1. Project Background
   - Thornton Historic Recognition Ordinance
   - Purpose of Historic Context Report
2. Historic Context Findings
   - Study methods
   - Eras of Thornton History
3. Prospects for Historic Recognition
   - Individual resources
   - Regional examples
IMPORTANCE OF THORNTON’S HISTORY

- Thornton Comprehensive Plan
- Eastlake Subarea Plan
- Eastlake TOD Plan
- Housing Master Plan
- Parks & Open Space Master Plan
- South Thornton Revitalization Plan

Lambertson Barn
CITY CODE CHAPTER 19: HISTORIC RECOGNITION ORDINANCE

- Recognizes places important to Thornton’s history
- Establishes a process to designate historic resources
- Recognition can increase civic pride and economic prosperity

Thornton Women’s Club tile plaque

Early Thornton Fire Dept. Fire Engine
WHAT IS AN HISTORIC CONTEXT STUDY?

- Support City’s historic recognition ordinance
- Provide background for a formal historic survey
- Encourage further investigation

Former City Hall, just south of Russel Blvd. on Washington St.

Sculpture outside of current City Hall
WHY WRITE AN HISTORIC CONTEXT REPORT?

- Easy identification of historical resources
- Evaluating a resource’s historic significance and integrity
- To classify historic resources by style, era, significance, etc.
HISTORIC CONTEXT FINDINGS
STUDY METHOD & RESOURCES

- Review of historic preservation literature
- Historic marketing materials and photos
- Field visits and personal experience
- GIS data
ELIGIBILITY FOR HISTORIC RECOGNITION

- Resources 50+ years of age eligible for national historic status
- Thornton’s recognition ordinance has no age minimum
- Nominated resources may have to meet additional criteria

- Parcel age used as a proxy for age of structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Parcels</th>
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<tr>
<td>Currently Eligible (red)</td>
<td>2,990</td>
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<tr>
<td>Within 10 years (light red)</td>
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<td>Within 20 years (pink)</td>
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FOUR STAGES OF SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT

I. Railroad (1830-1890)
II. Streetcar (1890-1908)
III. Automobile (1908-1945)
GROWTH SINCE INCORPORATION

Parcels by Year Built

Year

New Parcels

Parcels by Year Built

GROWTH SINCE INCORPORATION
HISTORIC ERAS

- Pre-Suburban
  - Pre-Historic Era
  - Railroad/Agricultural Era
- Suburban
  - Original Thornton (1953-1956)
  - Annexation Era (1972-1986)
PRE-HISTORIC ERA

- Potential fossil discovery
- Archaeological sites
  - Indication of an ancient campsite
- Native Americans
  - North Metro EIS process reached out to tribes as possibly affecting ancestral homelands
RAILROAD/AGRICULTURAL ERAS: PRE-1953

- Data from Adams County Assessor’s Office
- Only parcels currently on record

Eastlake

Union Pacific Railroad, 1909
RAILROAD/AGRICULTURAL ERA: PRE-1953

- Remaining structures associated with region’s reliance on:
  - Water
  - Agriculture
  - Railroads

Lambertson Barn

Train near Quimby, 1938

THE SIGNAL DITCH COMPANY.
CAPITAL STOCK $7,500.
500 SHARES, $25. EACH.
ORIGINAL THORNTON
ERA: 1953-1956

Suburban Eras by Year

New Parcels

Year


0 0.5 1.5 2 Miles

N
ORIGINAL THORNTON ERA: 1953-1956

- Post-WWII Context
- Federal Housing Policy
- Interstate Highway Construction
Original Thornton Era: 1953-1956

- Types of Home Models
- Evolving Street Patterns
BUILT BY THE “MERCHANT DEVELOPER”

- Post - WWII Subdivision Developers
  - Sold homes and marketed a lifestyle
  - Mass production of homes
- Sam Hoffman – Developer of Thornton
  - 640 acre farm site purchased
  - Built and promoted Thornton

Sam Hoffman & Associates
Original Thornton Grand Opening
Hollywood Actress
  Jane Russell
THE "ANNEXATION" ERA:
1972 - 1986

Thornton Parcel Growth by Year

Year

THE "ANNEXATION WARS" ERA: 1972 – 1986

- Competition with Northglenn
- Proposals to consolidate area cities
NORTHWARD EXPANSION

Suburban Eras by Year

New Parcels

Year


Map showing suburban expansion from 1994 to 2007.
NORTHWARD EXPANSION ERA: 1994 - 2007

- Sustained Housing Growth
- Regional Infrastructure Investments
PROSPECTS FOR HISTORIC RECOGNITION
MOVING FORWARD

- Recognize unique history of post-WWII suburban development
- Preserve most pristine examples
- Review historic resources as components of an historic district

1937  1957  1977
HISTORIC RECOGNITION – PRESERVE THE PAST, THRIVE IN THE FUTURE

- Englewood – Arapahoe Acres
- Boulder – Mapleton Historic District
- Arvada – Olde Town
- Wheat Ridge – 38th Avenue Corridor

For Wheat Ridge, 38th Avenue a corridor of change
POSSIBILITIES FOR HISTORIC RECOGNITION

- Farm & railroad structures/equipment
- Eastlake district
- Original Thornton district
  - Schools, churches,
  - Civic buildings
  - First 3 model homes
- 50s/60s era commercial properties
  - Associated features such as signage, facades, or rooflines
- Other ideas?

Miller’s Grocery, Washington Shopping Center, 1950s