



**MARIA GONZALEZ**  
**Candidate for City Council At-Large**

**Fast Facts:**

Age: 42  
Occupation: Business Owner  
Years lived in Commerce City: 25  
Years lived in Colorado: 31  
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**Questions & Answers**

**1. Why are you running for council?**

I am passionate about Commerce City! I have been in this amazing community for 25 years and raised my two children; they attended Adams 14 and School District 27J. For the last 20 years, I have been an active community member volunteering my time in many areas of economic and community development. I have seen our city grow and prosper and I want to be a part of Commerce City's continued growth as a City Council member. With the many roles I have had in our community I will bring a different perspective to the position. I am a Latina, business owner, community leader involved in numerous local and regional non-profits, former city employee and I have lived in the all areas of the community. Most recently, I was the co-chair of the Quality Community Initiative responsible for the recreational facilities including new parks and Paradise Island as well as other important capital improvement projects to benefit our community in the next years to come. I have worked hard to gain the trust and credibility of the community and I will work hard for residents and business owners to promote our great city.

**2. What do you see as the three biggest opportunities for Commerce City?**

Commerce City has many great things going for it but I believe our location, the diversity of our community and our room to grow present the most opportunity.

- Commerce City is located in a prime location. Our community is accessible due to the proximity to the Denver International Airport and to many major regional arteries. We will also be located on N line of RTD's train service. Our location provides a great place to live, work, learn and play.



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- Our community is diverse, which is an important asset. We have so much to learn from one another and I believe our diversity makes us strong and should be celebrated. Not only are we diverse in people, we have a multitude of economic diversity that supports financial stability.
- We are the fourth fastest growing community in the state and we are expected to grow to 64 square miles in the next 20 years. City Council and staff have a tremendous opportunity to shape the future of the community. I am excited and supportive of expanding our green areas, ensuring we have mixed growth and securing affordable housing.

### **3. What do you see as the three biggest challenges facing the city?**

We are full of potential but there are challenges facing our community. I believe we have an opportunity to improve education, increase affordable housing and promote diversity opportunities.

I am disappointed in the education system in our community. While I realize City Council is not in the business of education I believe they should be a better partner. A Quality Community for a Lifetime and Commerce City's growth is inexplicably tied to the success of our schools. When our schools do well, families want to move here and companies want to relocate. Not only do we need to partner better with local businesses and our school district but local non-profits supporting early childhood education and flexible afterschool programming options for working families. I also believe creating comprehensive opportunities for higher education and trade schools should be a priority.

Affordable housing is a challenge for all cities but Commerce City has always been a place people have moved for affordability. As our community grows and prospers we need to maintain a commitment to providing affordable housing options to senior citizens and our young families. As a former Access Housing board member, I understand the complexity and necessity for the community address housing needs for all. City government can and should address these issues in partnership with non-profits in the community and in their long-term planning.

Commerce City has a rich diversity and I believe we should promote and be proud to have. I think the arts and culture can still grow and develop to be a welcoming and inclusive city. The diversity of our business community needs to stay a priority for continued sustainable economic development. As a participant in the Commerce City Business Advisory Committee I have requested education and business development for small, local businesses. We also need to ensure new businesses coming in can be a foundation for long-term sustainability.



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#### **4. What does a “Quality Community for a Lifetime” mean to you?**

Quality Community for a Lifetime means to me that I am safe, happy and encouraged to belong to this community and that others are too. In Commerce City, I have raised my family, been a city employee and opened a business. I am sure there are a lot of great places in the world. However, this is home and I want to make sure our kids have a place to learn and safe places to play, our parents have a place to work and our business a place to prosper. As your City Council member I will work to make sure all are safe, happy and encouraged to feel connected in our community.

#### **5. What is your favorite aspect of the city?**

My favorite aspect of Commerce City is that we have an opportunity to grow our community into an even greater City. City forefathers have built a solid foundation, recent leaders have added to that and I see the future as bright. There are so many examples of communities growing with intention and with values. Our City tree logo symbolizes growth while understanding our past and rooted in tradition. I hope I am given a place to help build Commerce City’s future. I am very proud that we are changing the image of our city and ensuring future generations enjoy this great community.