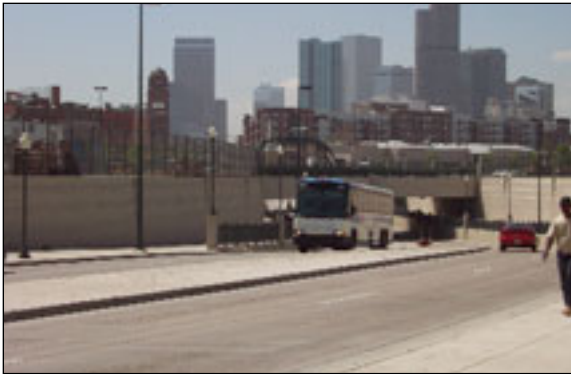




EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





Brighton connects to downtown via Broadway



Platte River Trail and Globeville Landing Park



Denargo Market as it exists today

The area covered in the River North Plan, or the Plan, is generally located northeast of downtown Denver between Park Avenue West and Interstate 70 (I-70) and its interchange with Brighton Boulevard. This area has enormous potential to create a unique community that will take its position among Denver's great places. Its past as a mixed-use area provides guidance on how to re-establish a mixture of uses to maximize its potential while continuing to serve as a home to many existing businesses.

The plan framework consists of two north-south corridors and one east-west corridor connecting three districts, four neighborhoods and downtown Denver. The next two paragraphs describe the corridors and the districts.

The recent replacement of the Broadway viaduct on the south end of the corridor and the improvements to the I-70 interchange on the north have improved the connection between I-70 and downtown. The Brighton Boulevard corridor can become an attractive gateway to Downtown Denver from I-70 and the North Denver neighborhoods and is in a position to benefit from and serve the growing downtown market. The South Platte River corridor presents a natural open space area that includes a bicycle trail and Globeville Landing Park. The river corridor has the opportunity to provide a setting for a mile long residential and mixed-use area with river front access. These two corridors connect two major districts and an events district. A third corridor is 38th Street. Given the restricted access from the west to the east created by the two railroad lines that run through the area and the South Platte River, 38th Street is a critical connection. It runs under the railroad tracks and over a bridge that crosses the South Platte River, thereby, connecting the segments of the study area to each other and to Brighton Boulevard.

The Denargo Market district is adjacent to downtown and has access from the Central Business District (CBD) via Broadway but also to the Central Platte Valley via Delgany Street. Its placement along the South Platte River and proximity to downtown provides an opportunity to create an exciting mixed-use area with its own identity. RTD's FasTracks Vision Plan calls for a rapid transit station in the vicinity of where 40th Avenue and 40th Street come together creating the opportunity to establish a 40th and 40th Transit Oriented Development district. If implemented, the FasTracks Vision Plan calls for rapid transit service between Union Station and Denver International Airport (DIA), to Thornton along the North Metro Line, and to downtown via an extension of the light rail line that runs along Welton Street and that now ends at 30th Street and Downing Street. River North is conveniently located between downtown and DIA and will be connected to both through transit and roads. New employers and new residents will be attracted to convenient access to downtown, Stapleton and DIA. The Events District includes the National Western Stock Show, the Denver Coliseum, and the Forney Transportation

Museum and attracts visitors from all over the world.

At the same time, River North already is the home to several large employers and to many long-time businesses. These businesses provide considerable employment and serve local businesses as well as the Rocky Mountain Region. Most of these businesses are an asset to the area and to the city. The retention of some of the unique industrial buildings will assure that the character of River North is maintained and will continue to foster an arts-related community.

Brighton Boulevard is part of the downtown grid and was named Wewatta Street until the late 1920's. It was separated from downtown until Broadway was extended and a viaduct built over the railroad yards. There was a considerable residential community along Brighton Boulevard and in other portions of the area as well as a variety of businesses that served local residents. This demonstrates one of the purposes of the Plan, which is to restore the historic, mixed-use character of the area. This is reinforced by *Blueprint Denver: An Integrated Land Use and Transportation Plan* that characterizes this area as an Area of Change. Areas of Change are areas that can accommodate growth because of the opportunity to create mixed-use development in conjunction with exceptional transportation access. This plan provides a framework and establishes implementation strategies that will direct future growth and redevelopment in a coordinated manner to River North. This plan is intended to promote River North by providing information about the area to existing businesses and landowners and to developers to help facilitate expansion and redevelopment. Whenever possible, this information will be updated annually and made available by updating the technical appendix.

Almost all of the area is zoned either I-1 or I-2 which allows for a wide range of industrial uses. The primary land uses are warehousing and railroads. Other prevalent uses are RTD and bottling and distribution. Nine percent of the land is vacant and a considerable amount of the land is underutilized. There are only 79 residential structures within the Plan's area.

An analysis of demographic and market conditions was undertaken. The results of this analysis led to the identification of potential land uses that could locate in River North. Over a twenty-year time frame, it is conceivable that over 1,500 dwelling units could be added, 350,000 square feet of retail development, 650,000 square feet of industrial development, and 1,800,000 square feet of office space. These conservative estimates of development were used to project future traffic. Traffic moves reasonably well at the present time. Based on a projected general increase in traffic and increases from new development, it is expected that several intersections will be operating at less than optimum levels of



Heading downtown on Brighton Boulevard



Drive Train Industries employs 180 people



Warehousing is the predominant use



This land is currently vacant



38th Street, Walnut and Marion intersection



Many of the streets are in poor condition

service. Intersections that may need attention include 38th Street and Brighton Boulevard, 38th Street and Walnut, and 31st Street and Brighton.

River North was once home to a variety of industrial uses and landfills that have created a variety of environmental problems. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has agreed to provide funding to test soil conditions and groundwater in several locations within the Plan's Area.

Infrastructure issues include the poor condition of several streets, drainage problems, and above grade utilities. Several storm water basins run through this area and studies are underway for several of these basins.

Goals and objectives have been identified for River North as a whole and also for the three corridors and three districts. In addition, actions have been identified that can lead to the implementation of this plan. Some of the primary ones are (1) identifying a cross section for Brighton Boulevard that identifies the characteristics for a rebuilt street, (2) rezoning portions of the area to mixed-use zone districts, (3) addressing the inadequacy of 38th Street for traffic, pedestrians and bicyclists, (4) master planning and establishing General Development Plans for the Denargo Market area and the 40th and 40th Transit Oriented Development area, (5) improving pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the area, (6) addressing traffic and transit needs and taking advantage of land use opportunities as part of the I-70 East Corridor process, (7) enhancing the South Platte River corridor, (8) promoting economic activity, (9) creating a variety of housing options including affordable housing, and (10) addressing environmental problems.

This plan was developed with considerable public input and with considerable assistance from several city department partners and other agency partners.



Plan Framework

