

# Scorecard Input to Comprehensive Plan Update in Littleton

November 2012  
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## 1 Introduction

Families are essential for a city to thrive. If a city is too relaxed towards investing in families, they will lose their child population and economic opportunities to neighboring cities. Observations indicate that cities most motivated to invest in families typically fall into two categories:

- City already has a high percent of family households
- City is in a state of decline with school enrollment falling, businesses closing, and tax base shrinking

The Human Life Project® research has identified 11 truths about cities.

- 1) Cities thrive with a balance of ages and incomes.
- 2) Growth occurs where young families are moving in.
- 3) Cities with a small percent of 3+ bedroom homes will struggle to attract families.
- 4) Cities with few children must rely on new people moving to fill vacant housing.
- 5) School quality will either attract or cause families to move out of city.
- 6) Good jobs are vital to supporting families.
- 7) Cities in a metropolitan region are typically strong in jobs or family housing, but not both.
- 8) Affordable living is more than affordable housing.
- 9) Retail and services locate closest to their strongest consumer base: families.
- 10) Older adults enjoy better services and community engagement by living in neighborhoods with families.
- 11) The family support structure is linked to the human sustainability of the city.

The Human Life Project® encourages cities to proactively work on identifying and reversing negative trends before they become big problems and to build a lasting legacy by investing in families. To this end, the Human Life Project® has created a Scorecard for cities. The Scorecard is an analytical method to quickly access the family friendliness of a city. "Family" is being used to mean all family members from the youngest child to the oldest grandparent.

The Scorecard output consists of:

- Ranking of 12 main categories on a scale of 1 to 5
- List of Apparent City Strengths
- List of Potential Areas for Improvement

The Human Life Project® has also created a "toolkit" of ideas for how cities can become more family friendly.

This report will include:

- Scorecard for Littleton, Colorado
- Combine output with toolkit items, providing input to update Littleton's Comprehensive Plan

## 2 Scorecard Overview

The Scorecard (version 2.0) consists of 12 main categories with 36 subcategories. Data is collected from the internet and input to a computer program. Thus, the Scorecard results are only as accurate as the data reported from these data bases. In the following list, the subcategory items in bold are weighted more heavily.

1. Community
  - **Family Support Structure**
  - **Marital Status**
  - **Average Household Size**
  - **Change in Child Population**
  - **Balance of Ages**
  - Population Change
  - Living in Poverty
  - Average Age
2. Education
  - **K-12 School Quality**
  - **Population with High School Degree**
  - Local Post High School Educational Opportunities
  - Population with Post High School Degree
3. Culture
  - Places of Worship
  - Museums
4. Recreation
  - Parks
  - Recreation Centers
5. Housing
  - **Family Housing**
  - Older Adult Housing
  - Vacant Housing
6. Employment
  - **Unemployment Rate**
  - Median Household Income
  - Live and Work in the City

7. Cost of Living
  - **Overall Cost of Living**
  - **Cost to Purchase a House**
8. Services
  - **Grocery Stores**
  - **Senior Care**
  - Child Care Centers
9. Transportation
  - **Walkability**
  - **Work Commute Time**
  - Commute to Work Method
10. Safety
  - **Crime Index**
  - Sex Offenders
11. Health
  - Doctors
  - Hospitals
12. Resources
  - Water Quality
  - Air Quality

## **2.1 Scorecard Overview - Level II**

The Level II Scorecard is a diagramming exercise. The first step is to plot the concentration of family housing. With this basic data 3 overlays are created to ultimately determine the city's Family Centers, Business Centers, and Resource Centers.

### **Family Centers: Hub of daily living activity**

Family Centers are the areas with the highest concentrations of households with 3 or more people. The city's family infrastructure such as schools, parks, libraries, and museums are also placed on the diagram. The diagram can be used to analyze how the family infrastructure corresponds to where families live.

### **Business Centers: Hub of economic activity**

Business Centers are the areas with the highest concentrations of jobs. Major transportation routes are overlaid on this diagram along with the Family Centers. The diagram can be used to analyze the proximity of jobs to where the families are living as well as how easily the family members can get to the jobs. The goal is to minimize commute times so as to maximize the time available for family or other non-work activities.

### **Resource Centers: Hub of resource activity**

Resource Centers are the locations of grocery stores, farms, water, and power generation. The Family and Business Centers are also shown on this diagram. The goal is to promote local resources as well as easy access to food for the city residents.

**3 Littleton Scorecard**

▲▲▲▲	<b>Overall</b>
▲▲	Transportation
▲▲▲	Community
▲▲▲	Education
▲▲▲	Cost of Living
▲▲▲▲	Housing
▲▲▲▲	Employment
▲▲▲▲	Safety
▲▲▲▲▲	Culture
▲▲▲▲▲	Recreation
▲▲▲▲▲	Services
▲▲▲▲▲	Health
▲▲▲▲▲	Resources

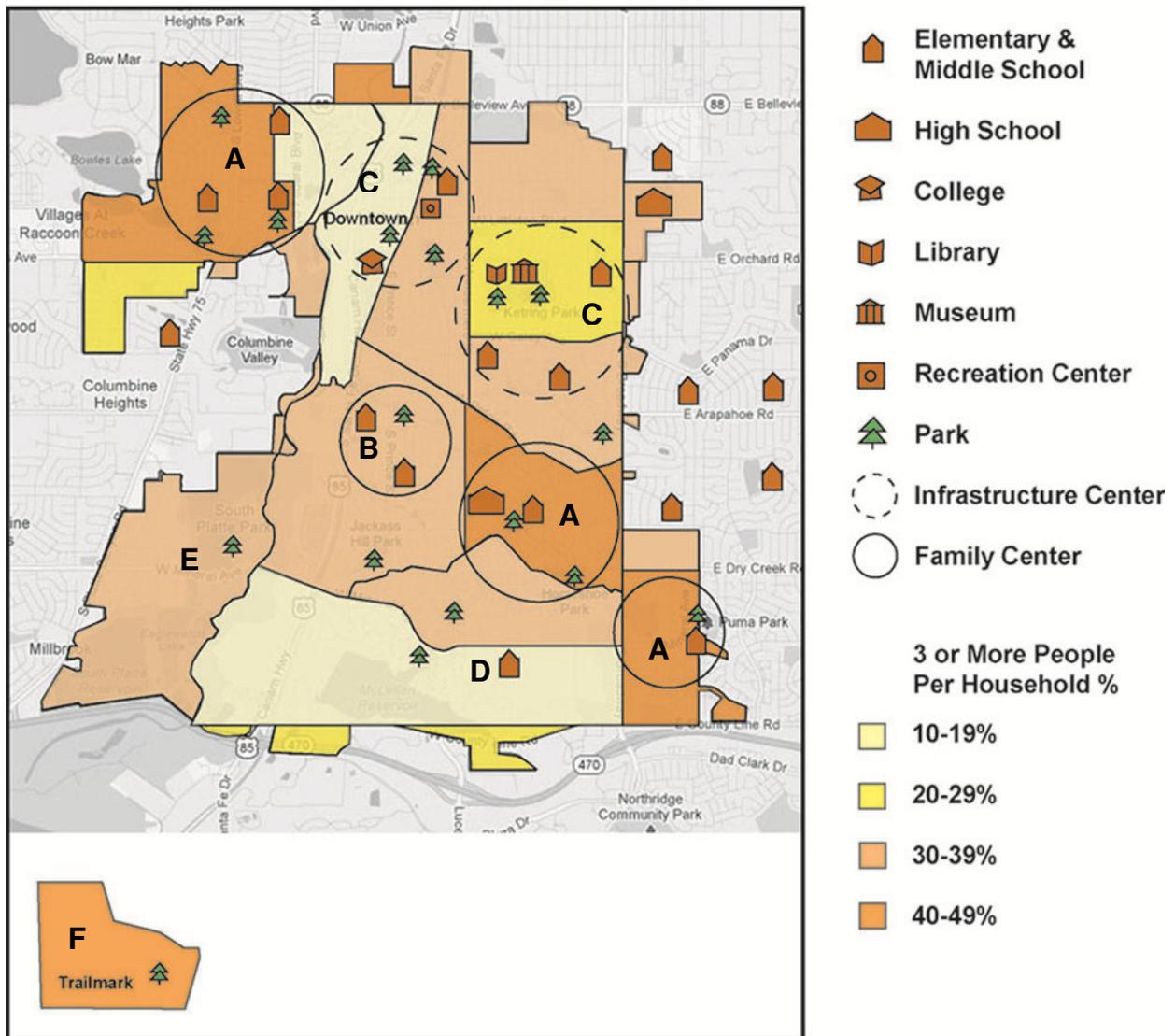
**Strengths**

1. Living in Poverty (low)
2. Population with High School Degree
3. K-12 School Quality
4. Places of Worship
5. Parks
6. Unemployment Rate (low)
7. Median Household Income
8. Child Care Centers
9. Senior Care Centers
10. Crime Index (low)
11. Hospitals
12. Water Quality

**Potential Areas for Improvement**

1. Average Age (high)
2. Average Household Size (low)
3. Local Post High School Educational Opportunities
4. Live and Work in the City
5. Grocery Stores
6. Work Commute Time
7. Commute to Work Method

**3.1 Littleton Scorecard Level II**



Sources:  
 Google Maps  
 Littleton Public Schools  
 U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 1 Family Centers**

**Analysis:**

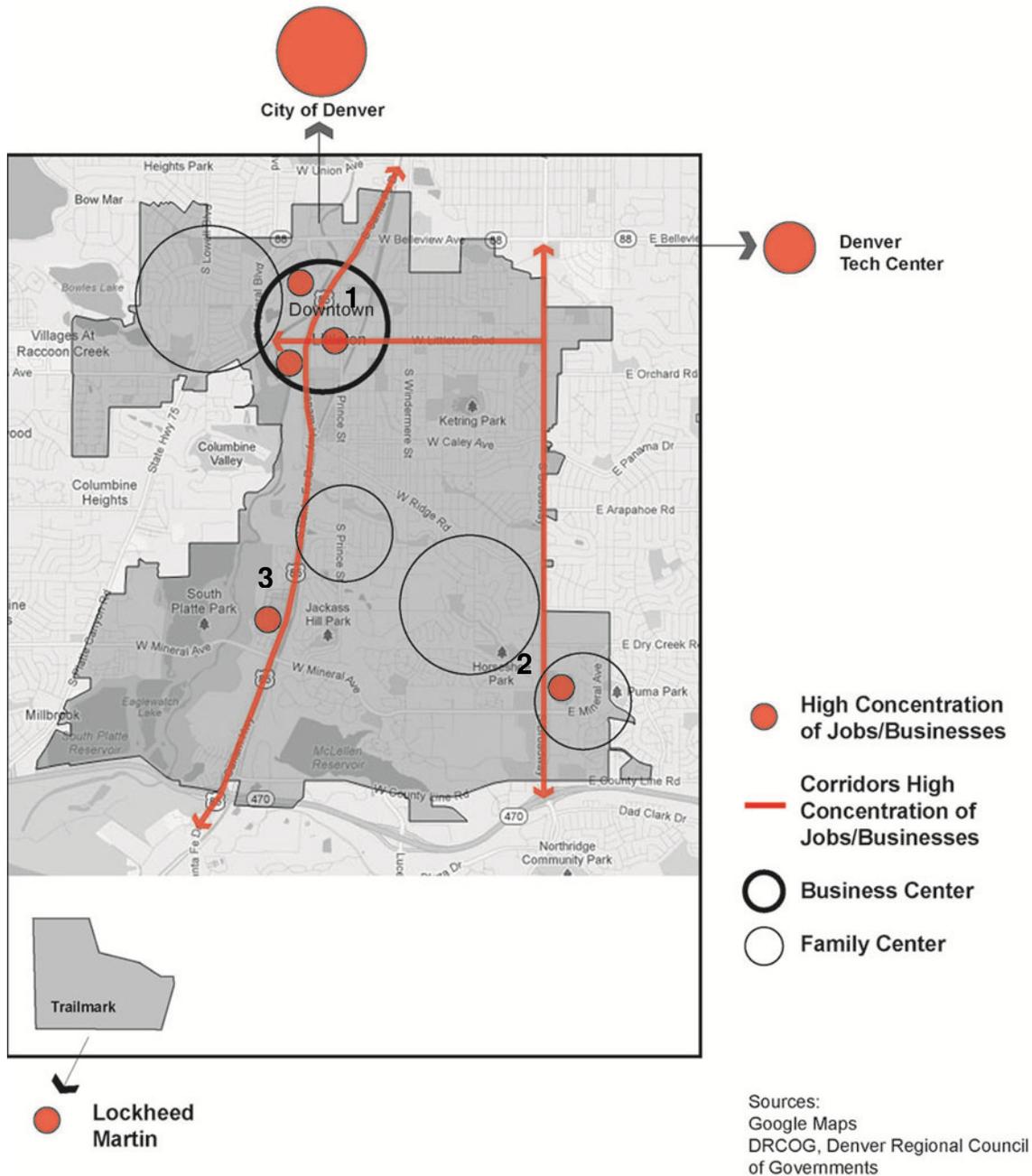
The "A" and "B" labels indicate Family Centers. These areas that have the highest concentrations of families as well as the infrastructure (schools and parks) to support the families.

The "C" labels indicate what appears to be Family Centers in the past with a high concentration of family infrastructure. However, the families appear to have moved away from these areas.

The "D" label indicates an area that has the family infrastructure but is potentially on the edge of not having the family densities to support this infrastructure investment.

The "E" label indicates an area potentially on the edge of having the family densities to support consideration for additional infrastructure investment. This area could potentially need a school, especially considering that a major road exits between this area and the nearest school.

The "F" label indicates an area that is a strong candidate for consideration for additional infrastructure investment. This area could potentially need a school, especially considering that this area is geographically distant from the nearest school and the area has a high number of families.



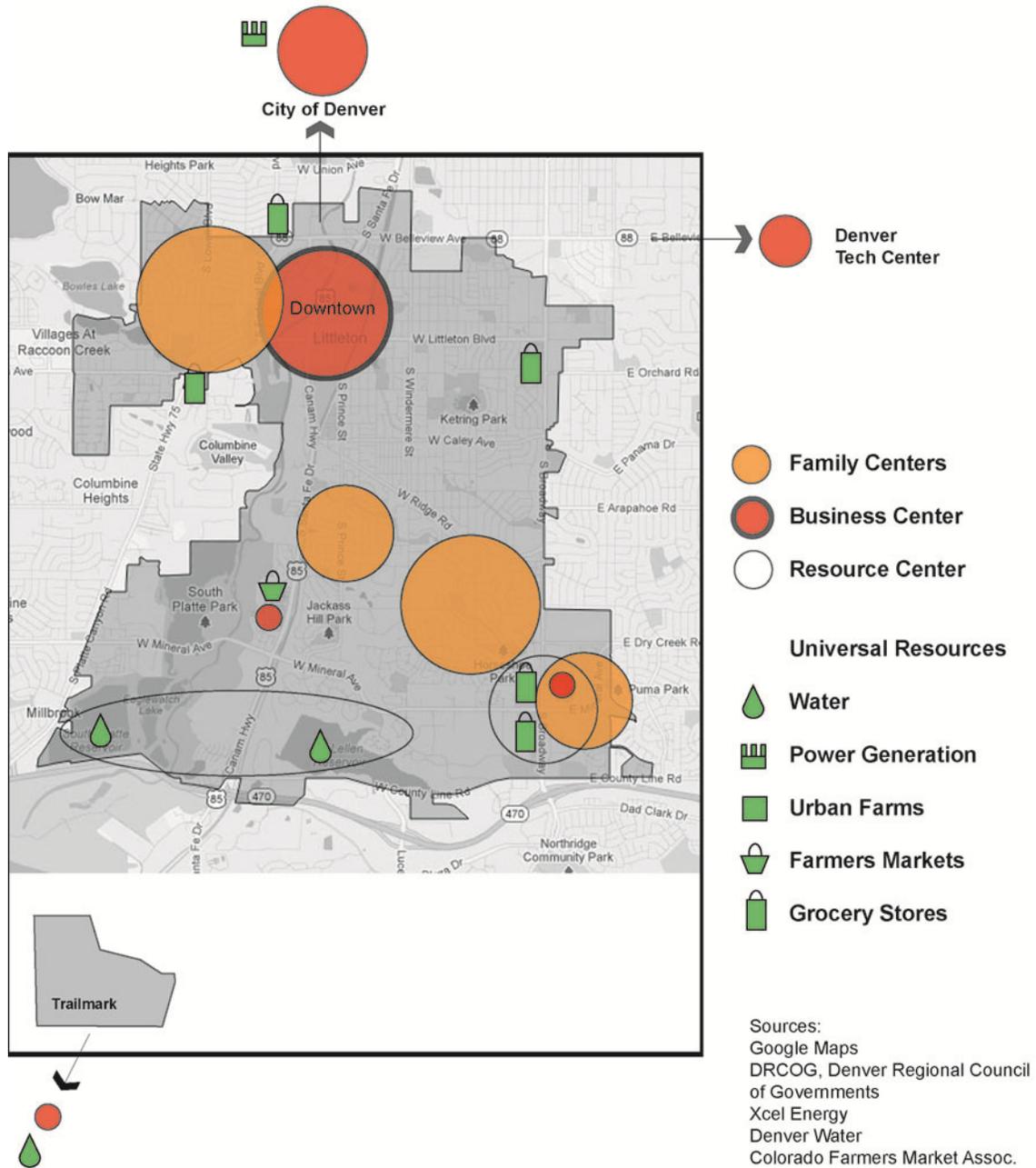
**Figure 2 Business Centers**

**Analysis:**

Area 1 is the primary Business Center in the city. Area 2 and 3 also has a good concentration of jobs. Area 1 and 2 are close to Family Centers. This is desirable in that families could potentially live close to the jobs.

Area 3 is reasonably close to a Family Center. However, there is a major road between these two which makes non-car travel more challenging.

A large number of city residents do work at one of three Business Centers that are located outside of the city limits. These jobs require car access. There is light rail access to the City of Denver Business Center. Unfortunately, there is limited parking at the light rail stations which limits how many commuters can conveniently use the light rail.



**Figure 3 Resource Centers**

**Analysis:**

The city has two reservoirs, and therefore, has a good water source.

The households near the geographic center of the city and the South West area have to travel further to get to the nearest grocery store. However, there is no commercial farm within the city limits which means that all food must be imported.

Aside from small scale solar installations on individual buildings, all of the power comes from outside of the city.

## 4 Comprehensive Plan Considerations

The following are proposed considerations for updating Littleton's Comprehensive Plan.

### 4.1 Restaurant and Microbrewery District

#### Identified Needs Addressed:

- Work Commute Time

#### Potential Solution:

Encourage restaurants and microbreweries to locate on Curtice Street between ACC and downtown. Merle's and the Tavern would become the downtown anchors for this district.

The recommendation is to follow the Merle's and Tavern architectural style and encourage or require that new restaurants include: brick facade, outdoor seating, and roof or patio seating. In addition to providing a consistent urban design, this should encourage the street to become a gathering place and maintain the quaint downtown character.

As more restaurants and microbreweries locate along this street, the street will become a good location to hold events, potentially even temporarily making the street pedestrian only for the events.

Events and primary business activity is envisioned to occur during non class hours, so parking at ACC seems feasible.

For those with less mobility, the recommendation is to encourage the city to create local taxi cab permits. The recommendation is for the taxis to be electric LSVs and for fares to be family friendly such as \$1/adult for a one way trip. Kids would be free when accompanied by a paying adult.

The following are example LSVs with different styles depending on what image the city would like to project.

#### Basic Multi-Passenger LSV:



<http://www.roadratmotors.com/product.aspx?ProductId=14&title=citEcar+6PF+Street+Legal+Golf+Cart>  
(\$9300)

#### Solar Powered:



[http://ctturbine.en.alibaba.com/product/376050838-209335396/solar\\_trolley\\_for\\_golf.html](http://ctturbine.en.alibaba.com/product/376050838-209335396/solar_trolley_for_golf.html) (\$9400)

Feeling of Luxury:



<http://www.gatormotouv.com/low-speed-vehicles/index.cfm> (\$14,000)

Fully Enclosed:



<http://www.roadratmotors.com/electric-shuttles> (\$23,000)

#### 4.2 LSV Network

Identified Needs Addressed:

- Commute to Work Method

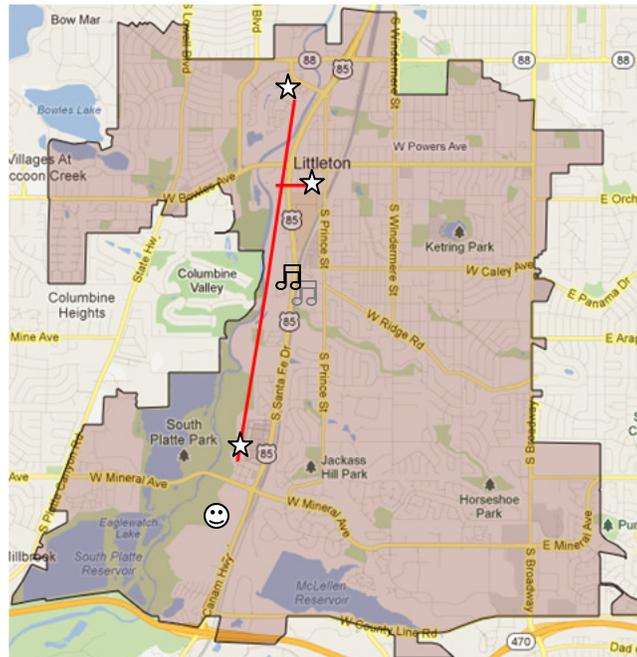
**Potential Solution:**

Create a LSV network connecting:

- Downtown
- Riverside Downs
- Aspen Grove

This network would have a number of benefits such as:

- Allow residents in all 3 areas to more easily get to the businesses in the other 2 areas
- Activate the river for economic growth (new businesses going in along the network)
- Allow residents near Riverside Downs to get to the downtown or Mineral light rail without using a full size car. LSVs are ~1/4 the size of a car and therefore, more people could park near the downtown light rail.
- If LSV sharing stations (similar to a bike sharing station) or rental stations were set up near the downtown or Mineral light rail stations, this would encourage tourists to take light rail to Littleton and then visit all 3 business areas.



**Figure 4 LSV Network (Phase 1)**

Note: LSVs are street legal on roads with speed limits <= 35 MPH.

Example personal LSVs:

Basic:



<http://www.cunninghamgolfcar.com/c-36-electric-vehicles.aspx> (\$7600)

Fun:



<http://www.cunninghamgolfcar.com/c-36-electric-vehicles.aspx> (\$17,000)

Enclosed:



<http://www.polaris.com/en-us/gem-electric-car/passenger-vehicle/e2/pages/overview.aspx> (\$7800)

### 4.3 Housing

#### Identified Needs Addressed:

- Average Age (high)
- Average Household Size (low)

#### Potential Solution:

Comprehensive Plan action is to encourage the following and to make sure that zoning allows the following housing options:

*For existing neighborhoods:*

1. **Group housing** typically looks like a single-family residence from the outside and located within single-family neighborhoods. Inside, each resident has a private bedroom and possibly a private bathroom. The rest of the house is common space shared by all residents. A certified nurse or care giver may reside on site or visit regularly.
2. **Accessory dwelling units (ADU)** allow a 2<sup>nd</sup> unit to be built on a lot with an existing house. The ADU may house a recent college graduate looking for a job or an elderly parent. ADUs can also be rented to non-family members.
3. ADUs can be taken to the next level by allowing the ADU to be sold independent of the main house. This can provide additional flexibility for the homeowner. To encourage more accessible housing, zoning could **allow the minimum lot size to be ½ the current size provided that a "universal design" house built on each ½ lot.** This would allow a homeowner in an existing single-family neighborhood to demo the old house, replace with 2 universal design houses, and potentially live in one of the houses while selling the other house to pay off the construction loan.

*For New/Infill Projects:*

For new or larger infill projects, require variety in the housing sizes. New projects present opportunities to make a significant impact on the future direction of the city.

1. For a mixed generational neighborhood, every 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> unit should be a different size. For example, if the development is primarily a family neighborhood with 3+ bedroom houses, the "other" houses would be smaller such as patio homes for older adults. The housing mix should attract singles, couples, families with children, and empty nesters.
2. For multi-family units, require a mix of 1, 2, and 3+ bedrooms to accommodate all family sizes. All too often, multi-family is not family-friendly. This needs to change to allow for more affordable family size housing options. Accessibility is big for older adults, so ensuring an adequate mix of accessible units is also very important.

#### 4.4 Trade Schools

**Identified Needs Addressed:**

- Local Post High School Educational Opportunities

**Potential Solution:**

Encourage trade schools to open in the city. The trade schools could potentially partner with local high schools (high school graduates could move on to trade schools), with ACC, or with the local work force office.

The Comprehensive Plan could target the low performing strip malls as potential trade school locations.

#### 4.5 Grocery Stores

**Identified Needs Addressed:**

- Grocery Stores

**Potential Solution:**

Modify zoning to allow mixed-use with a "corner" grocery store or for a full service grocery store to be built in residential neighborhoods.

#### 4.6 Farm Kits

**Identified Needs Addressed:**

- Local Food

- Live and Work in the City
- Work Commute Time

**Potential Solution:**

The TSR Group/Agriburbia has developed a "farm kit". This includes the specs and materials to build a combined house, green house, office, commercial kitchen, storage, and distribution center as well as a business plan and training to help ensure success. The farm kit is designed for commercially farming of 2-10 acres to provide local food.

Advanced farming techniques are used to minimize resource (time and water) usage while maximizing profits and food production. In one example, they generated 6,000 pounds of food on 1/3 acre.

The Comprehensive Plan action would be to encourage local food and to ensure that zoning allows this type of mixed use: commercial farming, residence, food storage, commercial kitchen, office, and distribution center.

*Example of a potential location for a commercial farm:*

The area south of Ridge Rd. and west of Prince St. This area is in the middle of an under served area for grocery stores.



Images from Google Maps

**Additional References:**

<http://www.agriburbia.com>

**4.7 Local Food: Agriburbia**

**Identified Needs Addressed:**

- Local Food

**Potential Solution:**

The TSR Group/Agriburbia, located in Golden, will commercially farm land owned by others. For example, unused land on school property or an unused city owned lot that the city is spending money for lawn care. The land owner will be paid for the use of the land, sharing in the profits generated from selling the food.

**Comprehensive Plan Actions:**

- Encourage land owners (private and government) to commercial farm on unused land
- Require large new developments such as the Marathon site and the SW corner of Santa Fe and Mineral to grow food in some of their open space. Additionally, make sure that zoning allows this usage and that the farm land counts towards open space requirements.

Note: This is NOT recommending that the TSR Group is the company to hire to do this, but rather any company that is implementing something similar.

**Additional References:**

<http://www.agriburbia.com>

#### 4.8 Local Food: Rooftop Gardening

**Identified Needs Addressed:**

- Local Food
- Live and Work in the City
- Work Commute Time

**Potential Solution:**

Encourage owners of flat roofs to lease out their roof space to gardeners.

In addition to the local food, this should provide additional local jobs.

Excerpt From an HLP Blog Posting (link below):



Rooftop gardening can be practical with the only change to the roof being the addition of light weight planters. In 2011, "450 urban agriculture planters were installed on the roof of the Palais des congrès, allowing three partner restaurants (Crudessence, the Palais' catering service, and Intercontinental hotel) to learn more about the basics of market gardening in cities and offer a wide variety of produce on their menu for those who want to eat locally and in season." ([Source article](#))

As one example, [Biotop](#) has an edible roof integrated system for growing food. It is lightweight and can be installed on an existing roof without structural modifications. The Montreal Convention Center installed this system over the summer during the Ecocity World Summit 2011. The food grown went to local restaurants.

**Additional References:**

<http://www.humanlifeproject.blogspot.com/2012/09/roofs-as-economic-generators.html>

#### 4.9 Local Food: Neighborhood Supported Agriculture (NSA)

**Identified Needs Addressed:**

- Local Food
- Live and Work in the City
- Work Commute Time

**Potential Solution:**

Encourage residential home owners to lease out unused land in their yards to a gardener. The gardener could then sell the food in a CSA-like manner. (This concept is similar to the above Agriburbia concept, but at a smaller scale.)

In addition to the local food, this should provide additional local jobs.

**Additional References:**

[http://www.eatwhereulive.com/sfd\\_nsa.htm](http://www.eatwhereulive.com/sfd_nsa.htm)

**4.10 Local Food: Edible Landscaping**

**Identified Needs Addressed:**

- Local Food

**Potential Solution:**

Encourage/Require residents to (over time) replace non-edible landscaping with edible landscaping. Basically, instead of watering the yard to make it look nice, water it to look nice and also generate food at the same time.

**Additional References:**

(example pictures)

[http://www.google.com/search?q=edible+landscaping+pictures&hl=en&rlz=1C1SNNT\\_enUS362US372&prmd=imvns&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=eAyUUMiwFubOyAHu3oHgCg&ved=0CBwQsAQ&biw=1129&bih=611](http://www.google.com/search?q=edible+landscaping+pictures&hl=en&rlz=1C1SNNT_enUS362US372&prmd=imvns&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=eAyUUMiwFubOyAHu3oHgCg&ved=0CBwQsAQ&biw=1129&bih=611)