



GOVERNMENT

Commerce City, CO on Open.Media



Commerce City, Colorado, is a home-rule municipality north of Denver with a rich history stretching back to the mid-1800s. Beginning as ranch and trading posts along the South Platte River in the gold rush era, it evolved into Commerce Town in 1952 and gained city status in 1962 ([Wikipedia](#)). Once an agricultural and light-industrial area, the city later became home to the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and a major oil refinery—now operated by Suncor Energy—making Commerce City an industrial hub with a complex environmental legacy ([Vogue](#)).

The City Council, led by Mayor Steve Douglas, acts as the primary policy-making body for the city ([Wikipedia](#)). Council meetings take place regularly at the Civic Center and often address urban renewal, development, and environmental health—especially concerns stemming from industrial operations like the Suncor refinery and the nearby Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Refuge. Environmental advocates, including local activists, have brought heightened attention to air and soil pollution and health impacts, framing these as major issues for the local government to address ([Vogue](#)).

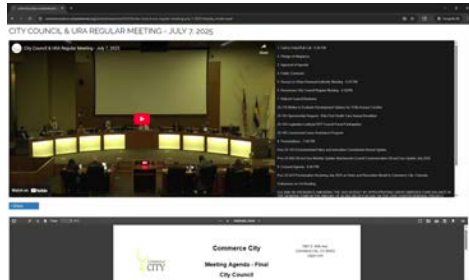


Commerce City Homepage

Commerce City's Planning Commission, established by Ordinance 1016, oversees the city's master plan and reviews zoning and development proposals, such as annexations and planned-unit developments ([c3gov.com](#)). Parallel to this, the Zoning Board of Adjustment—also created by Ordinance 1016—handles appeals, variances, and exceptions to the zoning code . Their public hearings are essential venues for community input, especially regarding rezoning requests. Recent high-profile cases include debates over converting agricultural land to industrial use and the fate of the historic 88 Drive-In theater, which faced potential rezoning before being saved by community advocacy ([Wikipedia](#)).

Commerce City's municipal bodies—including the City Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board—are increasingly balancing this industrial heritage with the realities and needs of a growing, diverse, modern community. The city's population has swelled to over 64,000, with nearly half (48%) identifying as Hispanic or Latino, alongside about 41% non-Hispanic White, 4% Black, and smaller Asian, Indigenous, and multiracial communities . These demographic shifts influence policy priorities, such as bilingual public services, public health outreach, and community advocacy, particularly from youth-led Latinx and Indigenous groups pushing for stricter environmental protections around Suncor and the Arsenal

[Watch Commerce City Public Meetings Live and On Demand](#)



Open Media Session

Advocacy and Engagement

The Future of Public Access: How Technology is Changing Civic Participation

The **rapid advancement of hardware and software**, combined with the ubiquity of smartphones and internet access, is transforming how the public engages with government. Affordable high-definition cameras, cloud-based platforms, and intuitive apps have made it easier than ever for governments to **share information in real time**. At the same time, people have become increasingly comfortable with digital tools, expecting the same **ease of access** to civic participation that they experience in other areas of life—whether it's online banking, telehealth, or remote work. This shift in public expectation is redefining what access means: not just the **legal right to attend a meeting**, but the practical ability to view, understand, and respond to it **from any location**, on any device.



Live streaming now plays a central role in ensuring that **civic participation** keeps pace with the digital era. Rather than relying on attendance in council chambers, residents can watch, rewatch, and share public meetings—extending the reach and lifespan of every civic discussion. Open.Media stands out as one of the highest quality solutions available, simplifying both the live streaming process and the management of recorded data. By automating workflows, ensuring compliance with open government laws, and making it easy for the public to search and access archived meetings, Open.Media helps municipalities meet transparency goals without adding complexity to workloads. As technology continues to evolve, platforms like Open.Media ensure that public access remains not only protected, but strengthened.

CAREER ENGINE



Our [Open Media Career Engine](#) is a service offered to Employers in the Media & Journalism sector to help you find and hire more diverse jobseekers. This program has helped over 40 employers in Colorado's Media & Journalism field hire POC jobseekers at more than double the industry average. We help craft your job description to appeal to diverse applicants, post it to over 20 job boards proven to generate more diverse jobseekers, and manage the screening process so that even the smallest HR team can afford a broad and inclusive hiring process developed by industry leaders.

Email careers@openmediafoundation.org to explore how the OMCE can help you with your next hire.

Join an Open Media Committee

Fundraising Committee - Contact Tony Shawcross at tony@openmediafoundation.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Celebrate Colorado! July 25 - August 3

On August 1, 1876, president Ulysses S. Grant signed a proclamation admitting Colorado as a state. Colorado Day was celebrated as a state holiday on August 1 for many years, and then was moved to the first Monday in August, after the U.S. Congress passed the Uniform Holidays Bill in 1968. The day switched from a public holiday to an observance in 1985.

Celebrate Colorado is a statewide celebration coordinated by the Governor's Office where Coloradans can enjoy free and discounted activities across the state.

[Visit Celebrate Colorado! Website](#)

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