

D E N V E R THROUGH THE D E C A D E S

Timeline Data

{decade} : {year} : {yearInfo}

1858 (Kimberli)

In the summer of 1858, a small group of prospectors from Georgia crossed the great plains of the Colorado Territory and made a region-changing discovery at the base of the Rocky Mountains. Gold. And although not much of the precious metal was found, the mere whisper of the word was enough to start a veritable stampede into the region. After all, the California Gold Rush had occurred just nine years earlier.

It wasn't long before tents, tepees, wagons, lean-tos, and crudely constructed log cabins lined the banks of the South Platte River as prospectors and fortune-seekers poured into the area. They came from all over the country, traveling on foot, in covered wagons, by horseback, and even pushing their belongings in wheelbarrows. Pikes Peak, a 14,000-foot mountain to the south of the mining camp served as both a landmark and a rallying cry for weary travelers. The "Pikes Peak or Bust!" Gold Rush was in full force.

However, gold wasn't the only way to strike it rich in the boomtown that was springing up on the banks of the South Platte. Those who arrived early enough could simply stake out a claim of land, lay out city streets, and then sell the lots to those arriving after them. General William H. Larimer didn't arrive early but followed the plan perfectly. He claim-jumped the land on the eastern side of Cherry Creek, laid out a city and, in hopes of gaining political favor, named the city after Kansas Territorial governor James Denver. What he didn't know was that Denver had already resigned. <https://www.denver.org/>

1860 - 1890 (Kimberli)

1860:

- 1861:
 - Denver became part of the **Territory of Colorado**; it was an organized incorporated territory of the United States that existed from February 28,

1861, until August 1, 1876, when it was admitted to the Union as the State of Colorado.

- The American Civil War broke out. Most Denverites were from the North and their support for the Union drove many Southerners from town, including Denver's first mayor John C. Moore. William Gilpin, Colorado's first territorial governor, organized Colorado's volunteer militia, and sent them south in February 1862 to fight Confederate Texans at the Battle of Glorieta Pass. With resources tied up in the war there was little left over for mines, farms, and infrastructure, and Denver stagnated
- 1864: The University of Denver is founded

1870:

- 1870's: Cheyenne-Denver and Kansas-Denver trains began operating.
- 1871: The Denver Horse Railroad began operating.
- 1872: Police department established.
- 1873 Palace Theater opens.
- 1875 East High School opens.
- 1876 Denver becomes part of the new State of Colorado

1880:

- 1881: Union Station open and Tabor Grand Opera House open.
- 1881: City Park was established.
- 1883: First St. Patrick's Day parade held,
- 1886 : Implemented **unsightly beggar ordinances**, in retrospect also dubbed **ugly laws**.^[1] These laws deemed it illegal for "any person, who is diseased, maimed, mutilated or deformed in any way, so as to be an unsightly or disgusting object, to expose himself or herself to public view

1890:

- 1890's: Elitch Gardens amusement park opens.
- 1892: Brown Palace Hotel was built.
- 1892: Evening Post Newspaper goes into print.
- 1893: The Denver Depression begins.
- 1894: Colorado State Capitol building opens.
- 1896: Denver Zoo is founded.

1900 - 1930 (Maria)

1900:

- 1902: Constitutional amendment permits towns of 2,000 to adopt "Home Rule"; Denver becomes home rule city. Beet sugar refinery built at Fort Collins. David H. Moffat and associates begin construction of Moffat Railroad over the Continental Divide. Completed to Steamboat Springs in 1908 and to Craig in 1913.
- 1903: With Ben B. Lindsey as Judge, Denver Juvenile Court opens - the first such court in the United States.

- 1906: United States Mint, Denver, issues first coins. March 12, National Western Stock Show is born with chartering of Western Stock Show Association following successful showing of about 60 head of cattle and horses and a few sheep and hogs in a makeshift tent at Stockyards. July 29, Mesa Verde National Park was created by Congress.
- 1909: Colorado attains first rank among states in irrigation area with 2,790,000 acres under irrigation. Gunnison water tunnel completed by Reclamation Service and opened, on September 23, by President William Howard Taft at the tunnel site. Western State Teachers College opens at Gunnison.

1910:

- 1911: Colorado National Monument west of Grand Junction, created by Presidential order.
- 1916: Colorado adopts prohibition. Emily Griffith Opportunity School is opened in Denver. Mining of tungsten causes flurry in the Boulder-Nederland area.
- 1917: April 6: Congress declares war on Germany and many Coloradans volunteer for service. Colorado reaches maximum mineral production, more than \$80,000,000. William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Famous Indian scout, dies and is buried on Lookout Mountain, west of Denver.
- 1919: Post-war inflation brings higher prices to farmers and producers; prices of farmland high; wages high; boom times everywhere. Colorado enacts a tax of one cent per gallon on gasoline, for building of roads. Monte Vista stages first Ski-Hi Stampede.

1920:

- 1920: Population of State, 939,629. Employees of Denver Tramway company go on strike. Aroused by editorials in The Denver Post, strikers raid Post building and do much damage to property.
- 1923 Oil discovered in Wellington field north of Fort Collins; flurry of oil stock promotion follows.
- 1925: dams State Teachers College at Alamosa and junior colleges at Grand Junction and Trinidad are opened.

1930:

- 1931: Population reaches over one million.
- 1938: U.S. Lowry Air Force Base established.
- 1934 Denver Symphony Orchestra established

1940 - 1970 (Vanessa)

1940:

- 1941: As the United States enters War World II, Denver recruiting offices are swamped by over 2,000 enlistments during the month of December.
- 1942: The federal government established Amache, a camp for Japanese-Americans who were interned and relocated from their homes on the West Coast.

- 1945 - 1950: Military installations and scientific institutions continue to develop while many veterans relocate to Colorado. The presence of the federal government in Colorado grows and these changes cause a steady increase in population. (Colorado.gov)
- 1948: Mile High Stadium (originally Bears Stadium) opened and became home for the Denver Bears/Zephyrs baseball team, Colorado Rockies, Colorado Rapids, the Denver Gold of the U.S. Football League and the Denver Broncos. In 2001, Mile High Stadium was closed and in 2002 the stadium was demolished. (Wikipedia)

1950:

- 1951: Denver Coliseum opens and has hosted many celebrities and artists including: Elvis Presley, The Grateful Dead, The Who, Frank Sinatra, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, Steven Wonder, The Jackson 5, Black Sabbath and more. Santana has played the Denver Coliseum six times, securing the title of House Band.
- 1952: American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), a nonprofit organization, are headquartered in Denver.
- 1956: Rocky Mountain PBS (KRMA-TV) begins broadcasting.
- 1958: Air Force Academy is built near Colorado Springs and the first class graduated in June 1959. (Colorado.gov)

1960:

- 1960: Colorado gets the Denver Broncos professional football team, which eventually goes on to win three Super Bowls. (Colorado.gov)
- 1962: Disposition of poisonous wastes into a deep well at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal results in earthquakes and hundreds of tremors around the Denver area.
- 1965: The Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU) is established.
- 1967:
 - The Denver Rockets become Colorado's professional American Basketball Association team. In 1974, they were renamed the Denver Nuggets.
 - August 9th, a 5.3 Mb earthquake affected the Denver area with a maximum Mercalli intensity of VII (very strong). This was the largest in a swarm of over 300 similar events that spanned more than a year.
- 1968: William H. McNichols, Jr. became mayor and served until 1983. McNichols attended the University of Colorado-Boulder and University of Alabama, though he did not receive a degree from either institution. During WWII, he enlisted in the Army and received three battle stars and the Purple Heart.
- 1969: Chicano Youth Liberation Conference is held in Denver.

1970:

- 1970: The population of Denver reaches over a half a million people, according to the US Census Bureau.
- 1971: The Denver Tramway company ceases being the operator of the city's transit system and transfers all assets to Denver Metro Transit (now Regional Transportation District).
- 1972: A 'brown cloud' develops over the Front Range and Coloradans become concerned over the consequences of pollution and overselling Colorado and reject hosting the 1976 Winter Olympics as a result.
- 1974: University of Colorado Denver established.
- 1976: A cloudburst on the Big Thompson River results in a massive flood in Larimer County, killing more than 145 people.
- 1979: Denver Firefighters Museum established.

1980 - 2020 (Andrew)

1980:

- 1980: Population: 492,365
- 1982:
 - 16th Street Mall (pedestrian way) opens
 - Great American Beer Festival
 - Christmas eve storm brought a record of 23.2 of snow
- 1983: Federico Peña becomes mayor.
- 1988: Wynkoop Brewing Company in business.

1990:

- 1990: Population: 467,610
- 1991: Wellington Webb becomes mayor
- 1993: Chipotle Mexican Grill in business.
- 1995:
 - Denver International Airport begins operating
 - Coors Field opens
 - Colorado Avalanche wins the Stanley Cup
- 1997: Denver Broncos win the Super Bowl
- 1998: Denver Broncos win back to back Super Bowls
- 1999: Pepsi Center arena and Colorado's Ocean Journey aquarium^[45] open.

2000:

- 2001: Sports Authority field was opened
- 2003: John Hickenlooper becomes mayor
- 2005: Marijuana legalization measure approved.
- 2008: *Blue Mustang* was unveiled at Denver International Airport

2010:

- 2010: B-cycle bike share launched.
- 2011: Michael Hancock becomes mayor.
- 2012:
 - Denver Comic Con begins
 - Recreational marijuana is legalized
- 2015: Broncos win the Super Bowl

2020:

- 2020: Denver shuts down due to COVID-19

References

[https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/Chronology%20of%20Colorado%20History.p
df](https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/Chronology%20of%20Colorado%20History.pdf)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Denver