more targeted, place-based, and policy-driven approach—one that reflects how the market is already operating and focuses on shaping outcomes rather than generating activity.

THIS PLAN RECOGNIZES THREE DEFINING REALITIES:



Development is occurring organically. The City does not need to actively recruit projects but rather be prepared to respond effectively when opportunities arise.



The City functions as a residential community within a strong regional economy. Employment, retail, and services are influenced by broader market patterns, particularly along the I-25 corridor.



The City’s influence varies significantly by geography. Stable, investor-owned areas on the west side offer limited near-term leverage, while large-scale development on the east side presents opportunities—but within the constraints of prior commitments and developer control.

Given these conditions, the role of the City is not to drive growth, but to guide it, through clear expectations, consistent processes, and strategic, targeted investments.

**This plan shifts the focus of economic development
in Castle Pines from:**



Recruitment



Readiness



Incentives



**Infrastructure &
policy alignment**



Maximizing
Growth



**Improving quality
& capture**



Competing
Regionally



**Positioning locally
within the region**

THE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT FOLLOW EMPHASIZE:

- Long-term infrastructure planning that emphasizes visual consistency and quality
- Clear expectations for design, public space, and development outcomes
- A responsive, efficient development process
- Strategic use of civic investments as catalysts
- Measurable performance metrics to track progress and build transparency

Taken together, this approach positions Castle Pines to capture more value from growth that is already occurring, while preserving the character and quality of life that define the community.

KEY FINDINGS

CASTLE PINES DOES NOT NEED A TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

Unlike many communities, Castle Pines is not competing to attract growth—it is already experiencing it. The City does not need to pursue aggressive recruitment strategies or expand staffing but instead it should focus on managing and shaping development effectively.

THE LOCAL ECONOMY IS STRONG, BUT RETAIL CAPTURE IS LIMITED.

Castle Pines has exceptionally high household incomes and purchasing power yet captures significantly less retail spending per capita than nearby communities. This indicates that a substantial share of residents' spending occurs elsewhere, creating an opportunity for incremental improvement in local retail and service offerings.

THE CITY FUNCTIONS AS A RESIDENTIAL HUB WITHIN A REGIONAL ECONOMY.

With the vast majority of residents commuting to jobs outside the city, Castle Pines is closely tied to regional employment centers. This limits the viability of large-scale job growth locally and reinforces the importance of focusing on resident-serving businesses and services.

DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS DIFFER SIGNIFICANTLY BETWEEN THE EAST AND WEST SIDES.

The west side is largely built out, investor-owned, and stable, with limited near-term opportunity for redevelopment or City influence.

The east side (The Canyons) represents the next phase of growth, with large-scale, developer-led projects that will define long-term patterns, but with reduced City leverage due to prior agreements.

These differences require a differentiated strategy, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

THE CITY'S ROLE SHOULD BE RESPONSIVE, NOT PROACTIVE.

Given current market conditions, the most effective role for the City is to:

- Provide clarity and consistency in development expectations
- Maintain efficient and predictable processes
- Be prepared to act when opportunities arise

This approach aligns with both market realities and the City's preference for a lean organizational structure.

STRATEGIC PUBLIC INVESTMENTS CAN SHAPE OUTCOMES OVER TIME.

While large-scale intervention is not necessary, targeted investments—particularly in infrastructure and civic uses—can influence development patterns, support retail clustering, and reinforce long-term value.

PUBLIC SPACE AND DESIGN EXPECTATIONS WILL DEFINE LONG-TERM IDENTITY.

As new development occurs, particularly on the east side, early decisions around public space, design, and access will establish the City's identity. Requiring adherence to the established design standards is essential to avoid fragmented outcomes.

CLEAR METRICS ARE NEEDED TO TRACK PERFORMANCE AND BUILD TRUST.

The absence of a formal benchmarking system contributes to uncertainty around economic performance. Establishing clear metrics, particularly around retail capture, development activity, and fiscal outcomes, will support better decision-making and improve transparency.



RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

The recommendations in this plan reflect a deliberate shift from traditional economic development practices toward a more targeted, place-based approach that aligns with Castle Pines’ unique market position. Rather than pursuing growth for its own sake, the City’s role is to guide, shape, and capture value from development that is already occurring.

- 1

WEST SIDE INFRASTRUCTURE & LONG-TERM POSITIONING

Focus on long-term readiness rather than near-term redevelopment. The west side is stable, nearly fully leased (84%), and investor-owned, with limited turnover. The City should prioritize infrastructure planning, particularly along the Lagae Corridor, along with zoning and design alignment to ensure that future reinvestment supports desired outcomes. Strategic public investments, such as a potential civic anchor, can serve as catalysts over time.
- 2

PUBLIC SPACE FRAMEWORK AND DESIGN EXPECTATIONS

Establish clear and consistent expectations for public and quasi-public spaces across all development areas. Ensure that new spaces are designed for broad public use, reflect a cohesive citywide identity, incorporate long-term flexibility and functionality, and adhere to established design standards. These standards should guide negotiations with developers, particularly for large-scale projects.
- 3

ROLE OF THE CITY: RESPONSIVE AND POLICY-DRIVEN

Adopt a responsive, enabling role rather than a proactive recruitment model. Maintain a lean organizational structure and focus on providing clarity, consistency, and predictability in development processes. Emphasize strong zoning, design standards, and efficient approvals to position the City as a reliable and effective partner.
- 4

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT METRICS AND BENCHMARKING

Implement a formal system to track development activity, retail performance, and overall economic health. Establish key performance indicators, including sales per capita, sales tax generation, vacancy rates, and development pipeline metrics. Use benchmarking against peer communities to inform decision-making and improve transparency.
- 5

CIVIC SPACES AS CATALYSTS FOR INVESTMENT

Leverage civic uses as economic anchors that support surrounding development. Coordinate the siting of future civic facilities—such as a library on the east side—and evaluate opportunities to strengthen civic presence on the west side. These investments can generate consistent activity, reinforce identity, and reduce risk for private development.
- 6

BRANDING AND POSITIONING STRATEGY

Establish and consistently apply a clear commercial identity for Castle Pines that reflects the community’s expectations for quality, character, and long-term value. Future development decisions, design standards, and public realm investments should reinforce a cohesive and recognizable sense of place while supporting a strong foundation of resident-serving businesses and selective regional commercial destinations.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The City of Castle Pines is preparing an Economic Development Strategic Plan to guide how the community supports economic growth, investment, and opportunity over the coming years. The purpose of this plan is to position Castle Pines for a resilient, sustainable, and vibrant local economy while preserving the character and quality of life that residents value.

As the community continues to evolve within the rapidly growing southern Denver metropolitan region, Castle Pines has an opportunity to strengthen its economic foundation and build upon its existing assets. This plan provides a framework for identifying strategic opportunities, addressing current challenges, and aligning future economic development efforts with community priorities.

The plan is intended to serve as a practical guide for City leaders, staff, and community stakeholders as they make decisions related to economic development, land use, infrastructure investments, and partnerships. It will help inform policies and initiatives that support local businesses, attract new investment, and expand the City's long-term economic base.

At its core, the plan serves three interconnected purposes:

ASSESS CASTLE PINES' CURRENT STANDING.

The plan evaluates the City's existing economic base, demographic trends, business climate, and market position, both locally and within the broader regional economy. This includes analyzing fiscal conditions, retail leakage, employment patterns, competitive strengths, and barriers to growth, such as connectivity along the Interstate 25 (I-25) corridor. Together, these insights help establish a clear understanding of the community's economic base, strengths, constraints, and competitive position within the region.

DEFINE A ROADMAP FOR FUTURE GROWTH.

Building on this baseline understanding, the plan identifies opportunities for economic growth that align with Castle Pines' assets, development patterns, and community character. This includes evaluating the types of businesses and industries that are most compatible with the community, identifying potential locations for future commercial development or redevelopment, and exploring ways to enhance the City's appeal for investment. The analysis also considers the role of infrastructure, land use, transportation access, including connectivity to I-25, and the creation of walkable, pedestrian-friendly commercial environments that support both economic activity and community gathering spaces.

RECOMMEND SHORT-, MEDIUM-, AND LONG-TERM STRATEGIES.

Finally, the plan provides a set of actionable strategies and implementation steps to help the City achieve its economic development goals over time. These recommendations focus on supporting existing businesses, attracting targeted industries, strengthening commercial districts, and fostering strategic partnerships that expand economic opportunities. The strategies are organized into near-term actions that can be initiated quickly, as well as longer-term initiatives that support sustained growth, job creation, and a stable tax base. Together, these recommendations create a practical roadmap for City leaders and partners to guide economic development efforts in the years ahead.

This strategic plan will serve as a resource for City leadership—including staff, the Planning Commission, and City Council—by offering a clear basis for economic development decisions, public investments, and regulatory approaches. While it is built on robust data and community engagement, the plan is also structured to be flexible and responsive, allowing City leaders to adjust to changing market conditions and emerging opportunities.

The result is a forward-looking strategy that supports a strong local economy, enhances community character, and positions Castle Pines to thrive in the decades ahead as a desirable place to live, work, and invest.

DEVELOPING THE PLAN



The Castle Pines Economic Development Strategic Plan was developed through a multi-step process that combined economic analysis, community input, and collaboration with City leadership. This approach ensured that the plan reflects both market realities and the priorities of the Castle Pines community.

ECONOMIC AND MARKET ANALYSIS

The process began with a detailed review of local and regional economic conditions. This included analysis of demographic trends, employment patterns, retail performance, and development activity to understand the City’s economic context and opportunities. The study also examined Castle Pines’ position within the broader regional economy and considered factors influencing business location decisions, including access and connectivity along the I-25 corridor.



COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community input played an important role in shaping the plan. Developers, local business owners, residents, and other stakeholders were invited to share perspectives on economic priorities, desired services and businesses, and the role of commercial areas as gathering places. Activities included one-on-one interviews, two community open houses, and an online community survey. Engagement activities helped identify community values and expectations for future growth.

Input from the community is integrated throughout the report. Refer to Appendix A for a full summary of community and stakeholder engagement.

COLLABORATION WITH CITY LEADERSHIP

Throughout the process, the project team worked closely with City staff and City Council to gather input, review findings, discuss opportunities, and refine potential strategies. These discussions helped ensure that the plan's recommendations are practical, achievable, and aligned with the City's broader planning and policy goals.

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Insights from the analysis and community engagement were then translated into strategic priorities and implementation actions. These strategies focus on strengthening Castle Pines' economic base, supporting local businesses, and guiding future commercial development in ways that reinforce the community's character and long-term vision.

RELEVANT PLANS AND STUDIES

Several prior plans and studies provide context for this Economic Development Strategic Plan by informing community priorities, land use patterns, and infrastructure considerations that influence economic development. Together, they highlight key opportunities and challenges related to growth, connectivity, and the City's long-term economic positioning.

BIG PICTURE THEMES ACROSS CORE PLANS



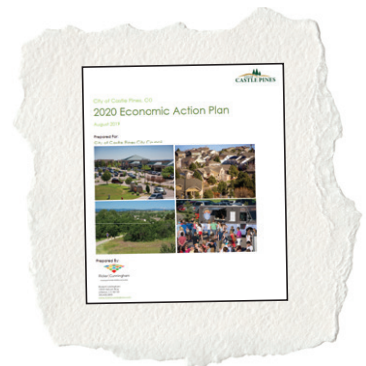
CASTLE PINES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2021)

PURPOSE:

Establishes the long-term vision for land use, growth, and community character, providing a policy framework to guide development decisions, infrastructure investments, and the overall physical form of the community.

RELEVANCE:

Provides the policy foundation for aligning economic development strategies with land use and community vision



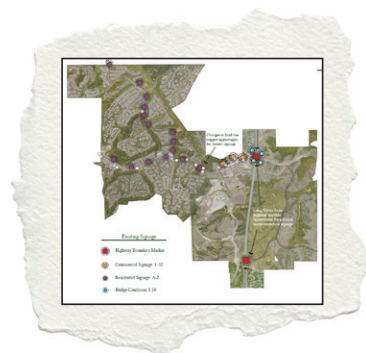
CASTLE PINES ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN (2020)

PURPOSE:

Establish a strategic direction for economic development, focusing on strengthening the City's commercial base and long-term fiscal sustainability.

RELEVANCE:

Provides a starting point for refining and advancing economic development strategies.



CASTLE PINES GATEWAY AND WAYFINDING PLAN (2019)

PURPOSE:

As one of the City Council's priorities, it focuses on creating welcoming entrances to the community for residents and visitors at the City's major thoroughfares.

RELEVANCE:

Standardizes the City's signage and aims to establish a cohesive Castle Pines brand.



ULI COLORADO CASTLE PINES CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL (2018)

PURPOSE:

Evaluate pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and identify priority infrastructure improvements.

RELEVANCE:

Provides a starting point for refining and advancing economic development strategies.

KEY THEMES FROM PRIOR PLANS

EVOLVE BEYOND A BEDROOM COMMUNITY: Across all plans, there is a consistent recognition that Castle Pines functions largely as a **commuter-based community**, with many residents working and spending time outside the City.

- Limited daytime population reduces support for local businesses
- Expanding local jobs and services is critical to long-term sustainability



BIG IDEA: Build a more **complete local economy** with jobs, services, and activity throughout the day

CAPTURE EXISTING SPENDING POWER: Residents have **high incomes and strong purchasing power**, yet much of that spending leaves the community.

- Retail and dining gaps persist
- Leakage represents a clear economic opportunity



BIG IDEA: Focus on **capturing existing demand**, not just creating new demand

CREATE A STRONGER SENSE OF PLACE AND BRAND: Each plan highlights the need for more **identifiable, vibrant community destinations and cohesive identity**.

- Existing commercial areas lack a cohesive “center” or gathering identity
- Residents want places to gather, linger, and connect



BIG IDEA: Economic development is closely tied to **placemaking and community identity**

SUPPORT WALKABLE, MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT: There is strong alignment on the importance of:

- Mixed-use environments
- Pedestrian-friendly design
- Integrated residential, retail, and office uses



BIG IDEA: Future growth should move toward **more connected, walkable commercial environments**, rather than isolated retail

LEVERAGE GROWTH AND KEY DEVELOPMENT AREAS: All plans point to significant growth potential, particularly in areas like:

- The Canyons
- Town Center
- Existing Commercial Corridors



BIG IDEA: Growth should be **strategically directed** to support commercial viability and long-term economic strength.

ADDRESS CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS CHALLENGES: Physical and perceived barriers (especially I-25) limit cohesion and access.

- Connectivity affects both market viability and community identity
- Improved access and circulation are recurring priorities



BIG IDEA: Infrastructure and connectivity are **critical enablers of economic development**

FOCUS ON TARGETED, COMPATIBLE ECONOMIC GROWTH: Rather than competing broadly, the Plans emphasize:

- Attracting businesses that fit the community's character
- Supporting small-scale, locally serving retail and services
- Encouraging office and employment uses where appropriate



BIG IDEA: Growth should be **intentional, targeted, and aligned with community values**

USE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND TOOLS: The Plans consistently highlight the importance of:

- Regional partnerships
- Public-private collaboration
- Strategic use of incentives and tools



BIG IDEA: The City plays a facilitating role, leveraging partnerships to advance economic goals

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

In addition to the core planning documents, several supporting plans and documents were reviewed to provide broader context and reinforce key themes. While these documents are not directly focused on economic development, they offer important insights into infrastructure, community priorities, and regional conditions that influence economic outcomes.

- **Community Survey (2025):** Provides insight into resident priorities, preferences, and perceptions related to growth, services, and community character.
- **Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan (2024):** Emphasizes the role of parks, open space, and community amenities in enhancing quality of life and supporting attractive, economically vibrant places.
- **Denver Regional Council of Governments Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2023):** Offers regional economic context, including industry trends, workforce considerations, and broader economic development priorities that influence local positioning.

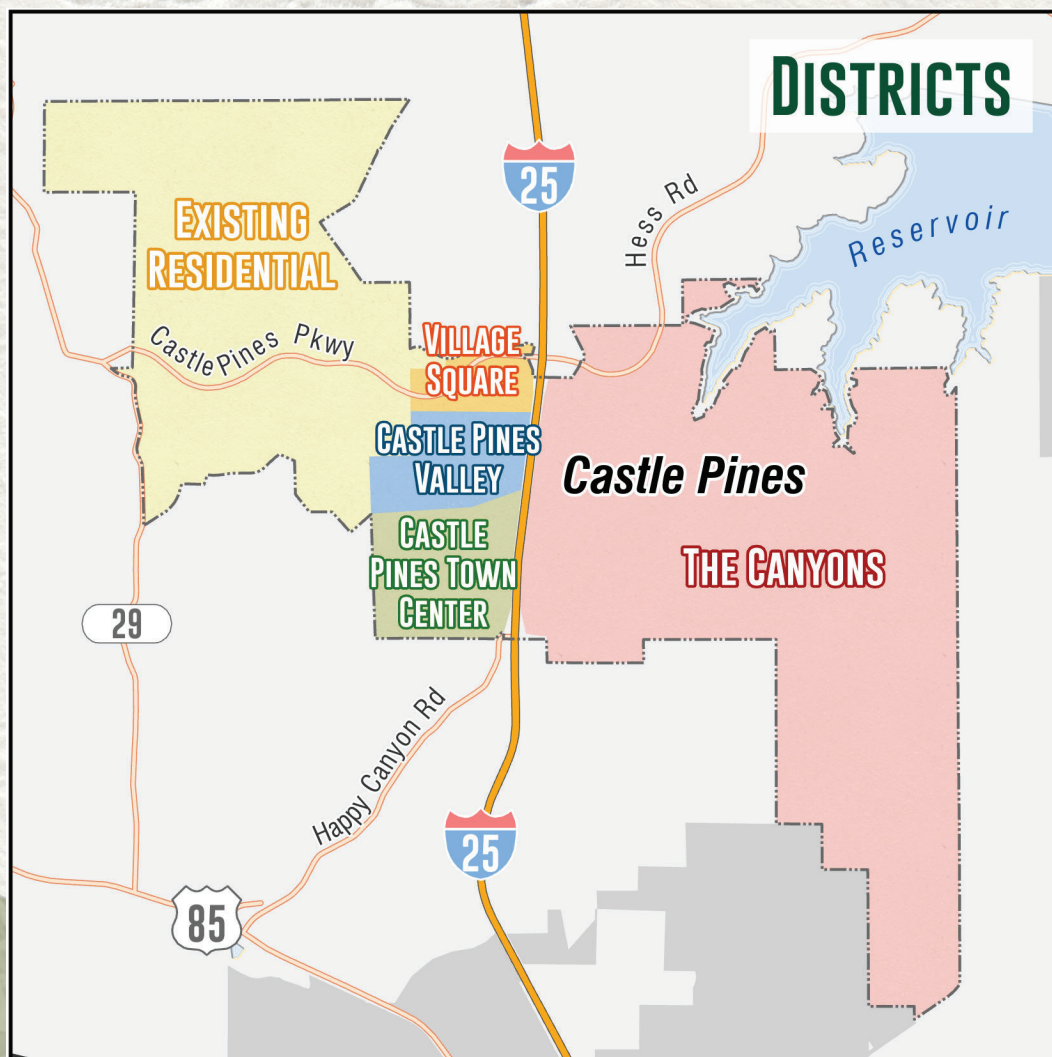
Together, these plans and studies establish a consistent direction for growth that emphasizes quality of life, thoughtful development, and regional connectivity. This Economic Development Strategic Plan builds on that foundation by translating broader policy goals into targeted strategies and implementation actions focused on strengthening Castle Pines' local economy.



CASTLE PINES OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

The City of Castle Pines is a predominantly residential community situated in Douglas County along Colorado's Front Range, with the Denver metropolitan area to the north and the foothills of the Rocky Mountains to the west. Originally developed as an unincorporated residential area known as Castle Pines North, the area experienced steady growth before residents voted to incorporate in 2007. The City was officially established in 2008, marking its transition to an independent municipality with its own governance structure and distinct community identity.



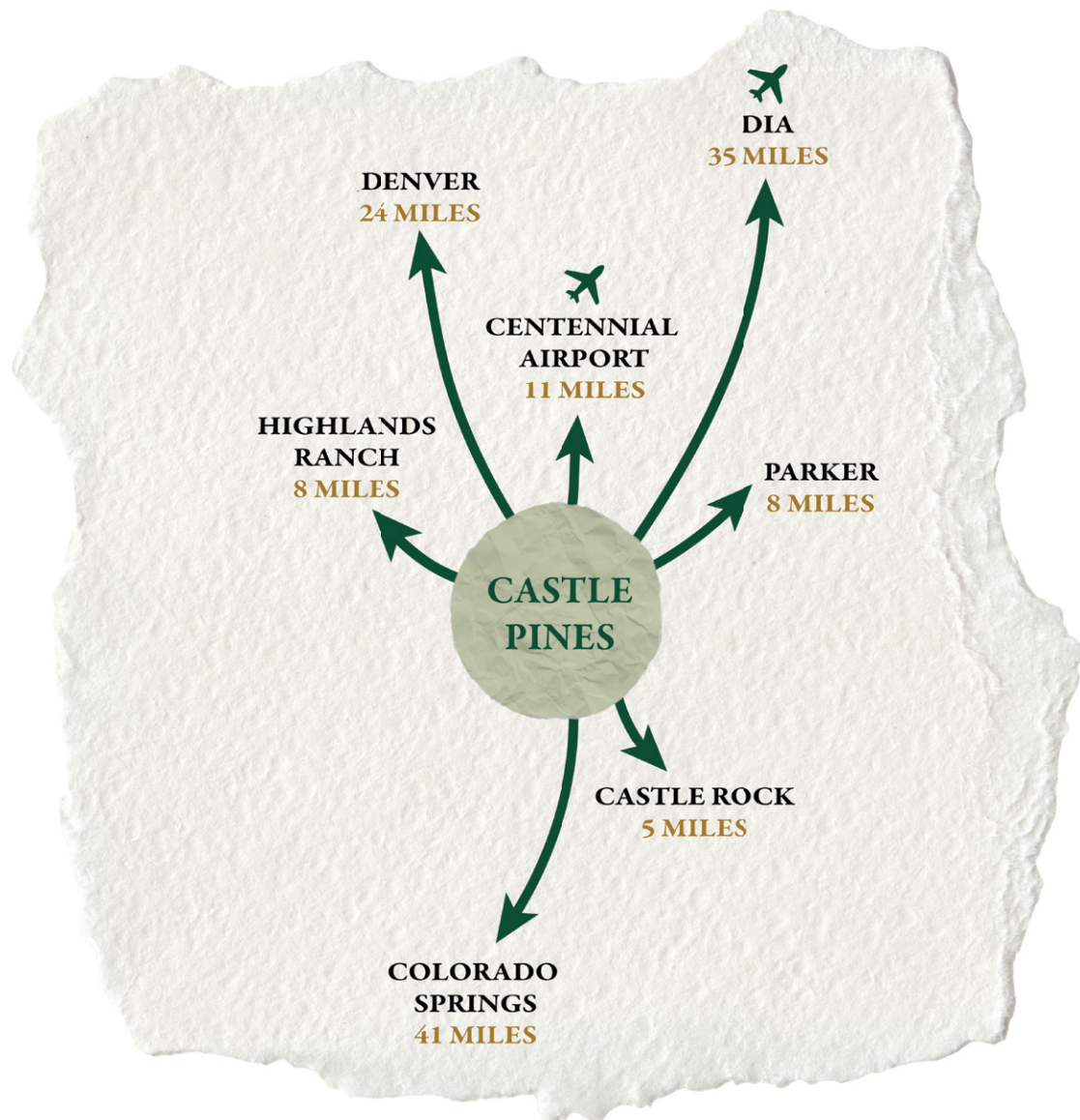
LOCATION AND REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY

Located approximately 20 miles south of Denver, Castle Pines encompasses approximately 9.6 square miles, sits at an elevation of roughly 6,500 feet, and is home to approximately 16,700 residents. Its suburban character, natural amenities, and proximity to the broader metropolitan area continue to drive steady population growth.

Castle Pines is positioned directly along I-25, the region's primary north-south corridor linking the community to major employment centers, commercial hubs, healthcare facilities, and higher-education institutions in Denver, Castle Rock, and Colorado Springs. Additional regional mobility is provided by routes such as E-470 and Highway 85.

The community also benefits from nearby regional transit options, including RTD light rail and Bustang service at the RidgeGate Station, offering convenient connections to downtown Denver, Colorado Springs, and other key Front Range destinations. Centennial Airport is approximately 15 minutes north, and Denver International Airport is approximately 35 minutes away, expanding both business and passenger travel access.

Together, these transportation assets enhance Castle Pines' regional accessibility and economic positioning. The city's strategic location along major mobility corridors strengthens its ability to attract targeted commercial investment, capture regional economic activity, and support a mix of businesses serving both residents and pass-through markets.



CHARACTER AND PLACE

Castle Pines is defined by its predominantly residential character, including established single-family neighborhoods west of I-25 and the rapidly developing Canyons community to the east. This foundation is supported by a well-connected network of parks, trails, open spaces, and community amenities that contribute to the city's high quality of life.

A variety of local and regional destinations reinforce Castle Pines' identity and appeal. Outdoor amenities such as Daniels Park, Elk Ridge Park, Coyote Ridge Park, and Pronghorn Park and Disc Golf Course provide scenic views and trail systems. Castle Pines is also known for its premier golf amenities, including The Ridge at Castle Pines North, as well as nearby Castle Pines Golf Club and The Country Club at Castle Pines in unincorporated Douglas County. These golf courses draw visitors and support the city's premium residential character. Cultural attractions such as Cherokee Ranch & Castle add to the community's unique sense of place, while nearby commercial hubs, including The Village at Castle Pines and Park Meadows, expand access to retail, dining, and services.

Regional recreation areas, including Rueter-Hess Reservoir and Castlewood Canyon State Park, further enhance the outdoor lifestyle and reinforce the city's connection to its natural surroundings. Castle Pines' rolling terrain, mature pine vegetation, expansive open spaces, and panoramic mountain views distinguish it within the Front Range and reinforce its identity as a community balanced between suburban living and natural landscape.

While Castle Pines offers a quiet suburban environment, its proximity to major employment centers, transportation corridors, and metropolitan amenities enables residents to remain closely connected to opportunities throughout the region.

MARKET POSITION

Castle Pines' residential base, high quality of life, strong regional accessibility, and natural amenities collectively define its market position. These characteristics shape the type and scale of economic development that is both feasible and compatible with community goals. As the city continues to grow, its land-use patterns, regional role, and community identity will serve as key factors in determining future economic opportunities and guiding strategic investment.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

Castle Pines presents a distinctive economic profile defined by rapid residential growth, exceptionally high household incomes, and strong integration with the broader Denver metropolitan economy. While these characteristics suggest substantial local market potential, the city does not function as a traditional employment or commercial center. Instead, Castle Pines operates primarily as a residential community whose economic activity is shaped by regional commuting patterns, external retail access, and localized development conditions.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE

Castle Pines is a mature, high-income suburban community anchored by established households and families. A significant share of residents (33%) is aged 45–64, reflecting a population largely composed of middle-aged adults and those approaching retirement, while fewer young adults indicate a smaller early-career presence. Nearly 74% of households are married, reinforcing the city’s appeal to families and established households.

These demographics support strong demand for lifestyle-oriented services, high-quality retail, dining, and amenities that cater to middle-aged and older adults. At the same time, the smaller share of younger residents suggests that businesses targeting early-career professionals may face more limited local market potential.

CASTLE PINES AT A GLANCE



16,736 population



6,020 households
(Source: City of Castle Pines, 2026)



96% work outside Castle Pines



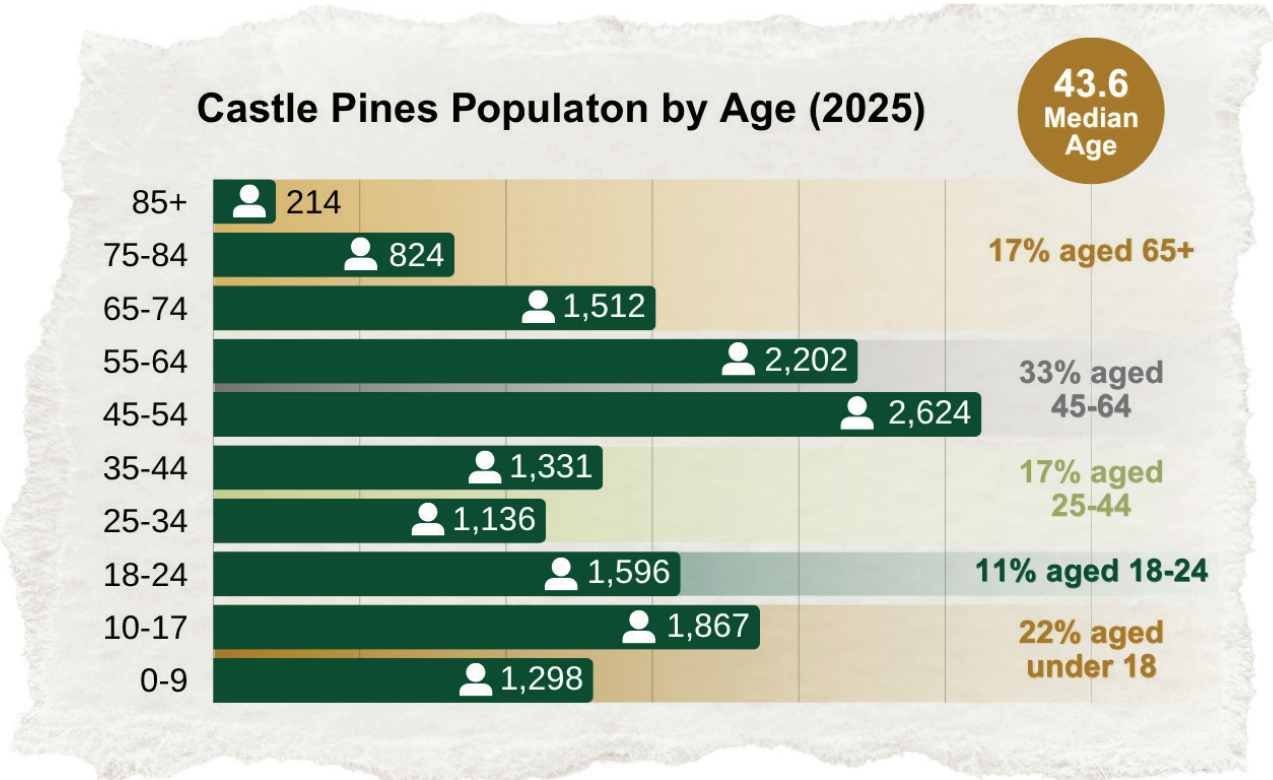
27-minute average commute



43.6 average age



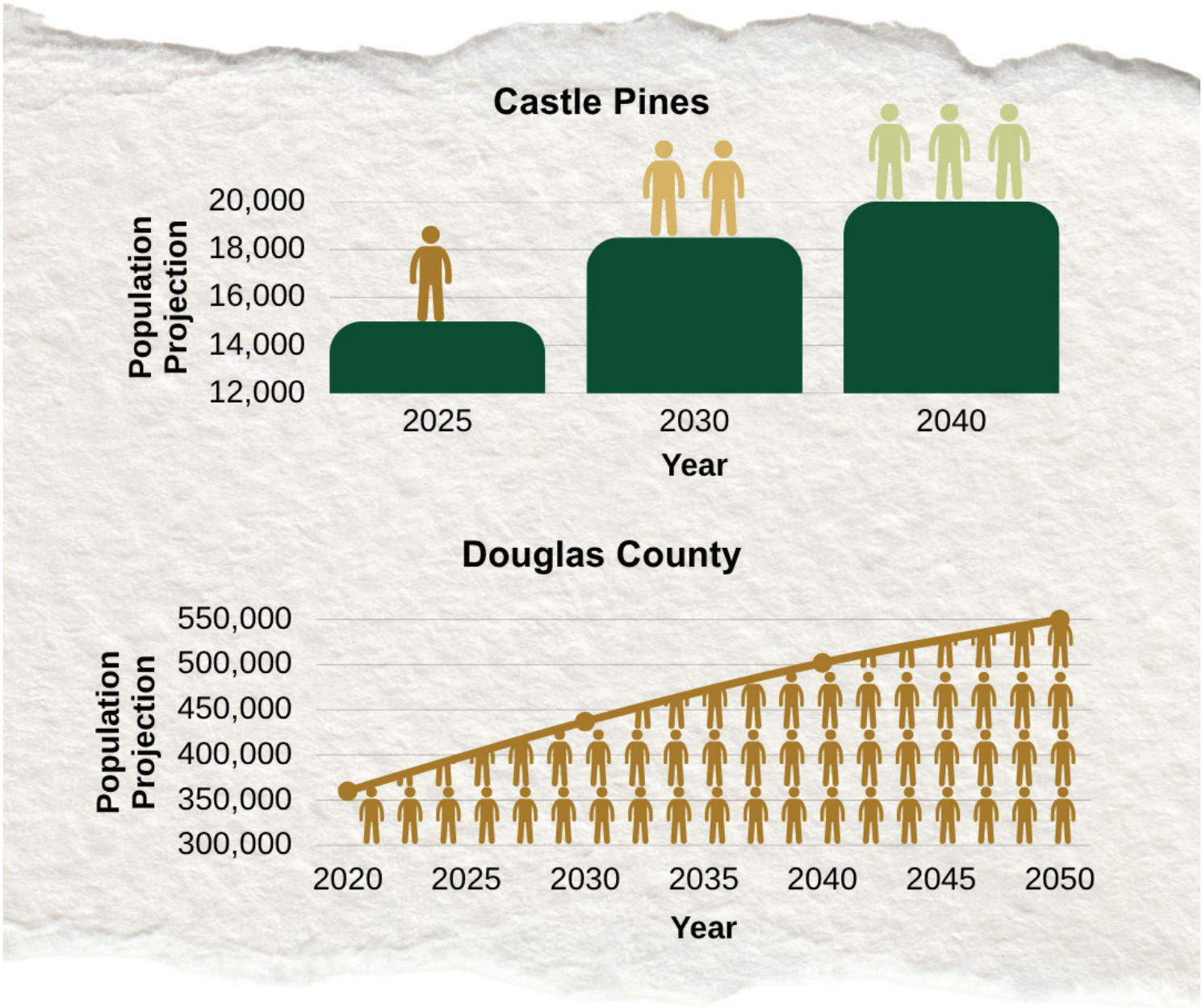
\$191,229 median household income
(Source: ACS, 2024)



POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD GROWTH

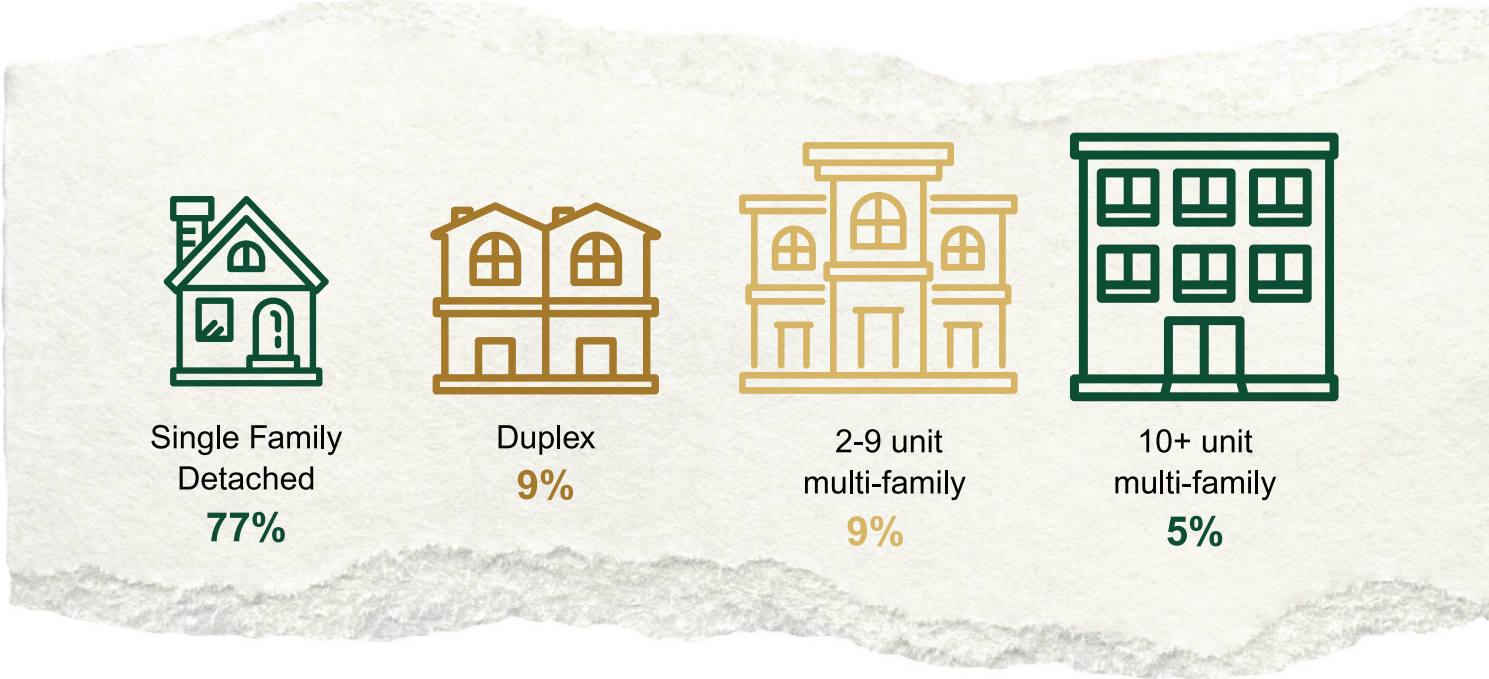
Castle Pines has experienced notable population growth in recent years, driven by its appeal as a suburban community with convenient access to urban centers like Denver. Between 2020 and 2025, the population grew 33%, exceeding the 10.2% increase observed between 2010 and 2020. Projections indicate a 10% population increase by 2030, reaching approximately 18,500 residents. If growth continues at the same rate beyond 2030, the population could exceed 20,000 (Claritas, 2025 estimates). Douglas County is one of the fastest-growing counties in Colorado, with the State Demography Office projecting its population to reach approximately 500,000 by 2040, an increase of about 39% from 2020.

Household growth has been even more pronounced, increasing 35% to approximately 5,500 households. Family households account for approximately 83% of all households, with 40% including children under 18, reinforcing Castle Pines’ identity as a stable, family-oriented community.



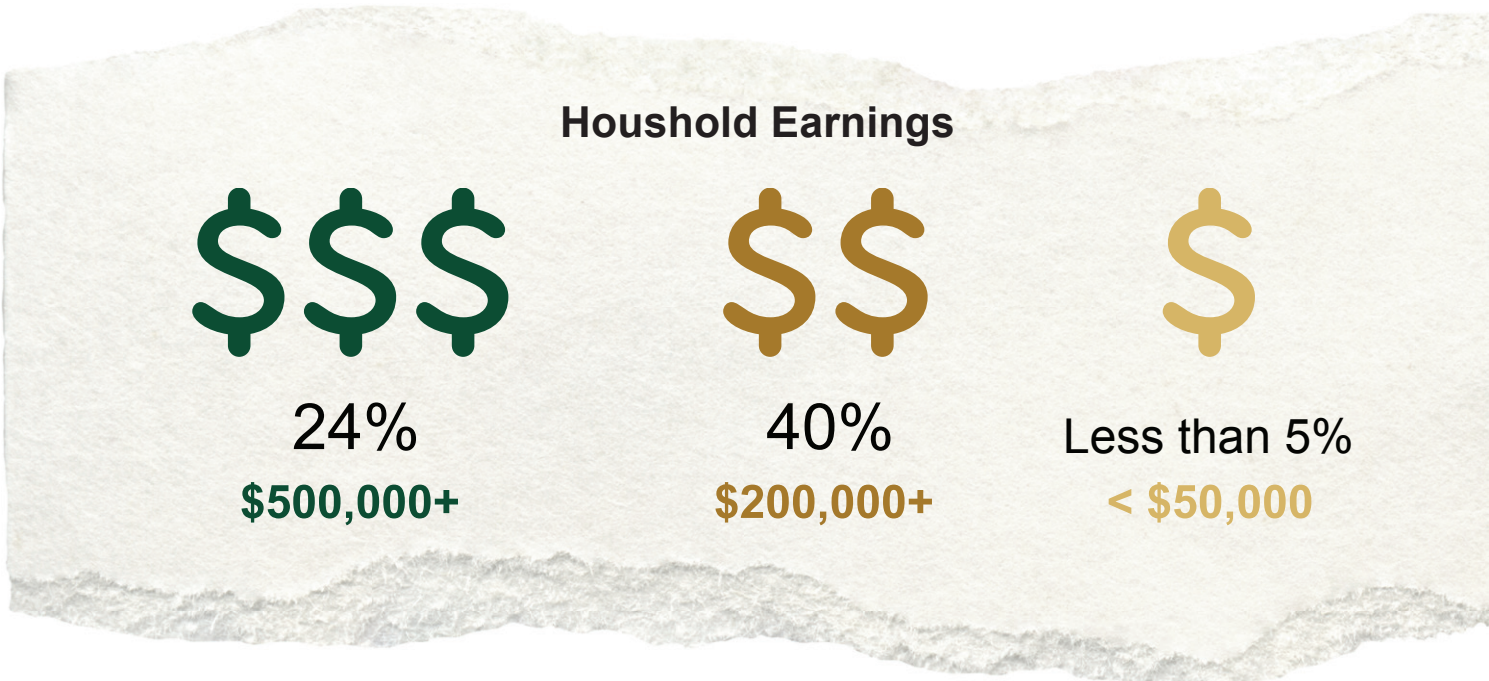
HOUSING COMPOSITION

Housing in Castle Pines is dominated by single-family homes, which comprise 77% of the housing stock. The community’s suburban character, combined with recreation-focused amenities and high-quality neighborhood design, has both retained existing residents and attracted new households. Population and household growth further underscore Castle Pines’ desirability within the broader Denver metro and Front Range region.



INCOME AND PURCHASING POWER

Castle Pines is among the most affluent communities in the region. Estimated average household income of approximately \$208,000, with a median household income just over \$191,000 (ACS, 2024). Income distribution is heavily skewed toward upper-income households.



This concentration of wealth creates substantial discretionary spending capacity and shapes expectations for high-quality retail and dining. However, engagement feedback revealed a consistent tension between expectation and behavior. While residents frequently expressed a desire for more local amenities, many also acknowledged regularly shopping and dining in nearby communities due to convenience and selection.

This reinforces a key market reality: purchasing power in Castle Pines is not geographically fixed within the city.

EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUTING PATTERNS

Castle Pines functions primarily as a residential community within the regional labor market. In 2023, approximately 5,978 residents were employed, while the city contained roughly 2,200 local jobs (U.S. Census LEHD OnTheMap, 2023).

- 4.4% of residents both live and work in Castle Pines (264)
- 95.6% of residents commute from Castle Pines to jobs outside the City (5,714)
- 88% of local jobs were filled by workers commuting into Castle Pines (1,936)



These flows result in a net outflow of about 3,778 workers daily, significantly reducing the daytime population. Employment is concentrated along the I-25 corridor, with many residents traveling to major job centers such as the Denver Tech Center, Lone Tree, and downtown Denver. Community engagement reinforced this pattern, with residents noting that many work- and service-related needs are met outside the city.

This outward orientation affects the types of businesses that are likely to succeed locally, favoring retail, grocery, and dining uses that cater to evenings, weekends, and neighborhood convenience rather than daytime office populations.

LOCAL MARKET CONTEXT

Despite strong household income and growth, commercial development in Castle Pines has lagged residential expansion. During stakeholder interviews and engagement exercises, residents consistently expressed the perception that “the community has grown faster than the retail,” reflecting a lag between residential development and commercial build-out.

High purchasing power combined with limited local options creates opportunities for service-oriented, boutique, and lifestyle-focused businesses, particularly those targeting middle-aged and older adults. At the same time, the smaller presence of young adults and limited daytime population suggest constraints for lunch-dependent dining, large-format retail, or businesses reliant on local workforce activity.

Retail Dynamics and Time-of-Day Constraints

The combination of high commuter outflow and strong regional accessibility creates a distinct retail environment in Castle Pines. While the community has the income and population base to support retail, the absence of a significant daytime population limits the viability of uses that depend on consistent daytime traffic. Retail demand is heavily concentrated in evenings and weekends.

Local observations and stakeholder feedback confirm that this dynamic is particularly impactful for dining and convenience retail. Community leadership and residents alike noted the lack of lunchtime activity and the challenges this creates for sustaining certain types of businesses.

At the same time, engagement revealed a strong preference for quality and fit in retail and dining, with residents expressing selective support for certain concepts while opposing others. This reflects a broader pattern in which development is evaluated not only on market viability, but on alignment with community identity.

COMMERCIAL MARKET ANALYSIS

The analysis presented in the previous section highlights a clear trend: Castle Pines generates strong consumer demand due to high household incomes and steady population growth. However, much of this spending currently occurs outside the city, influenced by community patterns, easy access to regional options, and local development conditions. Understanding these factors helps explain how the local economy functions and why certain types of commercial businesses perform the way they do.

The following snapshot sections take a closer look at three key commercial categories: grocery, retail, and dining. The analysis considers supply and demand, regional competition, and observed market behavior. While the same underlying forces affect each category, the opportunities and challenges for success differ, offering insight into the types of businesses that are most likely to thrive and have long-term success in Castle Pines.

GROCERY MARKET SNAPSHOT

Grocery is one of the most visible and sensitive components of Castle Pines' economic landscape. The departure of Safeway has heightened concern among residents and reinforced the perception of a local service gap. However, grocery demand must be evaluated within both a local and regional context.



CORE FINDING

Castle Pines residents have strong grocery demand, but much of it is captured outside the city. Large-format supermarkets face stiff regional competition, while small-format or specialty stores present viable opportunities.



MARKET DYNAMICS

- City-level leakage is measurable due to limited in-town grocery supply relative to population and income.
- Within a 20-minute drive, regional grocery operators (King Soopers, Whole Foods, Sprouts, Target) largely meet demand.
- Castle Pines needs to compete within a highly saturated, highly competitive, well-performing Denver metro grocery market.
- Conventional grocers like King Soopers dominate, specialty/natural stores like Sprouts and Whole Foods target higher-income households, and national discount formats like ALDI are emerging (not yet in Colorado).



VIABLE OPPORTUNITIES

- Specialty or curated grocery (Trader-Joe's-type concepts).
- Small-format, high-turnover stores with strong brand identity.
- Stores positioned to capture both local resident and pass-through traffic.



CONSTRAINTS

- Full-size conventional supermarkets face strong competition from King Soopers and surrounding trade areas.
- Stores relying solely on hyper-local, convenience-based demand will be challenging.
- The former Safeway site underperformed due to a combination of market conditions and challenges with positioning, access, and co-tenancy.



STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

- Expand the functional trade area beyond city limits.
- Prioritize sites with strong access and visibility.
- Align new stores with emerging grocery formats rather than traditional supermarkets.
- Castle Pines is well-positioned to capture a portion of regional demand, leveraging growth along the I-25 corridor, including The Canyons area



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

- Recognition that grocery success requires more than simply filling a vacancy.
- Strong desire for better grocery options, including Trader Joe's.



RETAIL MARKET SNAPSHOT (NON-GROCERY)

Retail activity in Castle Pines follows a familiar pattern: households have strong spending power, but many residents do their shopping in nearby communities. With high household incomes, the city generates significant retail demand, yet much of that spending is captured elsewhere simply because people travel through regional shopping areas as part of their daily routines.



CORE FINDING

Castle Pines' high incomes create strong retail spending potential, but most demand is captured in adjacent centers such as Castle Rock, Lone Tree, and Park Meadows. Local retail success depends on scale, format, and strategic location rather than replicating large regional centers.



MARKET DYNAMICS

- Affluent community with high average household income above \$266,000.
- Significant city-level retail leakage across general merchandise and apparel categories.
- Within the broader 20-minute trade area, retail supply and demand are balanced with full spectrum of shopping options, including Target, Costco, TJ Maxx, and specialty retailers.
- Retail spending in Castle Pines is highly mobile with most shopping outside the city, reducing the need for duplication of major retail formats within Castle Pines.



VIABLE OPPORTUNITIES

- Boutique and specialty retail.
- Service-oriented businesses (wellness, fitness, salons).
- Small-format, neighborhood retail centers.



CONSTRAINTS

- Large-format retail struggles due to strong regional competition and lack of critical mass.
- Uses requiring high-volume, destination-level traffic are challenging.
- Retail must be aligned with realistic market conditions



STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

- Development structure matters: fragmented west-side ownership limits cohesion and tenant mix; unified ownership in The Canyons allows for more coordinated planning and long-term positioning.
- Opportunity to capture selective retail categories benefiting from proximity.
- With regional population growth, Castle Pines can capture targeted retail demand, particularly in well-planned and strategically located areas.
- Leverage coordinated development areas for curated retail mix that reinforces community identity.



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

- Community feedback reflects frustration with past retail outcomes, particularly where market-supported uses were not realized.
- Strong desire for more local shopping options, particularly boutique and specialty retail.
- Acknowledgment that residents regularly shop elsewhere due to convenience, selection, and familiarity.



DINING MARKET SNAPSHOT

(FULL SERVICE AND LIMITED SERVICE)

Dining is one of the most frequently cited needs among residents and stakeholders. However, the performance of dining establishments in Castle Pines is shaped by structural factors that extend beyond simple supply.



CORE FINDING

Dining is a high-demand category for residents, but performance is constrained by a limited daytime population, strong regional competition, and historical development decisions. Fast-casual and destination full-service concepts are most viable options.



MARKET DYNAMICS

- Local-level leakage exists, with residents choosing to dine elsewhere.
- Dining demand met within regional market with abundance of dining options within 20-minute drive (casual chains, full-service, regional dining clusters).
- Daytime population is limited: far more residents leave for work than commute in.
- Community preferences and development decisions filter which restaurant types are supported.



VIABLE OPPORTUNITIES

- Fast-casual and limited-service restaurants (Chipotle, Panera-type concepts).
- Destination-oriented full-service dining concepts in high-visibility, high-access locations.
- Experience-driven concepts aligned with community identity



CONSTRAINTS

- Restaurants are significantly challenged without consistent daytime population, limiting lunchtime demand, which is critical for the financial viability of many restaurants.
- Relying heavily on evening traffic increases operational risk.
- Community preferences and development decisions filter which restaurant types are supported, even if market demand exists.



STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

- Locate dining strategically along growth corridors with strong access and visibility.
- Align concepts with traffic patterns and complementary uses.
- Leverage regional growth to capture spill-over demand.
- Anchor new centers with food-and-beverage options that match market realities.



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

- Dining is one of the most frequently cited needs among residents and stakeholders.
- Feedback highlighted instances where certain restaurant types, including some types of fast-food dining, were not supported due to concerns about perceived impacts.



EMPLOYMENT MARKET ANALYSIS

As demonstrated in the Community Profile chapter, the employment and commuting patterns reinforce the city's role as a residential base within the I-25 corridor, with major employment destinations accessible within a relatively short commute. This shapes both employment patterns and daily travel behavior. This pattern is not a deficiency. It reflects Castle Pines' position within a highly functional regional economy where employment centers are concentrated along established corridors.

DEFINING A REALISTIC EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

In traditional economic development plans, it is common to emphasize a robust strategy centered on job growth. However, Castle Pines is not positioned to compete as a primary employment center within the Denver metropolitan area. Attempting to reposition the City as a large-scale job center would be inconsistent with both market conditions and prevailing development patterns.

Instead, Castle Pines' opportunity lies in targeted employment growth that aligns with its residential base, leverages regional connectivity, and fits within emerging development areas. This includes positioning the community to benefit from anticipated regional investments, such as planned healthcare and institutional development along the I-25 corridor. The project may introduce new employment opportunities in proximity to the city and daytime retail and hospitality demand. While these projects are still evolving, they reinforce the importance of readiness and strategic alignment rather than large-scale recruitment.

Priority should be given to capturing jobs that:

- **Align with the resident workforce**
- **Integrate with available development patterns**
- **Reinforce, rather than compete with, regional employment centers**

Success should not be measured by simple job counts, but by capturing local employment opportunities that are feasible, sustainable, consistent with Castle Pines' character and that help drive retail opportunities.



TARGET EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Several categories of employment align with Castle Pines' and economic profile and development trajectory:



Medical and Healthcare Services: The proposed medical center on the east side represents a significant opportunity to establish a stable employment anchor within the community. Healthcare uses generate consistent daytime activity, support complementary services, and align with regional growth trends.



Professional and Office-Based Services: Small-scale professional services including finance, consulting, and real estate are well suited to Castle Pines' demographic profile. These uses benefit from proximity to high-income households and do not require large-scale office development.



Remote Work and Flexible Office Space: The continued growth of remote and hybrid work creates opportunities for coworking and small office environments. While not a primary employment driver, these spaces can support local entrepreneurs and reduce commuter outflow at the margins.



Service-Based Employment: Local-serving jobs tied to retail, dining, and personal services will continue to represent a meaningful portion of employment within the city. While these jobs are typically smaller-scale, they are essential to supporting daily activity and quality of life.

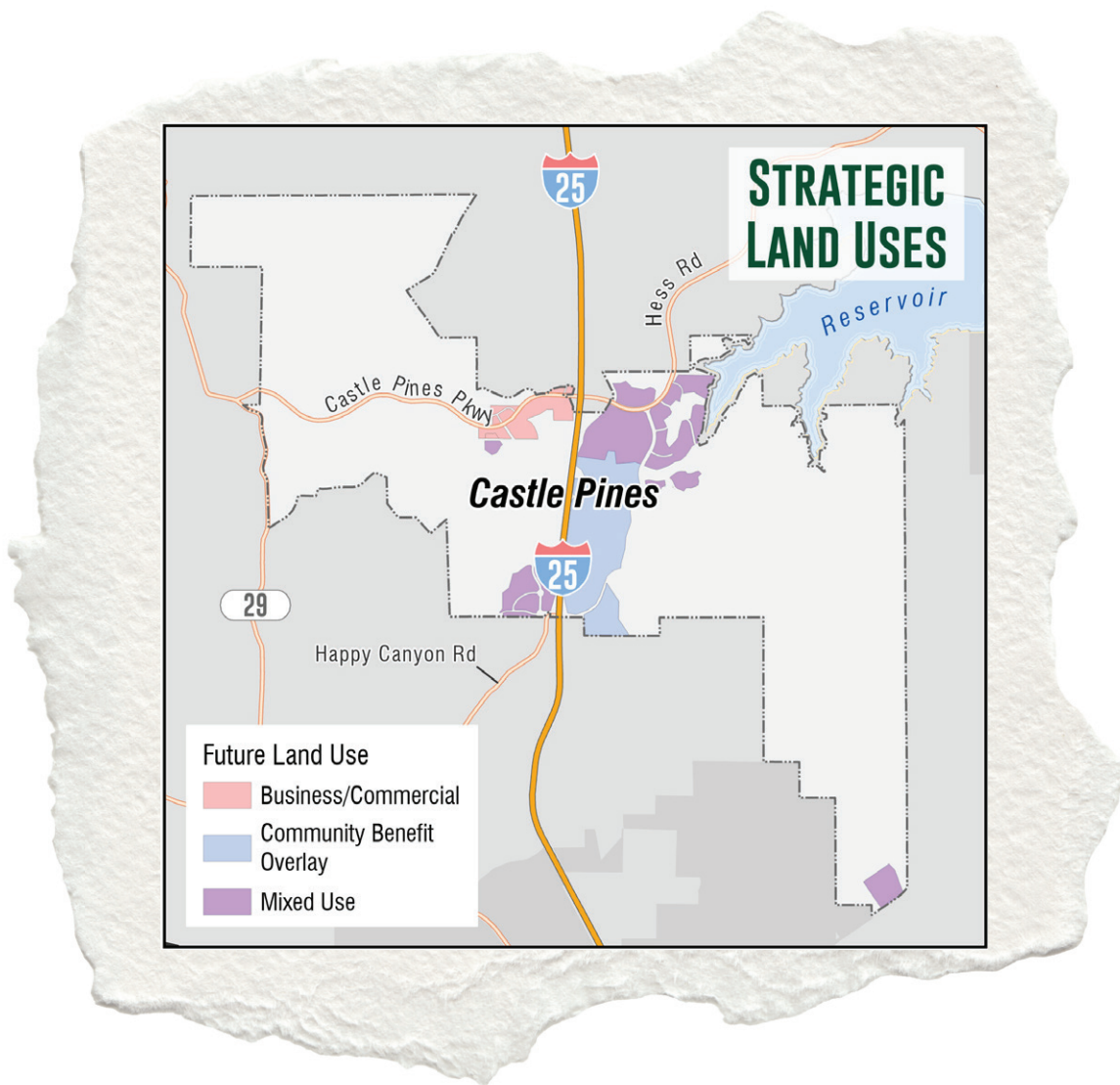
GEOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS: EAST AND WEST

Employment potential in Castle Pines is closely linked to geography and development patterns.

On the east side, unified ownership and master planning in The Canyons create the conditions necessary to support coordinated employment growth. The scale, access, and long-term vision associated with this area position The Canyons as the most viable location for employment-generating uses, particularly those tied to healthcare and mixed-use development.

On the west side, fragmented ownership and incremental development limit the potential for large-scale employment opportunities. However, targeted interventions, particularly those focused on small-scale office, coworking, and service-oriented uses, can incrementally increase activity and improve overall functionality.

Differences between the east and west sides of Castle Pines indicate that employment growth will be uneven across the city. It will be shaped by ownership patterns, site conditions, and the capacity to coordinate development over time.



EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY AND COMMUNITY ALIGNMENT

Community feedback indicates that residents value additional local services and amenities but place less emphasis on traditional job recruitment. There is broad recognition of Castle Pines' role within the regional economy, given easy access to nearby employment centers. At the same time, residents expressed interest in reducing daily travel for certain activities, including healthcare, services, and flexible work options.

A successful employment strategy should focus on targeted growth that supports convenience, quality of life, and local activity during daytime hours. This includes:

- Supporting anchor uses, such as healthcare, that generate consistent local activity and serves as a driver for hotel development
- Encouraging small-scale, neighborhood- and resident-oriented employment opportunities
- Leveraging master-planned areas to introduce coordinated and well-designed employment uses
- Recognizing and reinforcing Castle Pines' role within the broader regional economy

This approach ensures employment growth aligns with community expectations, enhances local activity, and complements the city's residential character and regional context.

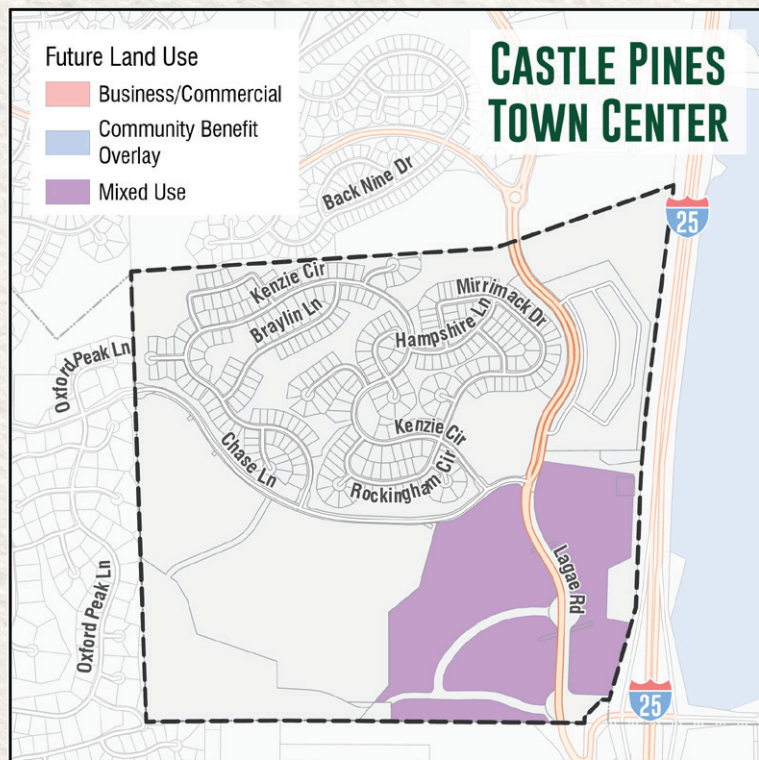
DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND CONSTRAINTS

Castle Pines is in a unique position, experiencing growth and development under two distinct sets of conditions. These conditions warrant differentiated strategies and should be addressed accordingly.

On the west side of I-25, the commercial market is largely built out and investor-owned. Assets are stable, with lease rates exceeding \$30 per square foot and occupancy levels approaching 84%, indicating a healthy and relatively tight market with limited turnover. Approximately 67% of properties are owned by private investors or privately held companies, which typically pursue long-term hold strategies focused on stable leasing rather than near-term redevelopment. The remaining properties are owned by a mix of institutional, owner-occupied, and public or nonprofit entities with differing operational and investment objectives.

As a result, there is no meaningful near-term catalyst for redevelopment, and the City’s ability to influence outcomes in this area is limited. In practical terms, the “window” to shape this area has largely passed. The appropriate strategy is to ensure that zoning, infrastructure, and regulatory frameworks are aligned with long-term goals, while maintaining a responsive posture when opportunities for reinvestment arise. Near-term revitalization efforts are unlikely to yield significant returns.

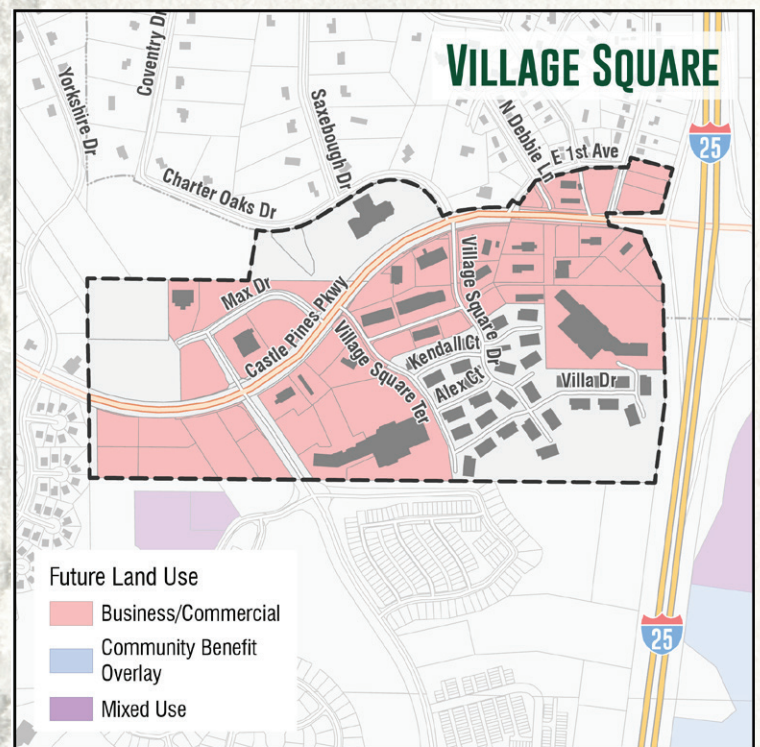
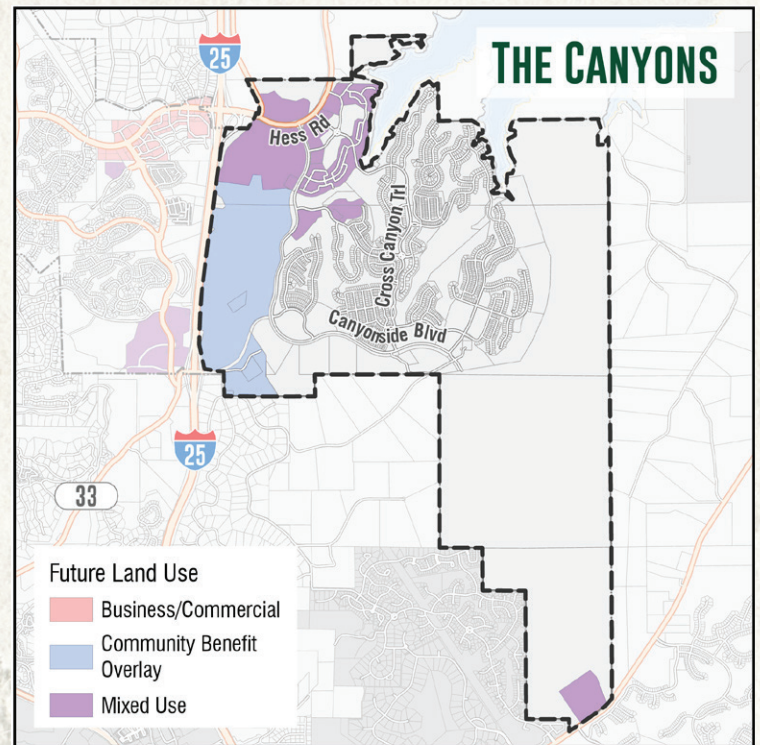
In practical terms, the west side is not a primary redevelopment focus. The opportunity is to ensure that zoning, basic design standards, and infrastructure function well, while taking a more reactive posture to reinvestment as it occurs. Large-scale intervention is unlikely to be necessary or effective.



The east side, commonly referred to as The Canyons, presents a fundamentally different development context. Here, control is concentrated among a small number of actors, and early decisions will establish long-term development patterns. In this environment, the developer will be seeking a public partner that can provide certainty, consistency, and clarity in its processes.

At the same time, public investments in the form of a sales tax share back have already been committed. The significant tax concessions were offered without any corresponding level of control or long-term commitment. As a result, the City's influence is more limited than it might appear given the amount of undeveloped land and there is a narrower window to shape outcomes going forward.

Looking forward, several additional areas will play an important role in shaping the city's commercial landscape. These include the Lagae Corridor on the west, which warrants a corridor plan to guide future development, transportation improvements, utility planning, and other strategic public infrastructure investments that can help position the area for long-term economic activity and reinvestment. Other strategic sites, including the Community Benefit Overlay Zone on the east, may also support future uses such as a hospital/medical campus or high-tech office complex. These locations represent some of the remaining opportunities where the City can still meaningfully influence development outcomes through proactive planning, infrastructure alignment, and clear long-term development expectations.



Finally, recent development challenges, including difficulties associated with certain national retail users, highlight the need to refine and strengthen the City's development code. In particular, consideration should be given to clarifying approval processes and reducing procedural uncertainty where appropriate, ensuring that well-aligned projects are not unduly delayed or derailed while still maintaining appropriate public input. This will require a careful balance but is essential to improving predictability for both developers and the community.

Taken together, this framework suggests a differentiated strategy:

- Long-term, infrastructure- and policy-focused approach on the west side;
- Structured, expectation-driven partnership model on the east side; and
- Targeted planning efforts in key remaining growth areas where the City still has the ability to shape outcomes.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES



1

WEST SIDE INFRASTRUCTURE AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

ISSUES AND BACKGROUND

The west side of I-25 is characterized by stable, investor-owned commercial real estate with high occupancy and strong lease rates. Properties are largely leased, resulting in limited turnover and little motivation for reinvestment or redevelopment in the near term. As a result, the City has minimal leverage to directly influence outcomes, and the existing development pattern is likely to persist.

Given these conditions, traditional economic development tools, such as incentives or active recruitment, are unlikely to produce meaningful change. This is not a market that is currently repositioning, and near-term revitalization efforts would likely yield only incremental results. However, over the long term, market shifts will occur, and sites will eventually transition.

OPPORTUNITY

While the City's near-term influence is limited, there is a meaningful opportunity to prepare for future change by establishing a clear infrastructure and development framework in advance of market turnover. By taking a longer-term view, Castle Pines can ensure that when redevelopment opportunities emerge, they align with the community's vision.

This includes advancing a coordinated plan for the west side, with particular attention to the Lagae Corridor as a key organizing spine for future commercial activity. In addition, there is an opportunity to evaluate how targeted public investment, such as a potential City Hall or civic use, could serve as a catalyst for adjacent retail and placemaking. These types of investments can help shape development patterns over time, even in a predominantly private, investor-driven environment.

RECOMMENDATION

Castle Pines should develop and adopt a West Side Infrastructure Plan focused on long-term positioning and targeted interventions rather than near-term redevelopment.

KEY ACTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Prepare a corridor-level plan for Lagae Road, identifying future transportation, access, and public realm improvements that support higher-quality commercial development over time
- Align zoning and development standards to ensure that future reinvestment supports the City's desired character and land use outcomes
- Identify strategic infrastructure investments that can be implemented incrementally as opportunities arise
- Evaluate the feasibility of a civic anchor, such as a City Hall or similar public use, as a catalyst for retail clustering and enhanced placemaking
- Maintain a responsive posture, allowing the City to act quickly when properties transition or redevelopment opportunities emerge

This approach acknowledges current market realities while positioning the City to shape long-term outcomes through infrastructure, policy alignment, and targeted public investment.





2

PUBLIC SPACE FRAMEWORK AND DESIGN EXPECTATIONS

ISSUES AND BACKGROUND

As new commercial and mixed-use areas develop, particularly in The Canyons, along the Lagae Corridor, and near the Happy Canyon interchange, the function and design of public and quasi-public spaces are being shaped largely by private developers. In several cases, developers are seeking to retain a high degree of control over these spaces, which can limit broader community access, reduce consistency across the City, and create fragmented development patterns.

In 2019, the City approved the Gateway and Wayfinding Plan to standardize signage and establish a cohesive Castle Pines brand. The Plan included iconic elements, such as buff stone and corten steel, and launched a new City logo. The construction of gateway bridge monuments began in 2023, with many already completed and Happy Canyon monuments being completed now.

While gateway monuments and city signage concepts are approved, the City does not have a clearly defined or consistently applied framework for public space design, programming, and long-term ownership/management. This creates uncertainty in negotiations and increases the risk that individual projects will evolve in ways that are not cohesive with the community's broader vision.

OPPORTUNITY

Building upon the Gateway and Wayfinding Plan, Castle Pines has an opportunity to establish expectations for public space that ensure long-term community benefit while still allowing developers flexibility in design and delivery. As new areas come online, particularly in large-scale developments, early decisions around public space will set lasting precedents for access, identity, and placemaking.

By defining a consistent approach to park space, plazas, and gathering areas, across both the east and west sides, the City can reinforce a unified identity while ensuring that these spaces function as true community assets rather than project-specific amenities.

RECOMMENDATION

Castle Pines should establish and consistently apply a Public Space Framework that defines the City's expectations for design, access, and long-term functionality in new development areas.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE CITY'S "ASK" SHOULD INCLUDE:

- **Broad Public Access:** Ensure that park spaces, plazas, and gathering areas are designed and programmed for general public use, rather than limited or controlled access tied to private development
- **Consistent Design, Wayfinding, and Signage Standards:** Continue implementation of the Gateway and Wayfinding Plan through cohesive design and signage standards that reinforce community identity, improve navigation, and create visual consistency across the city, particularly between east and west side developments and along key corridors.
- **Future Flexibility:** Design spaces to evolve over, accommodating events, programming, and changing community needs
- **Defined Roles and Responsibilities:** Clearly establish expectations for ownership, maintenance, and control to balance developer involvement with long-term public benefit

In negotiations with developers, particularly in The Canyons and other large-scale projects, the City should prioritize these elements to ensure that public spaces contribute to a cohesive, accessible, and high-quality community environment.





3

ROLE OF THE CITY – STRATEGIC POSITIONING AND TARGETED INVESTMENT

ISSUES AND BACKGROUND

Castle Pines is experiencing steady commercial development and investment without the need for active recruitment. Market conditions indicate a stable and functioning environment, with occupancy levels near 84% and positive net absorption, reflecting ongoing demand for space. Conversations with developers and stakeholders also indicated a generally positive perception of City operations, particularly regarding responsiveness, predictability, and the City's ability to work efficiently through development-related issues. Maintaining that reputation moving forward will be important to sustain continued investment and reinforcing market confidence.

Through stakeholder and Council discussions, there is strong support for maintaining the City's lean and efficient organizational structure. There is also limited appetite for expanding staffing, particularly with respect to a dedicated economic development position. Given the relatively small number of development-ready sites and active developers, and the absence of demand for direct City-led recruitment, this approach is consistent with current market realities.

OPPORTUNITY

Castle Pines is well-positioned to maintain an economic development model that focuses on a responsive and enabling role. Rather than using resources to compete for employers, and projects, the City should focus on being prepared, predictable, and easy to work with when development opportunities arise.

This creates an opportunity to redefine the City's role around process, policy, and strategic readiness, ensuring that when investment occurs, it aligns with community goals and is delivered efficiently. By emphasizing clarity in expectations and consistency in decision-making, the City can reduce risk for developers and improve the quality of outcomes without increasing staffing or direct incentives.

RECOMMENDATION

Castle Pines should adopt a responsive, policy-driven approach to economic development, focusing on readiness and process rather than active recruitment or organizational expansion.

KEY ACTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Maintain a lean organizational structure, avoiding the addition of dedicated economic development staff unless market conditions materially change
- Prioritize regulatory clarity, including zoning, design standards, and development expectations that are easy to interpret and consistently applied
- Enhance process predictability, ensuring that timelines, approvals, and requirements are clear and reliable for developers
- Focus public investment strategically, directing resources toward infrastructure, key sites, and catalytic opportunities rather than broad-based incentives
- Position the City as a reliable partner, emphasizing responsiveness, consistency, and professionalism in all development interactions

This approach aligns with market conditions, City Council priorities, and community preferences, enabling Castle Pines to support high-quality development without overextending resources or pursuing unnecessary growth strategies.





4

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT METRICS AND PERFORMANCE TRACKING

ISSUES AND BACKGROUND

Castle Pines currently lacks a formalized system for tracking economic development performance, including development activity, retail productivity, and overall fiscal outcomes. This has contributed to a degree of uncertainty regarding how the local economy is performing and what can realistically be expected from new development.

Market data indicates a stable, if limited, commercial environment, with occupancy near 84% and some new construction activity, suggesting a steady but constrained growth pattern. Without a structured benchmarking framework, it is difficult to determine whether this performance is strong relative to peers or indicative of underperformance.

OPPORTUNITY

There is a clear opportunity to establish a data-driven benchmarking system that provides transparency and context for Castle Pines' economic performance. Retail sales benchmarking offers a powerful lens for understanding how effectively the City is capturing local spending.

Preliminary comparisons of sales tax revenue as a function of per capita population highlight the current retail gap:

- **Castle Pines: ~\$360 per capita retail sales**
- **Castle Rock: ~\$985 per capita**
- **Parker: ~\$930 per capita**
- **Littleton: ~\$1,307 per capita**
- **Lone Tree: ~\$2,720 per capita (regional retail hub)**
- **Centennial: ~\$469 per capita**

These benchmarks reinforce a key reality: Castle Pines functions primarily as a residential community with limited retail capture, rather than a regional retail destination. This is not inherently a weakness, but it does suggest a ceiling for realistic economic development outcomes and supports policies that are:

- Reactive, not aggressive
- Quality over quantity
- Aligns with resident-serving retail
- Experience based, and not just square footage

RECOMMENDATION

Castle Pines should establish a formal Economic Development Metrics and Benchmarking Program to track performance, improve transparency, and inform policy decisions.

KEY ACTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE:

Retail Sales Benchmarking:

- Sales per square foot: Sales tax revenue is divided by the amount of retail square footage in Castle Pines.
- Sales tax generation per capita: Sales tax revenue is divided by population.
- Compare performance annually against peer communities such as Castle Rock, Parker, Centennial, and Lone Tree. For these, specific ownership tax revenue is excluded.

Development Activity Tracking to include a pipeline of commercial projects, including square footage, tenant mix, and delivery timelines

Market Health Indicators:

- Vacancy: The percentage of commercial or residential space that is currently unoccupied and available for lease or sale within a market or specific area.
- Absorption: The amount of commercial space leased or occupied compared to the amount of space vacated over a specific period of time. Positive absorption indicates demand is increasing, while negative absorption indicates more space is being vacated than leased.
- Leasing Trends: The amount of commercial space leased over a specific period of time, typically measured in square feet, used to evaluate market demand and leasing activity.

CONTINUES >

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Dashboard to establish a concise set of performance indicators, including:

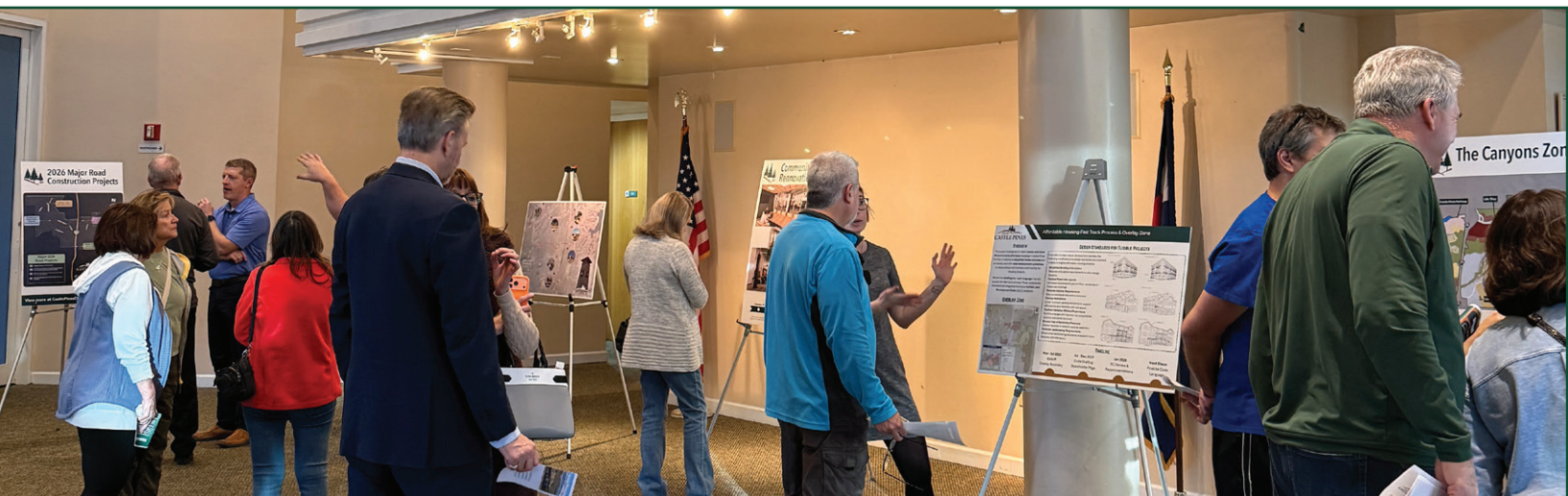
- Year-over-year sales tax growth
- Retail capture (per capita sales)
- Occupancy/Vacancy rates (absorption)
- New commercial square footage delivered
- Fiscal return on public investments

Regular Reporting: Provide annual or semi-annual updates to Council and the public to improve transparency and reduce uncertainty around outcomes

These benchmarks suggest that Castle Pines should not measure success against high-intensity retail centers like Lone Tree but rather focus on incrementally improving retail capture and fiscal performance within its role as a high-income residential community.

By grounding decision-making in clear, comparative data, the City can move away from perception-driven discussions and toward a more objective, credible, and strategic approach to economic development.





CIVIC SPACES AS CATALYSTS FOR PRIVATE INVESTMENT

ISSUES AND BACKGROUND

Castle Pines' primary municipal functions are not currently positioned to serve as visible civic anchors within the community's development pattern.

City Hall operates from an upper-floor suite within a west side shopping center, a practical but low-visibility arrangement that limits its presence as a recognizable center of civic activity. Public meetings are frequently held in the library or other spaces, creating scheduling constraints and reinforcing the perception that civic functions are secondary to private commercial uses.

The recently renovated Community Center will consolidate City Council, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and Urban Renewal Authority meetings into a dedicated facility. While this improves functionality and flexibility, the building is located on a separate site and does not directly reinforce either of the city's primary commercial areas.

At the same time, the west side includes the existing library, a proven civic anchor that drives consistent activity and supports surrounding uses. The east side is preparing for significant commercial development on largely undeveloped land. A future library on the east side has been discussed but remains conceptual. If advanced, it would likely require siting on private property and coordination with development partners. As a civic anchor, a library in this location would not simply follow development, it would help shape it by establishing a center of gravity for commercial activity in Castle Pines.

Without an intentional civic siting strategy, Castle Pines risks allowing its public facilities to remain functionally adequate but economically disconnected from surrounding commercial activity. In a growing city where private development is shaping much of the built environment, the location and visibility of civic buildings can either reinforce commercial confidence or remain detached from it.

The question is not whether Castle Pines has civic space. The question is whether those civic investments are positioned to stabilize growth and support surrounding private investment.

Civic buildings do more than “add civic” to a community. When placed strategically, they serve as economic anchors:

- Daily staff presence
- Regular public meetings
- Board and commission activity
- Community gatherings and events

This creates recurring visitation across different times of day, supporting nearby businesses and reducing perceived risk for private tenants. In emerging commercial areas, a civic anchor signals permanence, helping stabilize lease rates and reinforce long-term development confidence.

OPPORTUNITY

Strategically located civic uses can contribute to placemaking and economic activity by establishing a steady base of employees, visitors, and public meetings that support pedestrian activity and strengthen adjacent commercial nodes.

EAST SIDE: LIBRARY AS CATALYTIC ANCHOR

The east side represents forward-looking growth, including a significant planned commercial project. A new library in this area, particularly given Douglas County’s strong reputation for high-quality library design, could serve as a foundational civic anchor.

If placed with strong access and integrated into the commercial fabric, a future library would:

- Generate consistent daytime and evening visitation
- Provide immediate credibility to adjacent retail
- Signal long-term public commitment within a new development area
- Support restaurants, coffee shops, and neighborhood services through predictable traffic

In emerging commercial environments, this type of civic presence can help stabilize rents and strengthen tenant confidence.

WEST SIDE: CONSOLIDATING CIVIC PRESENCE

On the west side, relocation of City Hall functions to the former library building merits consideration. This would move City operations out of an upper-floor commercial setting and into a more visible and appropriate civic building.

This shift would:

- Establish a clearer civic identity
- Reinforce the west side as a stable, established area of the community
- Create steady staff and visitor activity
- Present a professional but lean municipal presence

Modest reimagining of the surrounding parking and public environment could further enhance the site as a gathering space, not to replicate other centers, but to provide an accessible and recognizable civic focal point. These enhancements could help create a more active and welcoming environment while increasing daytime foot traffic that supports nearby quick-service restaurants and small businesses. Together, these actions would create a distributed but complementary network of civic anchors serving both sides of Castle Pines.

RECOMMENDATION

The City should consider a coordinated civic siting strategy that recognizes public facilities as economic anchors, not solely service providers.

KEY ACTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Coordinate with Douglas County to explore placement of a future library on the east side within or adjacent to planned commercial development
- Evaluate the relocation of City Hall functions to the former library building on the west side to strengthen civic presence and visibility
- Identify targeted, cost-conscious improvements to surrounding public spaces to enhance gathering opportunities
- Incorporate civic siting considerations into broader land use and development discussions moving forward

These actions do not require large-scale public investment or the creation of a traditional downtown model. Rather, they represent a practical and measured approach to stabilizing a growing city and reinforcing investor confidence.





6

BRANDING AND POSITIONING STRATEGY

ISSUES AND BACKGROUND

Castle Pines should define and consistently apply a clear set of expectations for the character and quality of future commercial development. This is not intended to dictate architectural style, control tenant selection, or create a traditional branding campaign. Instead, it is about creating long-term consistency in how commercial areas are designed, evaluated, and integrated into the broader community character.

Castle Pines has established a strong residential identity centered on quality, investment, and community appearance. However, commercial development patterns and outcomes have been more uneven over time. Future commercial areas should better reflect the level of quality and consistency that residents already associate with the community.

This should be implemented through practical and measurable tools such as:

- building materials and durability standards,
- site layout and building placement,
- pedestrian orientation and connectivity,
- landscaping and streetscape expectations,
- parking design and screening,
- signage consistency,
- cohesive public realm improvements.

This recommendation should inform future updates to the Comprehensive Plan, commercial design standards, corridor planning efforts, infrastructure investments, and development review processes. Over time, these tools can help ensure that commercial development better aligns with the quality expectations already established within the broader community.

This is increasingly important as the city grows. The west side functions as an established commercial area with steady activity. The east side is largely undeveloped and will accommodate the next phase of growth. Without a clear point of view, these areas risk evolving separately, with no unifying identity.

Castle Pines is not competing to be a regional destination in the traditional sense, nor is it purely a convenience-driven market. It occupies a more nuanced position. It can support high-quality, everyday commercial activity, but it also has the capacity to attract selective regional uses that elevate its overall profile. That position is not yet clearly defined or consistently applied.

The question is not whether development will occur. The question is whether it will add up to a place. Branding in this context is not marketing. It is a standard. A defined position allows the City to evaluate opportunities consistently, guide but not dictate tenant mix, and set expectations for what belongs and what does not.

OPPORTUNITY

Castle Pines can define its commercial identity before its next phase of development is fully realized.

The east side will establish patterns that are difficult to change over time. Early decisions around tenant mix, layout, and overall character will influence long-term performance. At the same time, the west side provides a stable base that can reinforce that identity if the two areas are aligned.

Importantly, both market conditions and community input suggest an openness to a combination of regional draw, particularly on the east side. The introduction of tenants such as a higher-profile grocer or destination-oriented fitness, like the recently delivered Life Time Fitness, begins to shift the dynamic. These uses extend beyond strict local service and introduce a broader trade area.

This is not a contradiction to the City's positioning. It is an evolution of it.

The opportunity is to establish a clear, repeatable standard that accommodates this blend, maintaining a strong local foundation while allowing targeted regional uses that reinforce quality and expand the market.

Neighboring Parker has a consistent identity that is reinforced through consistent physical elements embedded in development standards. The Town's signature streetlight is not just a design choice. It is a required element that appears repeatedly across projects. Over time, this level of consistency creates immediate recognition and signals a clear standard of quality. This illustrates how positioning is reinforced not only through tenant mix, but through visible, repeatable elements in the built environment.

Aligning Commercial Types

Uses that align with this nuanced position as a local center with some regional anchors including:

- High-quality fast casual and sit-down dining
- Neighborhood-serving retail and services delivered at a higher standard
- Businesses that benefit from consistent local traffic and repeat visitation
- Select regional anchors that elevate quality and expand without shifting the overall character

Uses that should be approached cautiously include:

- Lower-tier, price-driven retail formats
- Auto oriented or convenience uses that diminish the overall environment
- Tenant mixes that prioritize volume over consistency

This is not about limiting activity. It is about maintaining coherence while allowing measured growth in market reach.

Aligning West and East

The west side should continue to function as a stable, service-oriented area anchored by existing businesses and civic uses. The east side should build on that foundation with a more intentional and coordinated pattern of development, including the introduction of select regional anchors.

These areas serve different roles, but they should reflect the same standard.

Without that alignment, the City risks creating two separate commercial identities rather than one cohesive system.



RECOMMENDATION

The City should adopt a clear commercial positioning statement and use it as a basis for economic development, recruitment, development decisions, and future updates to the Comprehensive Plan, ensuring that commercial growth, design expectations, and investment decisions align with the community's long-term vision and desired character.

Positioning Statement

Castle Pines is a place where everyday commercial life is defined by consistency, quality, and long-term value, complemented by select destinations that elevate its overall experience. Its commercial areas are shaped by well-operated, well-integrated businesses that meet daily needs while reinforcing a stable and well-managed environment.

KEY ACTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Use this positioning to frame development discussions
- Define preferred and discouraged uses to support consistent decision-making
- Allow for targeted regional anchors that align with the City's quality standard and expand its market reach
- Align economic development, land use, and partnership efforts around a shared standard
- Apply this framework equally to both existing and future commercial areas

This approach does not require a new program or significant investment. It requires clarity. A consistent position allows Castle Pines to move from evaluating projects individually to shaping a commercial environment that performs into the future.



SOURCES

Demographic and Socioeconomic Data

- **U.S. Census Bureau** – American Community Survey (ACS), 2024
- **Claritas** – Demographic, income, and population estimates and projections, 2025
- **Esri** – Tapestry segmentation profile, 2021

Employment and Commuting Data

U.S. Census Bureau – LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (OnTheMap), 2023

Retail and Market Analysis

- **Claritas** – Retail leakage/surplus analysis (NAICS-based), 2025
- **CoStar** – Commercial retail and real estate, 2025

All raw data, supporting datasets, and background materials used in the development of this plan have been compiled and provided to City staff as a separate enclosure and may be made available upon request.



APPENDIX A
ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Community input was a key element of the planning process. Residents, business owners, developers, and other stakeholders shared perspectives through interviews, open houses, and an online survey, helping define priorities and expectations that are integrated throughout the plan.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The one-on-one stakeholder interviews were designed to inform the Economic Development Strategic Plan by capturing perspectives from individuals with direct experience shaping, investing in, and operating within Castle Pines. This included City Council members, local developers, Chamber of Commerce representatives, and local business owners.

The interviews explored long-term success measures, priorities for economic growth, and expectations for the City's role in shaping development outcomes. Discussions focused on defining Castle Pines' economic identity, understanding the community's appetite for change, and identifying realistic opportunities given regional competition, infrastructure, and market constraints.

Interview questions also examined how economic development can balance resident desires for amenities, such as dining, gathering spaces, and community-serving retail, with concerns about growth, traffic, and small-town character. Feedback provided insight into local capacity, development processes, and potential tension points the plan should help address. Collectively, these conversations helped ground the plan's recommendations in local values, clarify trade-offs, and align strategies with what is both feasible and meaningful over the next 5 to 10 years.

KEY THEMES ACROSS STAKEHOLDERS

1. Need for a clear economic identity and stronger sense of place
2. Strong desire for more and better local-serving businesses, especially dining and gathering spaces
3. Recognition of market constraints vs. community expectations
4. Importance of walkability, design quality, and cohesive development patterns
5. Ongoing challenge of east-west connectivity and cohesion
6. General agreement that the City should be more proactive, while remaining business-friendly and fiscally responsible



COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSES

To gather community input on future growth and investment in Castle Pines, residents were invited to two community open houses:

Castle Pines East – February 19, 2026

Castle Pines West – February 25, 2026

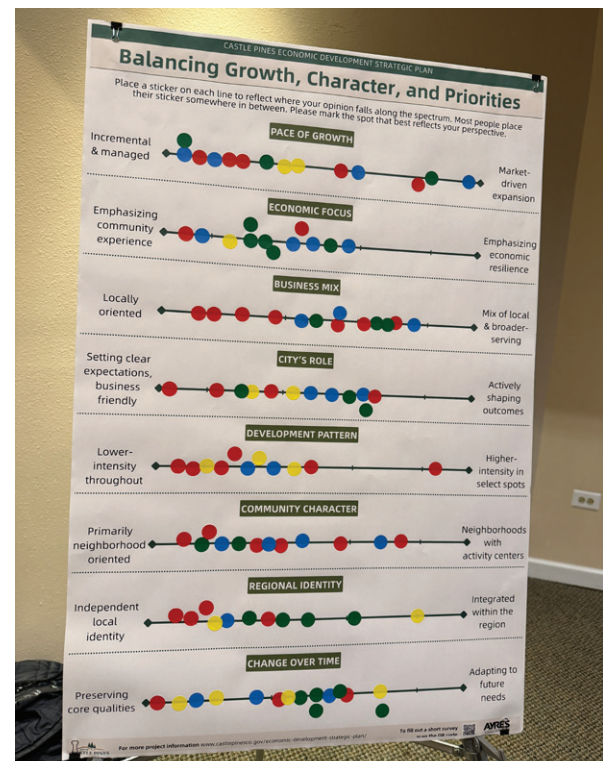
ACTIVITY: BALANCING GROWTH, CHARACTER, AND PRIORITIES

The boards asked residents to place a sticker along a spectrum representing two viewpoints on various topics related to growth and economic development priorities. The tables below show the results for each topic, including the count of stickers placed on the left, middle, and right portions of the spectrum.

Total participation based on visible dots was approximately 191:

- East meeting: 102 stickers placed
- West meeting: 89 stickers placed

The following tables show the results from each topic, including the sticker counts located to the left and right of the spectrum, as well as the total number placed roughly in the middle.



PACE OF GROWTH			
	INCREMENTAL & MANAGED 3	 14	MARKET-DRIVEN EXPANSION 8
INTERPRETATION	Residents in both meetings clustered strongly in the center of the spectrum, indicating support for growth but with moderation. East participants showed slightly more openness to market-driven expansion than West participants, but neither meeting leaned strongly toward rapid growth.		
KEY TAKEAWAY	Residents generally support incremental and managed growth, not aggressive expansion.		

ECONOMIC FOCUS			
	EMPHASIZING COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE 4	 13	EMPHASIZING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE 7
INTERPRETATION	Both meetings again clustered toward the center. East participants leaned slightly toward community experience, while West participants leaned slightly toward economic resilience.		
KEY TAKEAWAY	Residents want economic development that strengthens the economy while still enhancing community quality of life.		

BUSINESS MIX			
	LOCALLY ORIENTED 4	 14	MIX OF LOCAL & BROADER SERVING 7
INTERPRETATION	The center of the spectrum received the most dots. East participants leaned slightly toward locally oriented businesses, while West participants leaned slightly toward a mix of local and broader-serving businesses.		
KEY TAKEAWAY	Residents appear comfortable with attracting some regional-serving businesses, provided the local character of the business mix is preserved.		

CITY'S ROLE			
	SETTING CLEAR EXPECTATIONS, BUSINESS FRIENDLY 4	 13	ACTIVELY SHAPING OUTCOMES 6
INTERPRETATION	Most responses fell near the center of the spectrum. West participants showed slightly stronger support for the city actively shaping outcomes, while East participants were more evenly distributed.		
KEY TAKEAWAY	Residents appear comfortable with the city taking an active role in guiding development, though not overwhelmingly interventionist.		

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN			
	LOWER-INTENSITY THROUGHOUT 5	 14	HIGHER-INTENSITY IN SELECT SPOTS 4
INTERPRETATION	Most dots fell around the center but leaned slightly toward lower-intensity development overall, with some support for focused nodes. West participants placed slightly more dots toward higher-intensity in select spots.		
KEY TAKEAWAY	Residents appear open to targeted activity nodes, but do not support widespread density increases.		

COMMUNITY CHARACTER			
	PRIMARILY NEIGHBORHOOD ORIENTED 2	 12	NEIGHBORHOOD WITH ACTIVITY CENTERS 13
INTERPRETATION	This was one of the clearest responses on the board. A large share of participants supported neighborhoods with activity centers rather than purely residential areas.		
KEY TAKEAWAY	Residents appear interested in small hubs of activity embedded within neighborhoods, such as gathering places or small commercial nodes.		

REGIONAL IDENTITY			
	INDEPENDENT LOCAL IDENTITY 9	 9	INTEGRATED WITHIN THE REGION 9
INTERPRETATION	The strongest directional response on the board was toward independent local identity. East participants showed the strongest clustering toward this viewpoint.		
KEY TAKEAWAY	Preserving the distinct identity of Castle Pines appears to be a major community priority.		

CHANGE OVER TIME			
	PRESERVING CORE QUALITIES 4	 10	ADAPTING TO FUTURE NEEDS 9
INTERPRETATION	Responses were more evenly distributed than on most other questions. West participants leaned more toward adapting to future needs, while East participants leaned slightly toward preserving core qualities.		
KEY TAKEAWAY	Residents appear supportive of change over time, but with strong sensitivity to maintaining the community’s defining characteristics.		



ACTIVITY: COMMUNITY SPACES

The second board includes images representing different types of public gathering spaces. Residents were asked to place stickers next to the elements that they preferred for Castle Pines.

Key Takeaway: Residents appear to prefer smaller neighborhood gathering spaces rather than a single large civic plaza.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	OBSERVED PATTERN
NEIGHBORHOOD GATHERING NODE	Small, everyday gathering: • Cafes or small restaurants • Outdoor seating / patio • Places to linger • Daily, neighborhood serving uses	Most support
CENTRAL PLAZA OR SQUARE	Big civic gathering space: • Outdoor seating • Space for events • Flexible open area • Public art and programming	Moderate support
MAIN STREET / MIXED USE SPINE	Walkable retail street: • Walkable storefronts • Building close to the street • Active ground floors • Shade, lighting, benches	Moderate support
CIVIC GREEN OR COMMUNITY COMMONS	Park + community space: • Open lawn / green space • Family-friendly gathering • Sidewalks / oaths connections • Nearby community or civic uses	Least support



East vs. West: Responses from both meetings were highly aligned, with only modest variations and no significant divergence in views.

EAST	Participants leaned slightly more toward: • Preserving community character • Community experience • Independent local identity
WEST	Participants leaned slightly more toward: • Economic resilience • Higher-intensity development in selected spots • Adapting to future needs

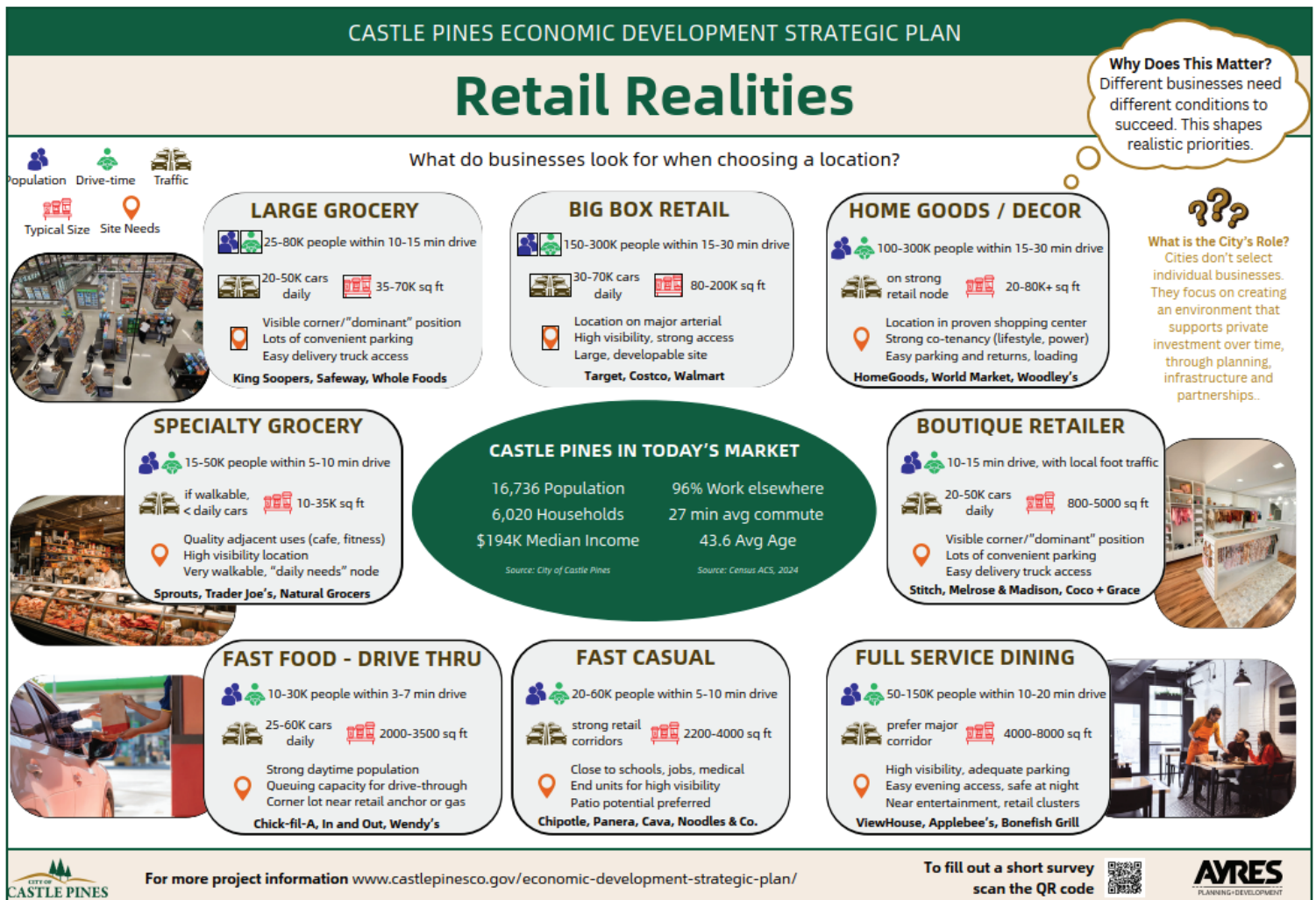
SUMMARY STRATEGIC INSIGHTS

Taken together, the activity highlights several broad community perspectives.

1. Residents favor incremental, well-managed growth over rapid expansion.
2. There is strong support for neighborhood-based activity centers, indicating a preference for distributed gathering places rather than a single centralized downtown.
3. Participants consistently emphasized the importance of maintaining Castle Pines’ distinct identity, reinforcing that character should remain a priority in economic development decisions.
4. Residents are open to targeted development nodes but do not support broad increases in intensity across the city.
5. Residents appear comfortable with change and adaptation, provided that core community qualities are preserved.

EDUCATION: RETAIL REALITIES

The Retail Realities Board is designed as an educational and conversation-oriented tool that helps ground community discussions in the practical factors that influence where businesses choose to locate. The board illustrates how different business types rely on specific market conditions, including population size, income levels, traffic volumes, and site visibility, to be viable. By presenting these requirements in a clear and accessible format, the board encourages residents to better understand the trade-offs associated with attracting different types of businesses. Ultimately, it reinforces that expanding local retail and dining options is closely tied to broader considerations such as growth, development patterns, and infrastructure, helping the community make more informed decisions about future priorities. A retail realities one-pager was also provided for residents to take with them.



COMMUNITY SURVEY

A total of 235 residents provided feedback through an online community survey. It was promoted through the City newsletter, website, and social media, as well as through flyers at the community open houses.

The survey was designed to go beyond preference-based questions and instead explore values, priorities, and perspectives that shape economic development decisions. Using a series of structured statements, the survey asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement on topics such as growth, quality of life, local spending, and the role of the City. This approach allowed the City to better understand community sentiment around tradeoffs, decision-making, and long-term direction, rather than focusing solely on specific business types or outcomes.

SURVEY RESULTS

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

OVERALL ECONOMIC DIRECTION	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Weighted Average
Castle Pines should pursue economic development strategies that reflect its current suburban form, lifestyle, and market context.	3.0%	4.6%	49.5%	42.9%	3.32
Economic development should be viewed as a tool for shaping the community as a place, not simply as a mechanism for attracting growth.	4.1%	1.5%	33.0%	61.4%	3.52
Economic development in Castle Pines should prioritize quality of life as much as revenue generation.	3.1%	1.5%	26.4%	69.0%	3.61
The City should be selective about the types of businesses and development it supports.	3.0%	1.5%	20.6%	74.9%	3.67
Economic development decisions should be guided by professional analysis, not only public opinion.	9.7%	23.0%	43.4%	24.0%	2.82
Castle Pines should focus on long-term sustainability rather than short-term economic gains.	1.5%	1.5%	35.7%	61.3%	3.57

BUSINESS CLIMATE & OPERATIONS	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Weighted Average
Castle Pines is a supportive environment for operating a business.	23.5%	29.4%	29.4%	17.7%	2.41
City processes related to permitting, licensing, and approvals are clear and predictable.	35.3%	17.7%	41.2%	5.9%	2.18
The local customer base is sufficient to support my business.	26.7%	20.0%	26.7%	26.7%	2.53
Infrastructure and services meet the needs of my business.	20.0%	33.3%	26.7%	20.0%	2.47
The City understands the practical challenges faced by local businesses.	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	2.2

RETAIL, SERVICES, AND LOCAL SPENDING	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Weighted Average
I would prefer to spend more of my money locally if the right options were available.	2.0%	5.1%	36.4%	56.6%	3.47
Castle Pines has gaps in retail or services that affect my daily life.	5.1%	16.2%	30.8%	48.0%	3.22
New retail or services should primarily serve residents rather than attract visitors.	3.1%	15.7%	34.5%	46.7%	3.25
Local-serving businesses are more important than destination or regional-scale development.	2.6%	14.0%	47.7%	35.8%	3.17
Economic development should focus on strengthening existing commercial areas rather than expanding outward.	2.6%	17.3%	37.2%	42.9%	3.2

RETAIL, SERVICES, AND LOCAL SPENDING	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Weighted Average
I would prefer to spend more of my money locally if the right options were available.	2.0%	5.1%	36.4%	56.6%	3.47
Castle Pines has gaps in retail or services that affect my daily life.	5.1%	16.2%	30.8%	48.0%	3.22
New retail or services should primarily serve residents rather than attract visitors.	3.1%	15.7%	34.5%	46.7%	3.25
Local-serving businesses are more important than destination or regional-scale development.	2.6%	14.0%	47.7%	35.8%	3.17
Economic development should focus on strengthening existing commercial areas rather than expanding outward.	2.6%	17.3%	37.2%	42.9%	3.2

ROLE OF THE CITY	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Weighted Average
The City should play an active role in shaping economic development outcomes.	3.5%	8.6%	59.1%	28.8%	3.13
The City should focus on removing barriers rather than directly driving development.	4.7%	29.5%	50.3%	15.5%	2.77
Public-private partnerships are an appropriate tool for economic development in Castle Pines.	5.2%	19.9%	63.9%	11.0%	2.81
The City should avoid taking on financial risk for economic development projects.	3.6%	18.0%	42.1%	36.4%	3.11
Clear policy and predictability are more important than speed.	0.0%	9.3%	54.1%	36.6%	3.27

COMMUNITY INPUT & ENGAGEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Weighted Average
Public input should inform economic development decisions but not determine them outright.	8.6%	18.2%	56.1%	17.2%	2.82
Not all economic development decisions should be decided by public consensus.	12.3%	28.7%	46.2%	12.8%	2.59
It is appropriate for the City to rely on professional analysis when making economic development decisions.	7.3%	15.0%	67.9%	9.8%	2.8
Community engagement is most valuable when it focuses on priorities rather than technical details.	1.0%	15.6%	59.4%	24.0%	3.06
Clear policy and predictability are more important than speed.	0.5%	6.7%	58.8%	34.0%	3.26

LOOKING AHEAD	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Weighted Average
Castle Pines should take a cautious, intentional approach to future growth.	1.5%	8.6%	49.5%	40.4%	3.29
Economic development should evolve as market conditions change.	0.0%	8.7%	74.5%	16.8%	3.08
The City should have a clear framework for evaluating future opportunities.	0.0%	0.5%	62.8%	36.7%	3.36
Doing nothing is sometimes better than doing the wrong thing.	5.2%	9.8%	39.9%	45.1%	3.25

RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

What are the main reasons you spend money outside of Castle Pines?

Residents primarily spend money outside Castle Pines due to limited variety, missing business types, and stronger retail and dining options in nearby communities, though some intentionally do so to preserve the City's small-town character. The top reasons include:

- 1. Limited retail & service options:** Residents report that many everyday needs (retail, services, and specialty goods) are simply not available locally.
- 2. Lack of restaurant variety:** Dining is a frequently cited gap, especially limited variety, few mid-range or higher-quality options, lack of casual family-friendly, and “go-to” places.
- 3. Insufficient overall variety and choice:** Even when businesses exist, there aren't enough options to compare or choose from, leading residents to go elsewhere.
- 4. Missing key business types:** Common gaps include clothing & boutique retails, hardware & home improvement, entertainment & recreation, fitness & specialty services.
- 5. Better quality and selection nearby:** Nearby areas offer broader selection, higher perceived quality, and more complete shopping/dining experiences.
- 6. Ability to combine trips:** Castle Pine currently lacks “one-stop” convenience. Residents prefer locations where they access clustered businesses and services so they can run multiple errands on one trip.
- 7. Price & value considerations:** Some respondents noted higher prices locally and better value elsewhere (especially groceries and gas).
- 8. Desire to preserve community character in Castle Pines:** Some respondents noted that they intentionally spend money elsewhere to avoid over-commercialization in Castle Pines.

What businesses or economic development activity would you like to see in Castle Pines?

1. Retail and service options for daily needs
2. More restaurants, greater quality and diversity
3. Shopping variety, including clothing, specialty retail, and gifts/boutiques
4. Better grocery store
5. Hardware store
6. Medical services
7. Fitness & recreation services
8. Entertainment (movies, activities)

Together, the responses to the two questions provide an important cross-cutting insight. There is a clear tension reflected in the responses. While many residents express a desire for more local retail, dining, and services, others value the ability to leave the community for these needs to preserve Castle Pines’ small-town character. This suggests the core issue is not simply a lack of businesses, but a broader balance between expanding local amenities and maintaining the qualities that define the community.

