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LiveWell Colorado Awards Commerce City its Highest Recognition for Building a Healthy Community

*Commerce City is the first city in Colorado to reach LiveWell Colorado's
HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign Elite Level*

DENVER — June 7, 2016 — LiveWell Colorado is proud to award its first-ever Elite Status City recognition to Commerce City for adopting five policies that help make it a healthy place to live, work and play.

“Commerce City has made a significant investment in building a healthier community,” said Julie George, LiveWell Colorado director of HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign. “From building parks and playgrounds to improving food access, Commerce City is a shining example of what it means to create a healthy community for all of its residents.”



“Building a healthy community is helping us redefine Commerce City for the next generation,” said René Bullock, Commerce City Mayor Pro Tem. “Being the first-ever LiveWell Colorado Elite City is a distinct honor for which we’re all very proud.” Home to 51,762 residents, Commerce City is the state’s third-fastest growing city and one of its most diverse, with 45.5 percent of the population comprised of individuals with Hispanic descent.

There are four levels of the LiveWell Colorado HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign: Eager, Active, Fit and

Elite. In order to qualify for Elite status, a city must have adopted at least five healthy eating and active living (HEAL) policies. The following are just a few of the policies adopted by Commerce City since 2013:

Active Community

- **Refuge Master Plan:** Commerce City participated in and endorsed the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Master Plan in 2015, approving new trails and trailheads that will connect to the existing network of Commerce City trail system.
- **Referred capital improvement ballot measure:** The city referred a ballot measure in August 2013 to provide a dedicated one-percent sales and use tax for the construction, operations and maintenance of new parks, recreation and road projects. The measure passed in November 2013 with 54 percent of the vote.
- The adopted Station Area Master Plan has a pedestrian and bike components, and the city is investing \$2.5 million to make connections to the new commuter rail station.
- An innovative Tower Road design (completed in 2014), which has on-street bike lanes and a 12-foot multiuse path that also includes a public fruit tree respite area with seating for families and other users. This project is part of the ballot measure and construction began in May 2016.
- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements are being designed for the Highway 2 widening project.
- A Safe Routes to Schools project on E. 72nd Avenue between three schools will begin construction this summer.
- A new 2.5-acre, \$10 million outdoor leisure pool – Paradise Island Pool – opened to residents in July 2015.

- The new 20-acre Fronterra Neighborhood Park opened to residents in August 2015 as part of a \$3 million capital project.

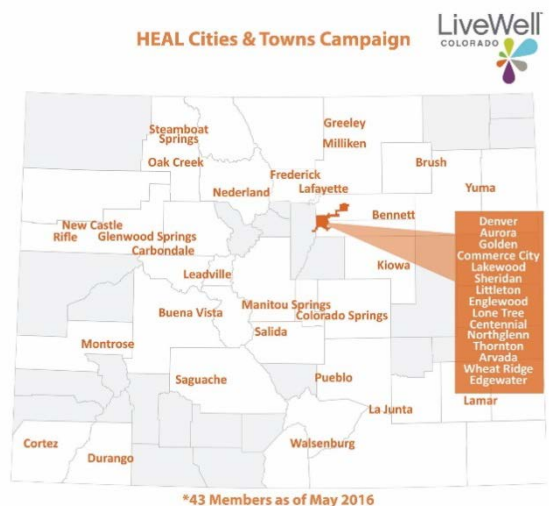
Healthy Workplace

- With the employees of the municipal workforce, achieved 80 percent unique users (252 employees) in city wellness program in 2014.
- Offered more than 30 events including lunch-and-learns, wellness challenges and wellness events in 2014.
- Implemented a “deskcycle” program in 2014 with grant funds to empower activity among employees
- Began an annual employee wellness survey in 2014 to guide program offerings
- Adopted a policy in 2014 to provide employees with a floating holiday if employees participated in two wellness program events. In 2015, made this a contract requirement for the AFSCME collective bargaining unit, to include completing a health wellness survey and program participation for eight hours of additional leave.

Healthy Food Access

- The city drafted a memorandum of understanding for the Commerce City Food Bank Network in 2015 and serves as an active network member to provide improved coordination and healthy food access to local food banks.
- The city’s 2014 land development code does not prohibit donations of backyard produce.
- In 2014, city employees created an organic CSA and held several lunch and learns on healthy eating tips and demonstrations in 2015.
- The city’s Quality Community Foundation funded \$7,500 for local food banks to secure refrigerated storage.

“Commerce City staff and council have worked incredibly hard to advance smart, innovative, collaborative and inclusive HEAL initiatives and earn this designation,” said Erin Mooney, Community Enterprise executive director. “Our collaboration has evolved over years and brought some incredible projects and policies to the community like building new parks, pools and trails, supporting a network local food pantries, a great complete streets policy, and my personal favorite -- planting fruit trees during some public works projects. The fruit can be eaten by kids and as they play in parks, or harvested and donated to the Commerce City Food Bank Network.”



Forty three cities are a part of the LiveWell Colorado HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign, which began in 2013. “We partner with LiveWell Colorado on the HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign because we believe a healthy community is a viable, sustainable community for future generations,” said Sam Mamet, Executive Director, Colorado Municipal League. Since the campaign began, municipalities have adopted more than 70 policies tied to healthy eating and active living across the state.

To learn more about Commerce City and their healthy living initiatives, please visit: <https://www.c3gov.com/>.

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LiveWell Colorado is a statewide nonprofit organization committed to preventing and reducing obesity in Colorado by promoting healthy eating and active living. With the goal of eliminating health disparities and advancing health equity, LiveWell Colorado focuses its efforts on policy, environmental and lifestyle changes that remove barriers and increase access to healthy behaviors. Working in partnership with obesity prevention initiatives across the state, LiveWell Colorado aims to provide every Coloradan with access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity to make Colorado the healthiest state in the nation. For more information, please visit: LiveWellColorado.org.