

plans Commerce City officials have for the mostly commercial area.

Mart at Monaco Street and East 72nd Place.

Story by Margaret Jackson | Photos by Jerry Cleveland  
The Denver Post

*The once-thriving 12-block district inside Commerce City has people talking — and working on a way to incorporate the land into the city's master plan to reinvigorate itself.*

**T**he remnants of a tiny working-class town west of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal have caught the eye of developer Dana Crawford.

She and environmental lawyer J. Kemper Will have been hired by Commerce City to design a master plan for the property known as Derby. Their mission is to incorporate the land into Commerce City's grand plan to reinvigorate itself

with a new soccer stadium, town center, high school, open space and park area. Derby would provide a residential component.

"It's all about the people — it's their town," Crawford said of the design process. "Most of them are beginning to realize Derby can really be quite special."

Former City Manager Perry VanDeventer acknowledged, "There's nothing particularly attrac-

tive about (Derby). It's not a large trade area. The buildings need to be fixed up, and the streets and parks need to be improved."

It hasn't always been that way. Derby was once a thriving commercial area, a 12-block district bounded by Colorado 2, Oneida Street and East 72nd Avenue.

"It's a funny little triangle in a weird location," Crawford said.

Like many small towns in the West, it got its start when a railroad depot opened to serve the area's agricultural economy. The town grew drastically during World War II when the Rocky Mountain Arsenal

was built to the east, but Derby resisted annexation by Commerce City.

In the 1960s, Derby made national news as the epicenter of a series of small and puzzling earthquakes. It was later determined that the quakes were triggered by wastewater being pumped down a 2-mile-deep well at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal. Once the dumping stopped, so did the quakes.

With Commerce City's population nearly doubling over the past six years to 40,023 residents, and Kroenke Sports' much-anticipated

> See **DERBY** on 8C

## Get smart for less

### High-tech home systems dropping in price

By Kimberly S. Johnson  
Denver Post Staff Writer

So-called smart homes are becoming more affordable, with less-expensive and simpler devices to manage everything including home music, videos, lighting, security cameras, heating and even the oven.

"A home system that once cost \$25,000 could now be \$10,000 to \$15,000," said Phil Murray, marketing manager for Denver-based ListenUp. "The level of sophisti-

> See **HOME** on 6C



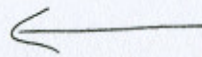
Brian Brainerd | The Denver Post

Lisa Maughan of Exceptional Innovation shows off cables used in the "brains" of a smart home.

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cation and control we can offer at a given price is much greater than we could give a few years ago. Not just the rich and famous get to take advantage of this; the average person can."

Affordable smart-home technology is a focus of the Custom Electronics Design and Installation Association expo Thursday through Sunday at the Colorado Convention Center. The event, which is not open to the public, will bring nearly 30,000 professionals to Denver.

All of the elements of the expo come together in the parking lot across the street from the convention center, where a fully outfitted smart home is on display. Westerville, Ohio-based Exceptional Innovation and Hewlett-Packard spent the past week constructing the 2,200-square-foot CEDIA Home of Electronic Lifestyles. It contains high-definition television, surround sound piped through the house, and a smart oven that can refrigerate and cook food, and even sends a message to your TV when a meal is done.

The oven retails for \$6,500. Automatic window shades that can be set to pull up or down with the touch of a button start at \$500. Lifepoint touch-screens that allow navigation of all the digital content in each room start at \$5,500. Speakers built into the ceiling range from \$200 to \$500. A smart thermostat is \$400.

HDTV and digital music are driving demand for home automation. Prices of HDTVs have fallen in recent years, along with the costs associated with running wires through a home and connecting various devices with a single touch-screen remote control.

"Many of the products are things that you can put into an



Brian Brainerd | The Denver Post

Mike Seamons of Exceptional Innovations demonstrates the TMIO Oven, which keeps food cold until cooking. The oven sends messages to other smart devices in the home when food is done. A TV remote control can be used to add cooking time.

existing home. It's much more attainable," said Mike Seamons, vice president of marketing for Exceptional Innovations. "Many

people already have some of the products that make up a smart-home environment, such as an Xbox 360."

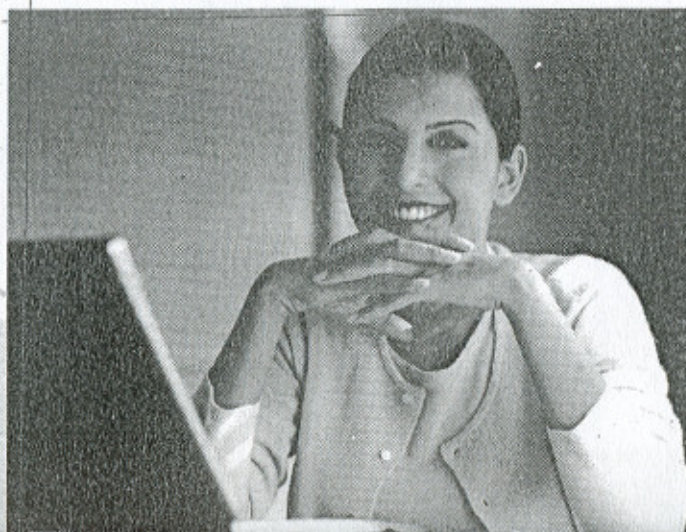
In the smart home, the Xbox 360 gaming console is hooked into the main home-entertainment center. Using a wireless game pad, users can not only play games but control TV channels, music and DVDs on a single screen.

ListenUp and Thornton-based Ultimate Electronics are just two of the retailers that will be trolling the expo this week looking for items to offer their customers next year.

"The affordability aspect is important, but you have to be able to use the products," said Jim Pearse, senior vice president of merchandise for Ultimate. "That's the big evolution. Before, it was esoteric and hard to use. We've been waiting for these home-integration products."

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