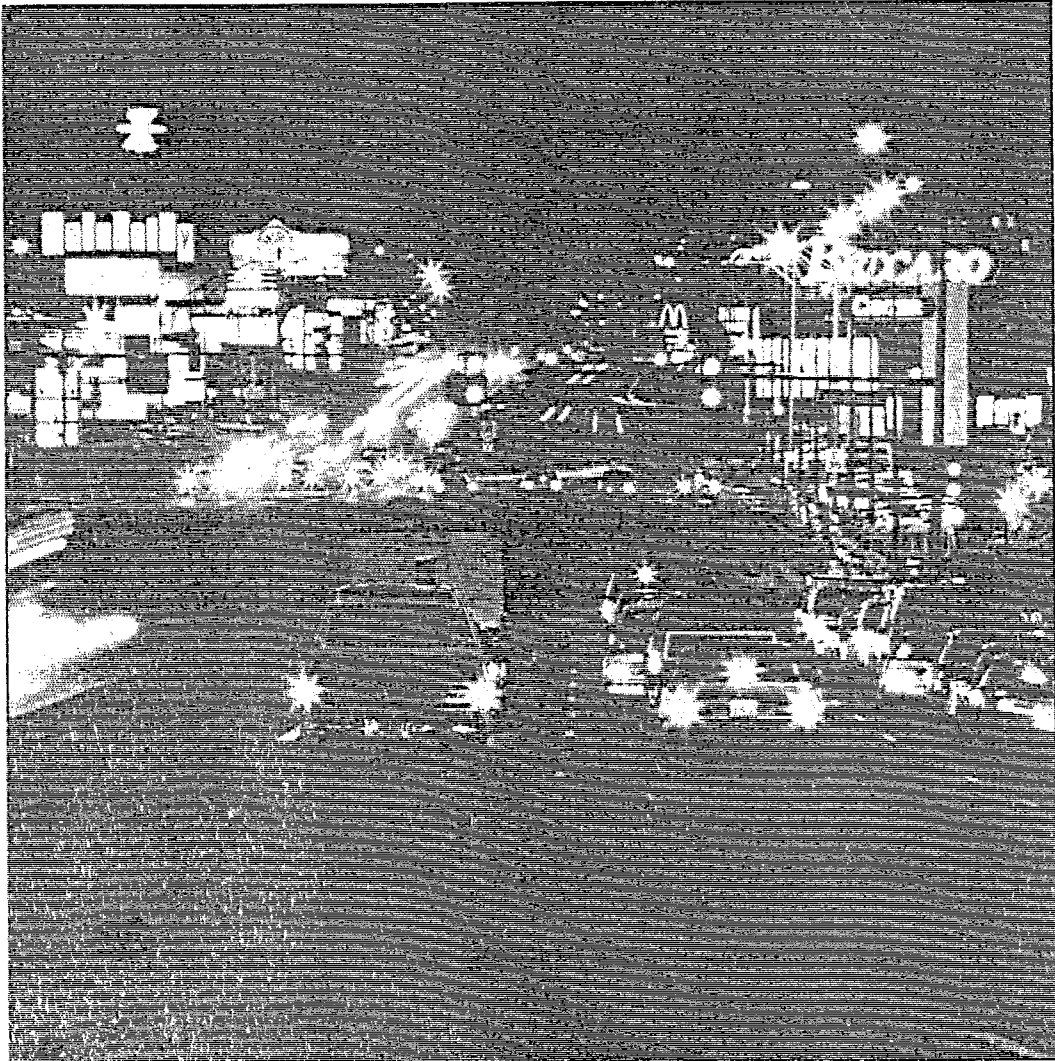

THE BOULEVARD PLAN

A DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SOUTH COLORADO BOULEVARD



CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER
CITY OF GLENDALE
AUGUST 1991

Acknowledgement

The Boulevard Plan is a result of a cooperative endeavor between the Community Advisory Committee and the City and County of Denver and the City of Glendale. The Advisory Committee represented various interests and organizations including developers, homeowners, business owners and Planning Board/Commission members. Members of the Community Advisory Committee were:

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**THE
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A DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SOUTH COLORADO BLVD.

Prepared By

City and County of Denver

Department of Public Works, Transportation Planning Section

Planning and Community Development Office

and

City of Glendale

City Manager's Office

Building Department

with

David H. Williams Consulting

August 1991

THE **BOULEVARD** PLAN

Table of Contents

Section	Page
I. Introduction	1
II. Plan Summary	3
A. Vision	3
B. Goals	3
C. Recommendations Summary	4
D. Implementation Overview	8
III. Transportation	9
A. Current and Future Conditions	9
B. Transportation Improvement Considerations	15
C. Transportation Recommendations	17
1. Intersection Improvement Program	17
2. Key Bottleneck Studies	20
3. Traffic Signal Timing Plan	21
4. Accel./Decel. Lanes/Curb-Cuts	21
5. Pedestrian/Bicycle Connections	22
6. Transit	23
7. Employer-Based Trip Reduction Program	25
8. TMA Task Force	26
9. Right-of-Way Maintenance	27
IV. Land Use	29
A. Current and Future Conditions	29
B. Alternative Strategies	33
C. Land Use Recommendations	35
1. Overall Development Cap	35
2. Land Use Mix	36
3. On-Site Parking	36

THE BOULEVARD PLAN

Table of Contents (Continued)

V. Urban Design	39
A. Current Conditions	39
B. Urban Design Improvement Considerations	40
C. Urban Design Recommendations	42
1. Sidewalk Standard	43
2. Street-Trees	44
3. Street Lighting	45
4. Bus Stop Improvements	45
5. Boulevard Median	46
6. Neighborhood Gateways / Local Streets	48
7. Parking Lot Screening/Entry Medians	49
8. Front Setback and Landscaping	52
9. Building Placement	53
10. Building Entrance Orientation	54
11. Building Facades	54
12. Upper Level Setback	56
13. Maximum Height Limitation	56
14. Arch. Treatment on All Sides	57
15. Rear Buffers & Screening/Alley access	59
16. Service Area Screening	61
17. Compatible Sign Codes	62
18. Ground Mounted Signs	63
19. Building Mounted Signs	64
20. Billboards	64
VI. Implementation	65

THE BOULEVARD PLAN

List of Tables

No.	Title	Page
1.	Recommendations/Action Summary	4
2.	1990 Travel Speeds and Level of Service	10
3.	Estimated Intersection Level-of-Service	10
4.	Transportation Demand Summary	12
5.	Current and Projected Colorado Boulevard Traffic Levels	14
6.	Existing Transit Service	16
7.	Recommended Intersection Improvements	18
8.	Intersection LOS Comparison	19
9.	Commercial Floor Space	28
10.	Estimated/Projected Households and Employment South Colorado Boulevard Influence Area	32

List of Figures

No.	Title	Page
1.	Planning Area and Existing Zoning	2
2.	Traffic Demand Categories	11
3.	Southeast Quadrant Plan Area Roadway Classifications	11
4.	Traffic Volumes North of Exposition Ave.	13
5.	Traffic Volumes North of Mexico Ave.	13
6.	Possible New Leetsdale/Virginia Connection	20
7.	Existing Zoning	30
8.	Generalized Land Use	31
9.	Existing Building Footprints / Figure Ground	41
10.	Design Standards Summary	42
11.	Existing/Proposed Typical Cross Section	47
12.	Surface Parking Lots	50
13.	Building Heights	58
14.	Implementation: Transportation Matrix	66
15.	Implementation: Land Use / Urban Design Matrix	67
16.	Approval / Implementation Process	68

THE **BOULEVARD** PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

The Boulevard Plan outlines a vision, goals and objectives for future development along South Colorado Boulevard between 1st Avenue and Cliff, generally encompassing the commercially zoned land which has frontage along the street (See Figure 1). In addition to establishing an overall vision and goals, the Plan identifies individual projects and actions recommended to achieve them and the next step that should be taken to implement those recommendations.

The development of this plan is recommended in the Comprehensive Plans of both Denver and Glendale. The Boulevard Plan supplements Denver's and Glendale's Comprehensive Plans, as well as the Cherry Creek Neighborhood Plan and other adopted sub-area and functional plans. All of these plans address various aspects of future development along Colorado Boulevard--however, the Boulevard Plan focuses on the unique, inter-related problems and opportunities in this area.

The Boulevard Plan has been developed jointly by the cities of Glendale and Denver, with significant input from a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) which included area businesses, neighborhood representatives and elected officials.

The Plan report is organized into six sections. This, the first section, briefly describes the plan context. The second section presents the overall vision and goals which drive the plan and summarizes the key plan recommendations. The third section focuses on transportation. It describes the background for the transportation recommendations, and presents each transportation recommendation in detail. The fourth section describes in general terms how the plan's land use recommendations were derived and includes a description of them. The fifth section includes development criteria for public and private development along Colorado Boulevard. The sixth section describes the implementation process.

II. PLAN SUMMARY

A. Vision

The "vision" statement for the planning area describes its desired role and how it is intended to function.

This portion of South Colorado Boulevard is, and should continue to be, a regionally distinct transportation, business and residential corridor accommodating a wide range of development types and sizes which serve the shopping, business and entertainment needs of nearby residents, as well as providing destination opportunities for a wider community.

While serving as a gateway to the cities of Glendale and Denver and the Cherry Creek area, Colorado Boulevard will provide for functional and efficient traffic flow both within and through the corridor. There will be a growing role for transit and a more friendly and safe environment for pedestrians.

Higher standards of both public and private urban design will create a positive human-scale image and a cohesiveness which will distinguish "the Boulevard" from typical strip commercial areas, while retaining the separate identities of Glendale and Denver. Design considerations will reinforce the integrity of adjacent residential area by enhancing their privacy and livability.

B. Goals

The goals and objectives provide direction for actions that should be taken to realize the vision. Denver and Glendale, as well as private property owners, businesses and community groups should cooperate to achieve this vision by:

- a.) Improving traffic flow and safety;
- b.) Taking action to retain a broad mix of land uses that are a good neighbor to existing uses;
- c.) Defining and reinforcing the unique image of the corridor and ensuring that new development has little or no adverse impacts on adjacent uses.

Each goal addresses a specific area of concern: transportation, land use, and urban design. These three areas of concern were identified early in the process as being the most important ones on which to focus. A variety of individual actions has been recommended to achieve these goals.

C. Recommendations Summary

As noted, the recommendations are organized into three categories. The recommendations in each category are

summarized in Table 1. A detailed discussion of each recommendation is presented later in the report.

Table 1. Recommendations and Action Summary

RECOMMENDATION	NEXT STEPS
TRANSPORTATION	
1. Intersection Improvement Program	1. Alameda Design in 1992 2. Include in Future CIPs
2. Key Bottleneck Studies	1. Monitor Volumes
3. Traffic Signal Timing Plan	1. Complete Current Project
4. Accel./Decel. Lanes/Curb-Cuts	1. Continue Current Policy
5. Pedestrian/Bicycle Connections	1. Accomodate in Intersection Improvements 2. Recognize in Development Review 3. Refer to Bike Advisory Committee
6. Transit	1. Complete Evans, Mississippi, & Alameda Shelters 2. Prioritize Other Improvements 3. Recognize in Development Review 4. Monitor Use Levels 5. Plan for Rapid Transit
7. Employer-Based Trip Reduction Program	1. Pursue Regional Initiative
8. Transportation Management Association Task Force	1. Establish in 1992 2. Coordinate Transit/Rideshare Promotion in 1992
9. Right-of-Way Maintenance	1. Pursue with Transportation Management Association Task Force

Table 1. Recommendations and Action Summary (continued)

RECOMMENDATION	NEXT STEPS
LAND USE	
1. Overall Development Cap	1. Recognize in Rezoning Application Reviews
2. Land Use Mix	1. Recognize in Rezoning Application Reviews 2. Work with Large Project Developers
3. On-Site Parking	1. Recognize in Development Review 2. Update Requirements Citywide
URBAN DESIGN: PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY	
1. Sidewalk Standard	1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Develop Design Guidelines
2. Street Trees	1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Develop Design Guidelines 3. Continue Glendale Program & Standards
3. Street Lighting	1. Develop Lighting Plan 2. Use in Development Review as Applicable 3. Continue Glendale Programs & Standards
4. Bus Stop Improvements	1. Complete Evans, Mississippi, & Alameda 2. Develop Design Guidelines 3. Continue Glendale Program & Standards
5. Boulevard Median	1. Develop Design Guidelines 2. Left Turn Demand Studies
6. Local Street Medians	1. Develop Design Guidelines 2. Contact/Assist Neighborhood

Table 1. Recommendations and Action Summary (Continued)

RECOMMENDATION	NEXT STEPS
URBAN DESIGN: PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT	
7. Parking Lot Screening/Entry Medians	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Incorporate in New Corridor Development Requirements 3. Develop Design Guidelines
8. Front Setback and Landscaping	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Incorporate in New Corridor Development Requirements 3. Develop Design Guidelines
9. Building Placement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Incorporate in New Corridor Development Requirements 3. Develop Design Guidelines
10. Building Entrance Orientation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Incorporate in New Corridor Development Requirements
11. Building Facades	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider in New Corridor Development Requirements
12. Upper Level Setback	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Incorporate in New Corridor Development Requirements 3. Develop Design Guidelines
13. Maximum Height Limitation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Incorporate in New Corridor Development Requirements
14. Architectural Treatment on All Sides	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Incorporate in New Corridor Development Requirements

Table 1. Recommendations and Action Summary (Continued)

RECOMMENDATION	NEXT STEPS
URBAN DESIGN: SIGNS	
15. Rear Buffers & Screen/Alley Access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Incorporate in New Corridor Development Requirements
16. Service Area Screening	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use in Development Review as Applicable 2. Incorporate in New Corridor Development Requirements
17. Compatible Sign Codes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint Follow-Up Analysis 2. Update Zoning Citywide to Require Sign Program
18. Ground Mounted Signs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify Required Implementation Mechanism 2. Use in Development Review as Applicable
19. Building Mounted Signs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify Required Implementation Mechanism 2. Use in Development Review as Applicable
20. Billboards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify Required Implementation Mechanism 2. Use in Development Review as Applicable

THE **BOULEVARD** PLAN

D. Implementation Overview

A variety of steps will be taken to implement the plan. Many of the land use and urban design recommendations will require amendments to the ordinances and regulations that guide private development. Some of those can be adopted on a corridor-specific basis, others will require changes in requirements that apply on a citywide basis. Additional, more detailed studies may be required in some cases before specific changes can be formulated. Once the development requirements are changed, new projects built along the Boulevard will have to comply with those changes. The specific recommendations will be put in place as individual properties along the Boulevard continue to redevelop. Thus, it will be a long time before all development along the Boulevard is consistent with these recommendations.

The CAC also strongly suggested that any future redevelopment proposals should be encouraged to be submitted as Planned Unit Development (PUD) rezoning. This would allow the specific applicable elements of this plan to be written into a binding, site specific development plan.

Many of the transportation recommendations will be implemented over time as capital funds become available to make improvements. Adopting the plan does not guarantee that the funds will be available. However, the plan does serve as the basis for funding requests, and projects

recommended in formally adopted plans often have priority over those that are not. Funds for transportation projects can be sought from a variety of sources, including local funds from Denver and Glendale, and state and federal funds administered by the Colorado Department of Transportation, and the Denver Regional Council of Governments. Even so, implementation of all of the projects recommended in this plan, even under the most favorable of funding circumstances, is expected to take ten to twenty years.

Finally, though formal adoption of the plan is an expression of the community's shared vision and goals for this area, many of the recommendations are consistent with, or extensions of, current practice, and will be implemented on that basis. For example, new developments are already required to provide acceleration-deceleration lanes and sidewalks. Also, Denver has successfully sought funding assistance from the Denver Regional Council of Governments to develop a detailed traffic signal retiming program. They have also successfully sought funding from the Colorado Department of Transportation to repave a significant portion of the Boulevard within the study area. However, this plan will only strengthen and broaden the scope of the community wide effort to improve Colorado Boulevard.

III. TRANSPORTATION

The transportation-related goal is to improve traffic flow and safety on the Boulevard. This goal includes several important objectives. They are:

- a.) Reduce "pressure" for Colorado Boulevard traffic to divert to parallel streets which cannot and should not be expanded, such as Holly, Monaco and University.
- b.) Improve accessibility to commercial development along the street in Denver and Glendale and in the Cherry Creek area.
- c.) Support development objectives for other areas, such as the Hale Parkway Hospital District area served by Colorado Boulevard, by improving conditions for through traffic.

There is no single solution for traffic problems on Colorado Boulevard. Even preventing conditions from becoming worse than they are today will require a complex and expensive series of coordinated projects and policies.

A. Current and Future Conditions
South Colorado Boulevard has long been an important transportation artery as well as a magnet for development. It currently experiences significant congestion and there is a concern that, as growth continues, the current situation may become significantly worse.

Traffic congestion can have an adverse effect on air quality, safety and convenience. Growing congestion levels may also force increasing amounts of traffic off of Colorado Boulevard and onto secondary streets in residential areas. At some point, traffic congestion levels may lead to disinvestment in the corridor, with consequent ramifications on individual businesses, tax base and the provision of services to the adjacent residential community, as well as to a decrease in the attractiveness of the area's residential neighborhoods.

Current Travel Times and Level of Service

Objective traffic congestion level measurements have been developed and are used consistently throughout the country. Congestion is described in terms of Level-of-Service (LOS). There are six LOS letter grades; "A" is the least congested, and "F" the most. LOS "F" represents a level of delay which has been found to be unacceptable to most drivers. Generally, LOS "D" is viewed as acceptable in the peak hour.

Current traffic Levels of Service (LOS) for Colorado Boulevard on an overall basis through the study area are summarized in Table 2. As can be seen, the worst overall condition is southbound in the afternoon rush hour, when LOS is in a D/E range. Conditions in both directions at noontime are LOS D, and are significantly worse than in the morning rush hour.

THE BOULEVARD PLAN

Period Direction	AM Peak		Noon		PM Peak	
	SB	NB	SB	NB	SB	NB
Speed (MPH)	25	23	18	20	17	22
LOS	C	C	D	D	D/E	C/B

Most of the peak hour delay on Colorado Boulevard is caused by intersection congestion--traffic between the intersections tends to move along well. Levels of Service at the individual intersections are actually worse than the overall Levels of Service described above. The current, estimated Level of Service at major intersections in the corridor is summarized in Table 3. As can be seen, all of the major intersections are currently functioning at or below LOS D.

Intersection	LOS
Evans	F
Mexico	D
Florida	E
Mississippi	D
CC Drive/South	F
CC Drive/North	E
Alameda	F
Bayaud	F
1st	F

Traffic Sources

Traffic demand levels associated with South Colorado Boulevard area development were calculated for the recent Southeast Quadrant Study, and that basic data was also used for this analysis. As travel demand on Colorado is affected by more than just the immediately adjacent development, the area included in these calculations is bounded by 1st/Alameda on the north, Evans on the south, Monaco on the east and University on the west.

A computer model was used to analyze where traffic on Colorado Boulevard is generally coming from and going to. The largest traffic source is development in the general vicinity of Colorado Boulevard. The computer model indicated that about 75% of the traffic on Colorado Boulevard has either an origin or a destination within the influence area. (This traffic is referred to as external-internal traffic in Figure 2.) However, only about 5% of the traffic on Colorado Boulevard has **both** an origin and a destination in this area (internal-internal traffic). The balance of the traffic on Colorado Boulevard, about 20%, has both an origin and destination somewhere