



Brighton: 10 Years in the (Re)Making

Brighton Urban Renewal Authority 10th Anniversary Report 2011

Message from the Chairman & Executive Director

This year we're celebrating our city's 125th anniversary. That makes us one of Colorado's oldest communities. But it's unlikely that our pioneering families would recognize the one-stop town they founded in 1887.

As a rural county seat, Brighton was a quiet town removed from the hustle and bustle of Denver. Then came Denver International Airport and the E-470 Beltway. Suddenly, we were just 20 minutes from everything. Developers turned farmland into residential neighborhoods. New homes went up faster than we could count them. New investment didn't happen as fast in older parts of town, because urban redevelopment is more complex and often more expensive. So the city decided to take control of our own destiny and change this development pattern. Ten years ago we began to write the next, and best, chapter of our town's story.

In 2001, the Brighton City Council unanimously approved the creation of the Brighton Urban Renewal Authority (BURA). In this, the Council was strongly supported by the Brighton Economic Development Council, Brighton Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Brighton Partnership.

The goal was to implement tools to spur reinvestment and redevelopment in the downtown and adjacent areas. And not just any investment, but the things we needed – a strong retail mix, affordable housing, new cultural amenities, workforce training and new jobs.

Today, these targeted public investments have attracted more than \$420 million in private investment, creating or retaining over 1,200 jobs. And new tax revenues are being shared with Adams County and two school districts, to spread the public benefits further.

In 2011, Brighton was named one of America's 100 Best Communities for Young People. We can't imagine a better measure of our success in creating a truly sustainable community, in part through our urban renewal efforts. Because in the end, this isn't about real estate development – it's about laying the foundation for another 125 years in the City of Brighton.



Dave Rose
Chairman

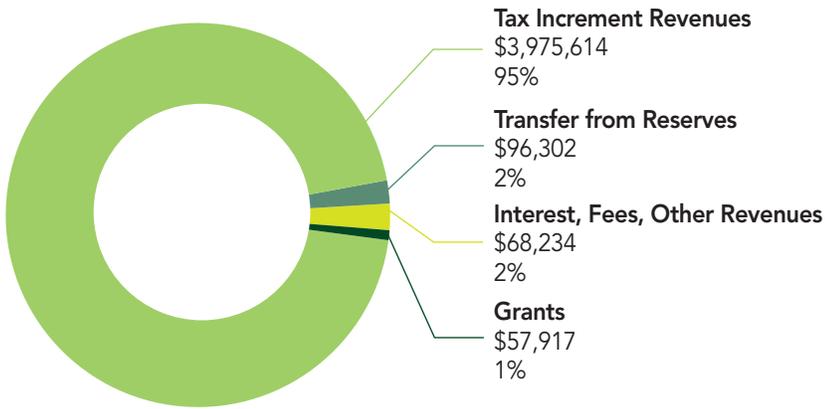


Manuel Esquibel
City Manager
BURA Executive Director

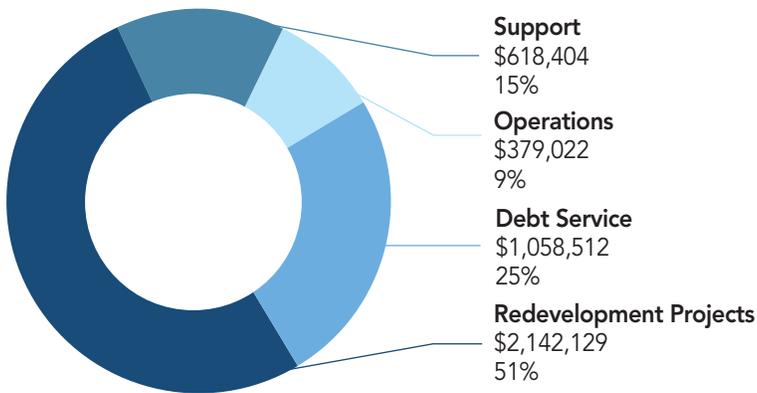
It's unlikely that our pioneering families would recognize the one-stop town they founded in 1887.



2011 BURA Revenues: \$4,198,067



2011 BURA Expenditures: \$4,198,067



“Urban Renewal has been a major tool to support reinvestment in key areas of our community. Our small but targeted public investments help ‘prime the pump’ for private sector partners to get a project underway.”

*Manuel Esquibel
City Manager,
BURA Executive Director
2001 to Present*

BURA Board of Commissioners



Dave Rose
Chairman
Principal
Northeast
Elementary School



Alan Lemons
Past Chairman
Senior Vice President
Wells Fargo Bank

The Brighton Urban Renewal Authority Board of Commissioners and staff are experienced professionals in business, education, economic development and local government.



Rich Gonzales
Vice Chair
District Representative
United Power



Gary Plock
Owner
Pinocchio's Restaurant
Real Estate Investor



Mark Cordova
President
MCC Enterprises



Wayne Scott
Mayor Pro Tem
Brighton City Council
Executive Director
Colorado Classified
School Employees
Association



Elias Huerta
Owner
E H Landscaping



Nancy McLean
Teacher
Pennock
Elementary School



Troy Hageman
CEO/CFO
RE/MAX Momentum



Candace Black
[Board Alternate](#)
Deputy District Attorney
Jefferson County



Bryan Larson
[Board Alternate](#)
Manager
Premier Title Agency
of Colorado



Magdalena del Villar
Assistant Principal
North Elementary
School

Staff



Manuel Esquibel
City Manager
BURA
Executive Director



Raymond Gonzales
REDCo
Assistant
City Manager



Jac Cuney
Director,
Redevelopment and
Development Projects



Linda Gonzales
Assistant to the
Executive Director



Gary Montoya
Downtown Initiative



Helen Rodriguez
Operations Manager
The Armory at Brighton
Cultural Center



Erica Blake
Administrative
Assistant



Susie Ramirez
Special Events
Coordinator



David Gallegos
Special Events
Leader



Paul Benedetti
Legal Advisor

Special thanks

We thank the Mayor and City Council of Brighton, who have provided sustained leadership and a "get it done" attitude from the beginning:

Dick McLean, Mayor
Wayne Scott, Mayor Pro Tem, Ward 3
Lynn Baca, Ward 3
Rex Bell, Ward 2
J.W. Edwards, Ward 4

Cynthia Martinez, Ward 2
Chris Maslanik, Ward 1
Wilma Rose, Ward 4
Kirby Wallin, Ward 1

Past Council members – 2011
Terry Moore, Ward 1
Rob Farina, Ward 3
Daryl Meyers, Ward 4

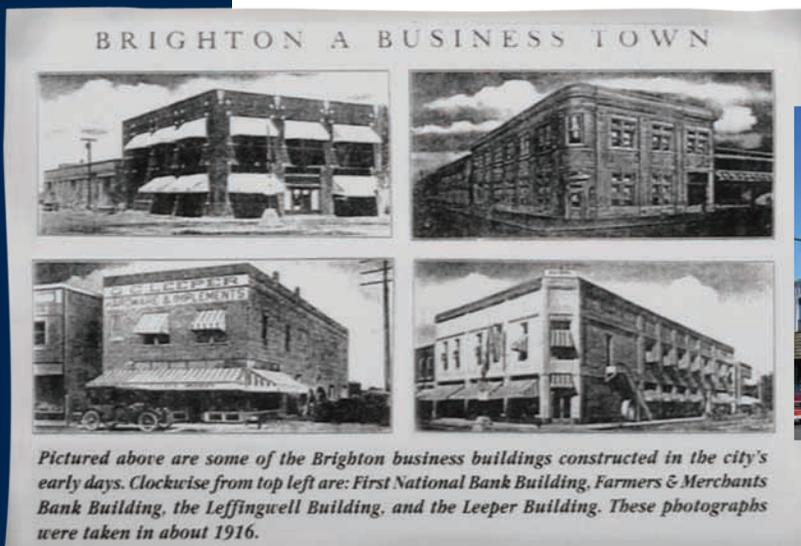
Private investment follows public commitment

Most cities have older areas that negatively affect the quality of life and economic vitality of the community. The purpose of an urban renewal authority is to stimulate reinvestment in the city in accordance with urban renewal plans adopted by the town or city council.

Redevelopment of these areas can be very complex and costly, and there is usually a funding gap. Urban renewal authorities may utilize a financial tool called Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to close that gap and fund eligible improvements within a designated area. Bonds can be issued based on current property taxes for a site and a forecast of additional property and sales tax revenues that will be generated by a new development. That difference, or tax increment, can be used toward construction costs or public improvements, and paid off through newly-generated tax revenues. Working in partnership with the private sector, urban renewal authorities can help create new retail, office, residential, cultural and educational amenities to benefit the entire community.

In 2001, 2010 and 2011, the Brighton City Council approved urban renewal plans that encompass much of downtown Brighton and targeted areas to the north and south. The Brighton Urban Renewal Authority is an economic catalyst for these areas, using its authority to leverage funds and forge creative partnerships with private developers, businesses and other investors. BURA may assist in property acquisition, development financing, public improvements or development approval. The goal is to encourage investment and reinvestment within these targeted areas while growing jobs and strengthening the city's tax base.

Since its creation, BURA has attracted more than \$420 million in private investment and created or retained over 1,200 jobs in the urban renewal areas. Due in part to downtown urban renewal efforts, new property tax revenues to the city are now approximately \$1.3 million each year. In the core downtown area, the annual property tax increment has increased nearly \$1.2 million since 2003.



Awards

2005

Governor's Award for Downtown Excellence

2005

Economic Development Council of Colorado Large Community Award

2005

Adams County Economic Development Excellence Award

2008

Project of the Year

University of Denver Franklin L. Burns School of Real Estate and Construction Management

2009

Special Development of the Year

National Association of Industrial and Office Properties, Colorado Chapter

First Place National Excellence in Construction
Associated Builders and Contractors Association

Excellence in Construction
Associated Builders and Contractors Rocky Mountain Chapter

Governor's Award for Downtown Excellence:
Best Downtown Façade Program

2010

Governor's Award for Downtown Excellence:
Best Adaptive Reuse, The Armory at Brighton Cultural Center



“Ten years ago, we had old empty buildings downtown left by the lumberyard and the hospital was leaving; we had whole vacant blocks and aged, worn store fronts; we had no new housing for our seniors and no real entertainment options. Today, we have the cultural center, new healthcare and educational center, modern housing for seniors and new businesses with clean new faces downtown.

If not for urban renewal, I’m not sure people would even recognize our community as a vibrant place. Our downtown would be dead.”

*Alan Lemons
BURA Chairman, 2001-2010*

Affordable Housing

Since 2002, with the support of BURA, nearly 400 much-needed affordable apartments have been built for families, seniors and individuals.



Platte View Landing Apartments

features a fitness center and pool, with easy access to Highway 85.



Brighton Village

is a 125-unit, affordable senior apartment community within walking distance of downtown services and amenities. The first 60 apartments were occupied in 2007.



Hughes Station offers quality affordable apartments for families, with amenities and training programs on a convenient Main Street location.



Hampton Inn

opened a new 76-room property opened in 2009, providing short-term housing for area employees and visitors to Adams County.

From 1955 to 2009, Brighton did not have a single cultural venue. Today, Downtown is becoming a hub of culture and civic life. Some 35,000 visitors come to the Brighton Cultural Center each month for a wide variety of events, activities, performances and exhibits. A catalyst project, the center is attracting new visitors and spin-off creative enterprises.

Arts and Culture



Anythink Brighton Library at the Brighton Cultural Center

The 20,000 square-foot Anythink Brighton library sets the standard for future libraries with its innovative approaches to customer service, programs and corporate culture. Here, books are just the beginning to a world of inquiry and activities. Anythink Brighton is LEED Silver certified and the first carbon positive library in the United States.



The Armory at the Brighton Cultural Center

The 89-year-old historic Armory had been fenced off and used as for lumber storage for decades before being re-opened in 2009. The beautifully restored, 6,000 square-foot building now presents local and regional theater, dance, music and visual arts exhibits and performances. It is one of seven historic Armories in the State of Colorado.



Main Street Creatives

The former chamber building on Main Street is now an incubator for artists and creative entrepreneurs. The space includes rooms for teaching and exhibiting as well as low-cost studios for working artists. Artist salons offer networking and business training. As a business development strategy, BURA is subsidizing the space to attract and grow creative businesses – a key downtown niche.



BURA serves three urban renewal areas:

- The Downtown Urban Renewal Area: 900 acres in Downtown Brighton and adjacent areas.
- The North Brighton Employment Urban Renewal Area: 244 acres near North Main Street and New Energy Boulevard
- The South Brighton Urban Renewal Area: 753 acres near Interstate 76 and Sable Boulevard

Key Projects and Opportunities

Vestas Nacelles A/S & Blade Manufacturing
(1500 N East Crown Prince Blvd)

Brighton Learning and Resource Campus

REDCo offices (22 South Fourth Avenue)

Brighton Pavilions (305 Pavilions Place)

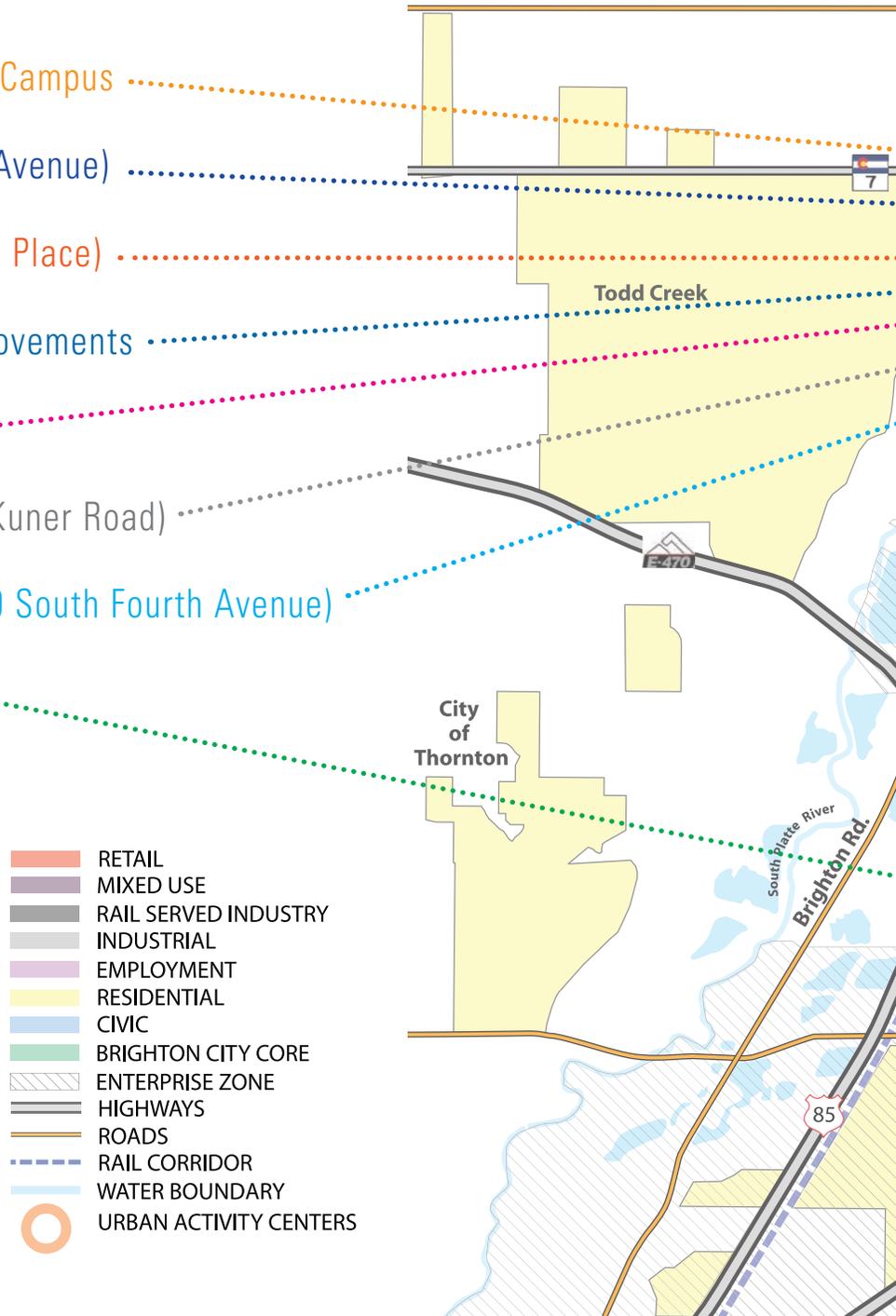
Fourth Avenue Streetscape Improvements

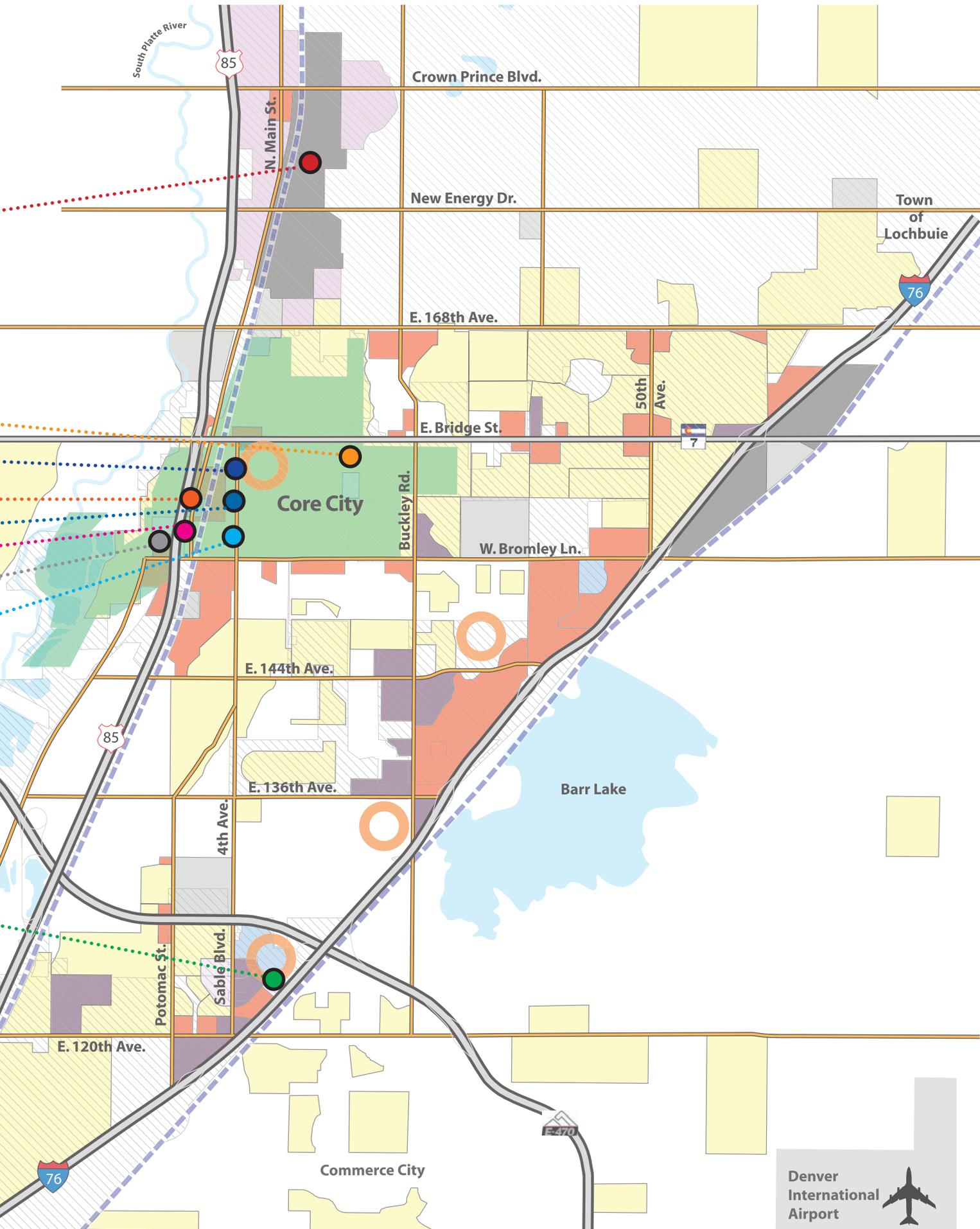
South Main Street Realignment

Alberta Redevelopment (893 S. Kuner Road)

4th Avenue Gateway Center (859 South Fourth Avenue)

Adams Crossing (E-470/I76)





Downtown Initiative



Brighton is one of the only communities in the region with an historic downtown. As the county seat, Downtown was once a thriving place to meet and do business. But by 2001, it was suffering the same fate as countless other American main streets. Buildings were rundown, vacancy rates were high, and whole blocks were being left behind by former employers. With new suburban retail destinations, there were fewer reasons to go Downtown.

In 2006, BURA initiated a special task force to develop a downtown vision. Led by Denver consultant Dana Crawford, hundreds of community and business leaders participated in a “placemaking” workshop and contributed ideas. The final plan called for a mix of general improvements, historic preservation and new redevelopment to maintain and enhance the downtown area. Action items included better landscaping,

Façade Improvement Program

In downtown redevelopment, little things matter. Building improvements like new paint, windows and signage create a sense of identity and attract new investment. In 2007, BURA launched a façade improvement program that now involves more than 95 percent of eligible property owners.

The goals were to preserve and enhance downtown buildings, regain Downtown’s historic character, enhance property values, support local business and foster civic pride. To date, 33 projects have been completed, totaling \$671,000 in private and public funds.





wayfinding and connections between downtown destinations, as well as restoration of historic building facades along Main Street.

Today, most of these recommendations have been implemented. Nineteen of 39 detailed strategies are underway. Every year, hundreds of events and programs take place at the Brighton Cultural Center (the Armory and the Anythink Library), attracting more than 25,000 visitors per month. Several annual festivals also contributed to new spending in downtown restaurants and stores. A new website, light pole banners, alley improvements and workshops made Downtown more attractive and supported local businesses.

Find out more at www.dtbrighton.com.

Downtown Partnership Committee

The Downtown Partnership Committee, staffed by BURA, advocates for Downtown Brighton through business recruitment and support, economic development, marketing and special events. Many thanks to these tireless leaders:

Co-chair

*Gary Plock,
Pinocchio's Italian Eatery*

Co-chair

*Blake Bischoff,
State Farm Insurance*

*Wilma Rose
Brighton City Council*

*Wayne Scott
Brighton City Council*



Downtown Connections

Fourth Avenue/Bridge Street Enhancements

Fourth Avenue is a primary north-south arterial connecting Bromley Lane to Downtown Brighton. Redevelopment is already being encouraged through an overlay zoning district. New streetscape improvements are further strengthening the corridor and connect it to urban renewal areas. The project includes new pedestrian-scale streetlights, wider sidewalks, bicycle lanes and undergrounding of overhead utilities. Brighton City Hall became a new anchor in 2011, with over 80 employees occupying 77,000 square feet of space.



Cabbage Street Improvements

Cabbage Street was a neglected area tucked behind Main Street storefronts and the rail line. Not anymore. New sidewalks, parking, street lights and public art were added in 2009. Two new pocket parks with benches, tables and plantings were installed in 2010, finishing off what is now an interesting and safe corridor.



New entry monument at Fourth Avenue and Bromley Lane

Main Street Gateway Improvements

Access to Downtown Brighton from the south on Main Street has been extremely restricted. That will change dramatically when South Main is opened up as part of a federally-funded transportation project. BURA and the City of Brighton have long advocated for this project, which will greatly enhance Downtown's southern gateway and stimulate redevelopment along South Main Street.

New Jobs and Retail Services

Slowly but surely, empty storefronts have been filling up in Downtown Brighton. BURA has supported many merchants with strategic investments, façade improvement grants and special events. Other targeted investments are supporting major employers in growth industries such as renewable energy, healthcare and government services.

Vestas/Clean Energy

Vestas opened the first of two factories on its 300 acre campus in July 2010. The 265,000 square-foot nacelle plant employs more than 300 people and is expected to produce more than 1,500 nacelles per year at full operation. A blade factory opened in 2011, employing an expected 600 people at full operating capacity. Brighton's central location offers access to rail services, highway infrastructure, a qualified workforce and sites for related industries. BURA may invest in specific infrastructure improvements to support additional firms bringing jobs and new tax revenues to the area.



Kaiser Permanente

Kaiser Permanente occupied the 4th Avenue Gateway Center at the southern entrance to Downtown in 2011. The 27,860 square-foot facility has 24 employees providing primary healthcare, pharmaceutical and optometry services.

Big Lots

A former 57,000 square-foot Albertsons grocery store west of Downtown was vacant for six years. In 2011, Alberta Development redeveloped it into a Big Lots discount retailer and an Hispanic grocery store, with room for additional retailers. Together with the city, BURA funded some infrastructure improvements and improved access points.



Adams County Government Center

Located at the convergence of Interstate 76 and the E-470 beltway, Adams Crossing is a premier mixed-use development and major employment center. The 91-acre Adams County Government Center and its 1,200 + employees and visitors. This anchor will attract users for up to 2 million square feet of commercial space, 1 million square feet of retail space.

Greenleaf Wholesale and Kitayama Brothers

For more than 40 years, Greenleaf Wholesale and Kitayama Brothers, national wholesale floral growers and distributors, were based in Brighton. Their 30 employees managed more than 1 million square feet of greenhouses and retail stores in 20 U.S. cities. In 2010, serious space constraints compelled the companies to seek new locations. The Brighton Economic Development Corporation and BURA quickly responded, identifying new space in the downtown urban renewal area. The companies invested more than \$300,000 in renovations and occupied the building, keeping jobs and economic activity in Brighton.

Retail Services

Brighton Pavilions

Once a blighted drainage area, the award-winning, \$20 million Brighton Pavilions lifestyle center was completed in 2005. A 30,000 square-foot, mixed-use development, Brighton Pavilions is anchored by a 12-screen AMC Theaters Showplace, Lone Star Steakhouse and a 240-space Regional Transportation District Park-N-Ride. Located at Brighton's downtown gateway at US 85 and Bridge Street, Pavilions is currently attracting significant new investment and business activity.



Jack in the Box

A new Jack in the Box hamburger chain opened in 2011, adding to the tax base in the downtown urban renewal area.



Platteview Farms Retail Center

Platteview Farms Retail Center anchors Brighton's high-visibility western entrance at Highway 7 and Bridge Street. Featuring a new Santiago's Restaurant and a state-of-the-art carwash, the \$4 million, 7,600 square-foot complex also includes nearly 3,200 square feet of retail and office space.

Restaurants

Flood Stage Ale Works, The Copper Rail and Pinocchio's are popular restaurants activating key corners in older downtown buildings.



Additional restaurants include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Los Pescadores | Lauer Kraut Restaurant |
| El Coyote Grill | La Placita |
| La Estrellita | Fuhgidabowdit Pizzeria |
| Jerry's Bar and Grill | Taco and Salsas |
| Buffet City | Bubba Chinos |
| Jordinelli's Sports Bar & Restaurant | Qdoba |
| Camaron Loco | Lone Star Steakhouse |
| Taco Loco | Cold Stone Creamery |
| Anthony's Pizza | Starbucks |
| Azadores Mexican Grill | Los Jimadores |
| | Asia Inn |

Brighton Learning and Resource Campus

The closure of the Platte Valley Medical Center could have been a major setback for Downtown Brighton. Instead, the city, BURA and the Brighton Economic Development Corporation in participation with Community Reach, seized the opportunity to increase access to higher education, workforce training and healthcare for citizens. Today the Brighton Learning and Resource Campus serves hundreds of adults, families and children, and the project is recognized as a state-wide model.

Re-opened in 2008, the campus is now home to nine nonprofit organizations and has room to grow. Colorado State University – the first four-year university presence in Brighton – offers postgraduate degrees in social work and organizational management to nearly 100 students. About 200 adults attend classes at Front Range Community College in business, economics, communications, science, math and more. A new small business assistance center offers professional counseling and free or low-cost workshops to support start-up or existing businesses.

Salud Family Health Centers and Community Reach Center provide affordable healthcare and counseling services, while more than 200 children attend preschools operated by Adams County Headstart and School District 27J. Project Lead the Way offers specialized instruction in science and engineering to high school students.

The Brighton Learning and Resource Campus is a unique and innovative collaboration. The project is an outstanding model for blending and braiding funding streams and missions of public agencies to preserve property and create expanded training for citizens. The Colorado Workforce Development Council and CDLE are pleased to be a partner in such a dynamic advancement of service to this community.

*Booker T. Graves
Director
Colorado Workforce
Development Council,
Colorado Department
of Labor and Employment*



Colorado State University offers postgraduate professional degrees for working adults.



Project Lead The Way provides high school students with applied experiences in math and science.



The Brighton Small Business Assistance Center provides a wide range of workshops for entrepreneurs.

Front Range community Colleges offers a variety of classes for adults.



One-Stop Investment Assistance

In 2010, BURA became part of the new city management office of Redevelopment, Economic Development and Community Resources Office (REDCo). This dynamic approach leverages resources and streamlines efforts for all city agencies involved in sustainable community development. It also provides one-stop assistance for business owners, developers and others interested in investing in Brighton. REDCo agencies include BURA, the Brighton Economic Development Corporation, Brighton Housing Authority, Grant Development Office, Office of Youth Resources, and Downtown Initiative and Special Events.

If you or your company is interested in investing in Brighton's urban renewal areas, here's how we could help:

Market research and economic data

Get the latest demographics, market studies, employer statistics and investment information through the Brighton Economic Development Corporation.

See www.brighthonedc.org.

Gap funding

Tax increment financing may be available to fund eligible construction and public improvements in an urban renewal area.

Matching grants

Facade improvements must meet specific design guidelines. To date, more than \$600,000 has been committed to this program, involving 33 projects.

Streamlined development process

Through the RED, BURA can get all of the city players to the table to move things forward. If you're converting a residential property to a commercial use on Fourth Avenue, your approval process will be shortened due to an overlay zoning district.

Employee training and business support

Colorado State University and Front Range Community College offer a variety of postgraduate professional degrees for working adults. Business owners and entrepreneurs can take advantage of free and low-cost workshops at the city's Brighton Small Business Development Center.



Keeping Up the Momentum

We've accomplished a lot in our first ten years, but in some ways we've only just begun. In the coming years we'll build on our commitment to downtown reinvestment, affordable housing and cultural amenities. New jobs will be created. Opportunities will arise, and we'll take advantage of them, working collaboratively with the City of Brighton, the Brighton Economic Development Corporation and other public and private partners. Urban renewal is one tool in our toolbox. We'll continue to use it in a focused way to help attract and leverage new investment for the benefit of everyone.



"Having grown up here, I always felt the Highway 85 corridor gave people a negative impression of Brighton. Now you see the AMC Theater and restaurants in The Pavilions and Mi Pueblo Market and Big Lots in the former grocery warehouse area. The development shows a lot of energy in our community and helps to bring new businesses to Brighton. We're a progressive city committed to reinventing what we have, while other communities let their older areas deteriorate."

*Candace Black
BURA Trustee
2009-Present*



The Brighton Urban Renewal Authority's mission is to encourage investment and reinvestment within targeted areas of the community while strengthening the tax base of the whole city and growing the area's job base.

BURA leverages resources and partnerships to deliver high quality community improvements.

If you or your business would like to know more about what's happening in the Brighton Urban Renewal area or in Downtown Brighton, call 303.655.2066, email lgonzales@brightonco.gov, or visit www.brightonura.org

BURA
Brighton Urban Renewal Authority