



## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Local Efforts Underway for Development of a 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Plan

**WHEAT RIDGE** – Work on the development of a 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Plan kicked-off in March with a March 10<sup>th</sup> Stakeholder Committee meeting and March 15<sup>th</sup> community meeting, which had more than 70 business and property owners in attendance.

“The planning process is off to a great start,” said Mayor Jerry DiTullio. “The purpose of the corridor plan is to guide future decisions on redevelopment of the 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor, which is a priority area for redevelopment identified in the City’s 2009 Comprehensive Plan update, *Envision Wheat Ridge*. The plan includes the area on the 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor between Wadsworth Boulevard and Sheidan Boulevard.”

The grassroots planning effort involves a Mayoral-appointed 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Stakeholder Committee, formed to assist the City in development of the corridor plan. The Stakeholder Committee is made up of property and business owners as well as residents that live in close proximity to 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Local partners also include LiveWell Wheat Ridge (LWWR) and WR2020. Assisting the City with development of the plan is a team of experts specializing in corridor revitalization and redevelopment efforts, represented by the firms of: Entelechy, Muller Engineering and Arland Land Use Economics.

“I am very excited about the collaboration underway between our project partners and the City,” added Joyce Jay, Councilmember, District II. “The City Council is committed to redevelopment of key commercial corridors and 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue is a priority. The Stakeholder Committee will be instrumental in providing City Council with input and recommendations on policies throughout the planning process. Many people in the community see this section of 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue as a ‘Main Street’ or ‘downtown’ area for the City. The corridor plan will provide the framework to make this vision a reality.”

In 2009, WR2020 secured the Community Revitalization Partnership (CRP) grant which brought a team of consultants who specialize in downtown and community revitalization to tour and study the corridor and provide tools, insights and direction on actions to take to improve the corridor. The CRP resulted in an action plan outlining specific recommendations including the development of a corridor plan for 38<sup>th</sup> Ave. to create a unique vision. “The 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Plan will implement and build on the recommendations of both the WR2020 CRP planning efforts and the City’s *Envision Wheat Ridge* Comprehensive Plan document,” added Ken Johnstone, Community Development Director.

The corridor plan will also identify specific actions that need to be taken to make 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue a more desirable place in the community for residents and businesses. The plan will be a guide for decisions related to future redevelopment and improvements along the corridor.

“Consensus from the first Stakeholder Committee meeting included agreement that the corridor lacks an identity and that there is a need for improvements for pedestrian safety,” said Jerry Nealon, business owner, a Director on the Wheat Ridge Business District Board, and a member of the 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Stakeholder Committee. “The Committee would like to see 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue become a unique place where there is a range of activities to attract people day and night.”

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## Local efforts underway for development of a 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Plan 2-2-2

While there was a desire to see changes and updating of the corridor, sentiment was also expressed about existing businesses being able to continue operating.

In the coming weeks, City staff will focus on the plan areas or nodes along the corridor with the greatest potential for redevelopment, looking at a variety of factors such as age, condition of buildings, ownership, vacancy rates, and parcel size. "Analysis is also being done on corridor traffic patterns, including historic and projected traffic volumes. Traffic modeling and potential trip diversion analysis is being done to identify impacts if the number of lanes along the corridor were to be reduced to accommodate wider sidewalks, bike lanes and amenity zones," added Sally Payne, Senior Planner. "Both the City's Comprehensive Plan and the CRP Action Plan recommended looking at the possibility of reducing the lanes to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment that would accommodate a range of modes of transportation."

Next steps in the project include:

- Community meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. at Wheat Ridge Middle School. At this meeting, alternative corridor plan scenarios will be presented based on input from the first public meeting and the Stakeholder Committee meetings and the land use and traffic analysis. Attendees will have an opportunity to comment on the various alternatives and to present additional ideas.
- A final public meeting will be held in late summer. At this meeting a draft of the preferred 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Plan will be presented as well as an implementation action plan.
- Following completion of the community meetings, the draft Corridor Plan will then go to Planning Commission and City Council next fall for adoption.

Mayor DiTullio added, "The 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Plan will be the fourth subarea plan prepared by the City providing greater focus and detail for targeted areas of our community. This plan is an important tool for the City in providing guidance to City Council, Planning Commission and City staff on future redevelopment and improvements to the Corridor."

The following resources are available for additional information about the 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor planning process:

- City Website – Visit the City's main webpage and look under "Quick Links" to find the 38<sup>th</sup> Avenue link and it will take you to information about the planning process, notes from previous meetings and upcoming meeting dates.
- Contact staff – Sally Payne, Senior Planner at 303-235-2852, email: [spayne@ci.wheatridge.co.us](mailto:spayne@ci.wheatridge.co.us) or Sarah Showalter, Planner II at 303-235-2849, email: [sshowalter@ci.wheatridge.co.us](mailto:sshowalter@ci.wheatridge.co.us)

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