

Scope of Work for Thornton, Colorado

Thornton Shopping Center

The Thornton Shopping Center is a 15.6-acre property located at the intersection of 88th Avenue and Washington St. in Thornton, Colorado. The center opened in 1955 as Thornton's first "ultra-modern shopping center". Over the years, the shopping center fell into disrepair, and former dry-cleaning businesses have left a substantial plume of perchloroethylene (PCE) that is impacting the property and has migrated offsite, to the southeast of the property. Over the years, CDPHE efforts to force a cleanup of the site have been unsuccessful. Additionally, many of the existing buildings contain asbestos, another impediment to redevelopment.

After years of effort to facilitate redevelopment of the property proved unsuccessful, the City of Thornton began the process of acquiring the property through eminent domain and was awarded possession in January 2023. The City anticipates receiving title to the property in Q2 2024. The city is currently conducting asbestos abatement and demolition of the existing structures and expects to complete demolition by early March. Once the buildings are demolished, remediation efforts will be ongoing. The property has long been an eyesore in one of Thornton's oldest neighborhoods, and there are strong sentiments within the community about the type of redevelopment they would like to see. The city is requesting KSU TAB services to help involve the community in reuse visioning and to build consensus about feasible redevelopment scenarios, as well as determine market feasibility for the most supported reuse alternatives.

Task 1: Preliminary Community Engagement

The Adaapta and Kansas State University (KSU) Technical Assistance for Brownfields (TAB) team will organize and conduct a series of community engagement meetings to solicit feedback from residents about priorities for redevelopment. This task is currently anticipated to include the following meetings:

- **Pre-Meeting:** Attend a City of Thornton-organized kickoff meeting in February 2024 to learn about redevelopment timeline, project history, and establish a feel for the community (attendance only)
- **Meeting 1:** Conduct an in-person meeting to gather feedback from residents on priorities for reuse. This meeting will include interactive redevelopment visioning exercises to begin to establish consensus on reuse. Adaapta will also develop an online survey to supplement the feedback received during the in-person meetings. A link to this survey will be posted shortly after the in-person meeting takes place. A summary of feedback obtained from in-person and online avenues, including a list of desired reuse options, will be provided to the City within a month of the survey closure date.

Task 1 Anticipated Completion: April 2024

Task 2: Highest and Best Use Analysis

Using feedback solicited during Meeting 1, the online survey data, and real estate metrics from Esri and CoStar, Adaapta will prepare a highest and best use analysis¹ report for some or all of the reuse alternatives identified in Task 1. The report will incorporate a community demographic profile, summary of existing and projected market conditions, and recent real estate transactions. It will also include the following elements:

- A description of legally permissible uses (zoning and entitlement factors; environmental covenants; other applicable plans) for the Thornton Shopping Center site and a discussion of what could be constructed given zoning and entitlement constraints.
- A high-level analysis of factors that may impact the physical possibility of development, including constraints based on environmental conditions, floodplain, existing infrastructure, parcel size and configuration, etc.
- Conduct high-level analyses to assess the financial feasibility of proposed reuse options in order to determine the maximally productive use(s).
- Summary of highest and best use(s) based on the four criteria as described in Footnote 1.
- Description of potential benefits of the proposed reuses, including non-financial community benefits, which are not addressed in a highest and best use analysis. Such non-financial community benefits may include environmental justice, community health and wellness, provision of senior and/or youth services, job creation, housing, access to recreational opportunities, open space, etc.

The highest and best use analysis will be summarized in a report for the City of Thornton to help attract potential future development partners. Due to the size of the site and the needs of the community, multiple reuse options will likely be identified as good candidates for the site.

Task 2 Anticipated Completion: July 2024

Future Task 3: Additional Community Engagement

Based on the results of the highest and best use analysis, Adaapta and the KSU TAB team will organize and conduct two additional community engagement meetings:

- **Meeting 2:** In partnership with an architecture/urban design firm, this meeting will solicit participation from a smaller number (10-15) of identified stakeholders for a design charrette informed by the results of the highest and best use analysis. Depending on the number of participants, 1-2 draft site designs will be prepared that respond to market conditions and community priorities.
- **Meeting 3:** This meeting will present the results of the highest and best use analysis and design charrette to the community and solicit additional feedback on redevelopment. The results of this

¹ Highest and Best Use is defined as: *The reasonably, probable, and legal use of vacant land or an improved property that is physically possible, appropriately supported, financially feasible, and that results in the highest value. The four criteria the highest and best use must meet are legal permissibility, physical possibility, financial feasibility, and maximum productivity.*

meeting will be summarized in a report for the client, along with recommendations for next steps.

- **Additional Meetings as needed:** Based on the complexity of redevelopment, additional outreach may be conducted to allow for ongoing communication with stakeholders and residents.

Task 3 Anticipated Completion: October 2024