

Denver Landmark Preservation Commission Application for Landmark Designation

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Armour & Company Administration Building (Armour Office Building)

Current Name: Armour Property

2. Location

Address: 5001-5011 Packing House Road, Denver, CO 80216

The former Armour Office Building (1917) is the only remaining building from the former Armour & Company meatpacking plant property.

Landmark boundary: (see Attachment A: Site Maps and Historic Boundary)

A parcel of land lying in the southwest quarter of Section 14, Township 3 south, Range 68 west of the 6th P.M., City and County of Denver, State of Colorado described as follows:

Commencing at the Center Quarter Corner of said section 14, whence the South Quarter Corner of said section 14 lies S 00° 20' 34" W 2657.09 feet, with all bearings herein being relative thereto, thence S 25° 13' 08" W 1909.86 feet to the Point of Beginning.

Thence S 34° 40' W 117.5 feet, along a line 20 feet from and parallel with the rear or northwesterly side of the Armour Admin building;

Thence S 55° 20' E 125.5 feet, along a line 8 feet from and parallel with the southwesterly side of the Armour Admin building;

Thence N 34° 40' E 117.5 feet, along a line 50 feet from and parallel with the front or southeasterly side of the Armour Admin building;

Thence N 55° 20' W 125.5 feet, along a line 20 feet from and parallel with the northeasterly side of the Armour Admin building, to the Point of Beginning;

Containing 14,746 square feet or 0.3385 acres.

A water tower (c.1920) was constructed within the Armour Office Building's period of significance (1917-1967) and is located northwest of the Armour Office Building outside of the parcel boundary for the building. This object will be nominated for listing as a separate structure.

3. Owner Information

Name: City and County of Denver

Address: 201 West Colfax, Denver, CO 80202

Phone: 720-865-2907

Email: gretchen.hollrah@denvergov.org

Name: Western Stock Show Association (land), Paul Andrews, President/CEO

Address: 4655 Humboldt Street, Denver, CO 80216

Phone: 303-299-5551

Email: pandrews@nationalwestern.com

4. Applicant/Contact Person (If other than owner)

Name: Gretchen Hollrah, Executive Director, Mayor's Office of the National Western Center

Address: 201 West Colfax, Denver, CO 80202

Phone: 720-865-2907

Email: gretchen.hollrah@denvergov.org

5. General Data

Date of construction and major additions/alterations: 1917

Source of Information: Denver Assessor data

Number, type, and date of construction of outbuildings: No outbuildings present.

Source of Information: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1903-1904, 1904 updated to 1925

Approximate lot size and acreage: .47 acre

Source of Information: Denver Assessor data.

Architect: Unknown

Source of Information: N/A

Builder: Unknown

Source of Information: N/A

Original Use: Meatpacking Plant Office/Administration Building

Source of Information: Historic records and archival documents (see Section 8 of this application)

Present Use: Empty/Not in use

Source of Information: National Western Center/National Western Stock Show/Site visit

Previous field documentation (date and surveyor)

5DV.10083, Historical Building Inventory Record. Documented as 5001 Packing House Road for the I-70 East EIS: Intensive Cultural Resource Survey, Denver and Adams Counties, CO, 2007 and 2014—I-70 Draft and Final EIS (CDOT): Determined to be contributing to a potential National Western Center Historic District (5DV.10050) and also individually eligible; this assessment was concurred with by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

National Register Status and date (listed, eligible, study list).

2017—Mead & Hunt for Mayor’s Office of the National Western Center: Recommended the building as individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under *Criterion A* in the area of economic development for the property’s association with the animal processing industry at the stockyards, and in the area of social history for employing immigrants and other workers who often lived nearby in Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea. The property was also recommended as eligible under *Criterion C* for Architecture as a rare and excellent example of a Neoclassical Office building on the former Denver Union Stock Yards (DUSY).

2014—National Western Center Historic Preservation Study (Slater Paull Architects, p. 55): Recommended the former Armour Office Building as individually eligible for the NRHP. This report also recommended the building as contributing to the potential National Western Center Historic District (5DV.10050).

6. Statement of Significance

Explain how the structure meets at least one criterion in at least two of the categories.

To qualify as a Landmark, a property must meet at least one criterion in at least two of the three categories: history, architecture, geography. The specific criterion must be identified and a statement provided as to how the property meets each selected criterion. The explanation should summarize why the property meets the criterion and, therefore, has the exceptional, unusual, or outstanding characteristics that make it qualify as a Denver Landmark. As part of the designation criteria, a structure must have historic and physical integrity.

Landmark Designation Categories and Criteria

Category 1: History

To have historical importance, the structure shall be more than 30 years old or have extraordinary importance to the architectural or historical development of Denver, and shall:

Criteria:

- a. *Have direct association with the historical development of the city, state, or nation; or*
- b. *Be the site of a significant historic event; or*
- c. *Have direct and substantial association with a person or group of persons who had influence on society.*

Criterion 1A

The Armour Property (historically known as the Armour & Company Administration Building) is directly associated with the economic development in Denver and Colorado, and specifically with the growth and decline of meat processing facilities at the DUSY. The building represents the significant investment and development of local and national meatpacking companies and slaughter houses that once dominated the stockyards. The building is

the last extant building of the Armour & Company meatpacking plant on this location. Armour was one of five major meatpacking companies in the United States and played a major role in promoting and developing the livestock industry at the DUSY. Prior to its purchase by Armour, the property was the location of the Colorado Packing and Provision Company (CPPC), a local business established by Henry Gebhard that was later bought by Armour. Armour and the other major meatpackers boosted Denver up to the level of other meatpacking centers such as Omaha, Kansas City, St. Joseph, and Sioux City, and created the nation's largest sheep market and the primary hog processing and distributing facility west of the Mississippi at the DUSY.

Armour's investment in the Denver market was matched by Swift and Cudahy, which also operated large meat packing facilities at the yards, in addition to numerous smaller companies. Meatpackers controlled the stockyards, ranches, cattle, and transportation of meat products in Denver and similar markets for decades and wielded enormous influence on Denver and Colorado's economic vitality in this area of the city.

Criterion 1C

The property is directly associated with the skilled and semi-skilled laborers who worked at the meatpacking plant, many of whom lived nearby in the Elyria, Swansea, and Globeville neighborhoods. This building housed the administration headquarters, where the white-collar employees worked and controlled the day-to-day activities of the plant. The majority of the blue-collar Armour employees were immigrants from Russian, Slavic, and other Eastern European countries, in addition to numerous other ethnic groups and native-born citizens. While it is well-known that slaughter house employees worked long hours for menial pay, and in generally appalling conditions, meatpacking still provided the greatest number of stable jobs for nearby residents until the 1960s, when the large meatpacking plants on Packing House Drive closed. As such, the Armour meatpacking plant had a profound impact on scores of employees who supported their families by working at the plant.

The property is also significant for its association with the Gebhard family and the CPPC. Henry Gebhard established the CPPC at this location in 1890 and passed the responsibilities of the business to his son Charles Gebhard, who ran the plant as manager until his untimely death at the age of 43 in 1919. Henry Gebhard helped establish the DUSY in 1881 and served on the executive board of the Western Stock Show Association (WSSA), and helped produce the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) by serving on numerous committees from 1906 until his death in 1922. He was elected Vice President of the WSSA board from 1913 to 1922, serving under President Elias Ammons. After Armour & Company purchased the CPPC, the Gebhards continued to run the plant as local partners, and the name CPPC was displayed prominently over the entrance to the Armour Office Building when it was constructed in 1917 (see Figures 6 and 7 in Attachment B).

The period of significance for the Armour Property begins in 1917, the year the office building was constructed, until 1967, when the Armour Company built new offices and a plant at 4800 Washington Street and began leasing the office building at the stockyards to other organizations. Therefore, the Armour Office Building is historically significant as the administration building of the Armour/CPPC meatpacking plant between 1917 and 1967.

Category 2: Architecture

To have architectural importance, the structure or district shall have design quality and integrity, and shall:

Criteria:

- a. *Embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or type; or,*
- b. *Be a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder; or,*

- c. *Contain elements of architectural design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant or influential innovation; or,*
- d. *Portray the environment of a group of people or physical development of an area in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.*

Criterion 2A

The 1917 Armour Office Building is one of Denver's few intact examples of Neo-Classical style architecture outside of downtown Denver. The Neo-Classical style is evident in the Armour Office Building's cleanly delineated corbelled cornices, simple geometric designs on the brick walls, and regular, symmetrical form and fenestration. Simplified and elegant, these elements can be interpreted as an expression of the masculine aesthetic that characterized the American West and the ranching culture at the DUSY.

Category 3: Geography

To have geographical importance, the structure shall:

Criteria:

- a. *Have a prominent location or be an established, familiar, and orienting visual feature of the contemporary city; or,*
- b. *Promote understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity; or,*
- c. *Make a special contribution to Denver's distinctive character.*

Criterion 3B

The Armour Office Building is a unique and distinctive remnant of the meatpacking history at the DUSY and one of the few buildings left that can educate people about the former prominence of meatpacking and slaughter houses in this part of Denver. All but a few buildings that were part of the Swift and Armour plants were eventually demolished to make way for parking lots. The office building is a distinctive structure that can help people understand the scale and significance of the stockyards and meatpacking plants to Denver and Colorado's agricultural economy.

Criterion 3C

The Armour Office Building is representative of the contribution that the meatpacking industry had to Denver's character as a major hub of the livestock industry and host to the annual National Western Stock Show. This property is directly associated with the CPPC's and Armour's development of the meatpacking industry at the DUSY, which supported ranching and livestock industries in Colorado and other nearby states that shipped animals to Denver for processing. In its historic location, the Armour Office Building is a distinctive landmark within the stockyards, which has collectively defined the character of Denver as a major livestock hub since the early 20th century.

7. Architectural Description

Please provide a statement for each of the following:

- a. **Concisely describe the structure and its surrounds. Include building size, shape, # stories, materials, style, and site terrain.**

The 1917 Armour Property is north of I-70 and west of Brighton Boulevard in the National Western Complex approximately two miles northeast of downtown Denver. It is accessed from Packing House Road/National Western Drive, and is northeast of a large former sheep pen structure known as Le Mouton Noir. A railroad track, the former DUSY No. 2 currently operated by the Denver Rock Island Railroad, parallels Packing House Road/National Western Drive. Across National Western Drive to the southeast is the Livestock Exchange Building at 4701 Marion, and the pens and associated structures of the stockyards are directly east of the Armour Property. The building faces northeast and is surrounded by asphalt- and concrete-paved parking areas on the west, north, and east. A masonry wall between the Armour Property and Le Mouton Noir is on the southern boundary line of the parcel but outside of the landmark boundary. Industrial buildings and the former DUSY No. 20 tracks, also currently operated by the Denver Rock Island Railroad, are located to the west, parallel to the South Platte River.

The former Armour Office building is a two-story (plus basement), rectangular-plan, Neo-Classical style office building, with a brick masonry exterior. The building measures approximately 95 feet long by 65 feet wide. The main entry on the front (east) facade is accessed via a one-story colonnaded portico, and there are two secondary entrances: one on the front facade and one on the rear (west) elevation. Due to the downward slope of the terrain towards the west on the rear elevation, the massing of the rear elevation is three full stories.

b. Architectural description including mention of major features, uncommon or unique design features, ancillary structures, and important landscape or site features. Also describe interior spaces with extraordinary design features (if any).

The Armour Office Building has a rectangular plan that rests on a poured-concrete wall foundation. The exterior walls of the building consist of a pattern of regular bays. The building is generally symmetrical, with the main entrance centered on the front (east) facade.

Roof

The flat roof features a parapet finished with stone block coping around the entire perimeter. The roof is covered in built up asphalt.¹ A stone belt course just underneath the roofline provides a horizontal emphasis.

Exterior walls, portico, and fenestration

The exterior of the building is divided into bays by full-height brick pilasters, which tie into a brick masonry lintel with a three-tiered corbelled brick support in orange-hued brick. The brickwork between the pilasters form recessed panels laid in five-course common bond of the same color.

The main entry portico, which dominates the front facade, has a poured-concrete footing and dressed-concrete floor. The portico has no railings. The flat roof is supported by two pairs of concrete columns, each pair consisting of one square and one Roman Tuscan column, at the front corners, and by squared concrete pilasters on the building. Above the columns are an architrave, wide frieze, and overhanging cornice, all of concrete. The roof of the portico is flat.

The main entry is a pair of wood panels with single-light doors with a metal kick plate. The doors and transom above are all set in a simple wood frame. Two small rectangular windows with concrete sills flank the main

¹ SAIC, *Colorado Cultural Resource Survey Architectural Inventory Form 5DV.10083* (OAHF, September 18, 2007).

entrance. These have been boarded. A secondary entrance located at the southeast corner of the front facade consists of a wood panel door with a single light flanked by sidelights, all in a wooden frame. This entrance is not original and was added at an unknown date. The entry uses the same opening of the window that formerly was located here. A flat wooden frieze with a prominent cornice extends the width of the door and sidelights, topped by three transoms with simple wood surrounds. Windows are generally wood, one-over-one, double-hung sash with single-pane fixed transom, grouped in threes. The second-story window triplets are taller than those on the first story, and have stone sills. A concrete belt course topping the water table and exposed foundation served as the sill for the first-story windows, which were boarded up at the time of this survey.

Foundation

The topography is such that the ground slopes upward at the front of the building, and then downward towards the rear of the building. While the front facade features a 3-foot concrete foundation sill, the rear elevation has a full story of exposed concrete foundation and garden-level basement entrance. Above the concrete, a masonry water table with bands of decorative brickwork topped by a concrete belt course extend around the entire building. A single solid wood door provides entry on the rear elevation. Three square awning windows with simple wood surrounds are located in the center of the side (north) elevation, and six more are located west of the door on the rear elevation.

Interior

The interior of the former Armour Office building offers a lavishly finished administration space. The main entry opens into a central hall/stair hall, which features elaborate oak woodwork and wood-and-metal railings. The first floor boasts high ceilings and oak woodwork. Office space is housed in the eastern portion of the building, which is partitioned to take advantage of the natural light from the tall windows. The lower half of the walls are constructed in handsome oak wood paneling, and the upper portions consist of opaque plate glass divisions and transoms in wood frames. A large walk-in safe with a decorative metal door and surround is located at the northeast corner. Utility rooms, a records and registration office, and tiled men's and women's restrooms line the rear hall. An extensive meeting room housed in the western portion of the first floor features a system of columns and retractable wood paneled doors that act as room dividers.

The second story features a large open workroom (subdivided now) and a wood paneled "ticket cage." The ticket cage is centrally located on the front (east) wall oriented towards the room; its lower walls feature oak paneling and the upper wall consists of vertical metal bars framed with oak. Two enclosed, wood-paneled offices are housed in the eastern portion, and another large safe is located in the northeast corner. A bathroom, which appears to date to the historic period, is located along the rear (west) wall. The large open room has been subdivided at the northwest corner with modern frame and drywall materials.

The central stair hall accesses the ground floor, which is a walk-out basement on the rear elevation. The cellar level features storage rooms, a furnace room with the original boiler, and a kitchen with an adjoining area that was used as a cafeteria.

Landscaping

Masonry wall (not in landmark boundary)

A 4-foot-tall brick masonry wall/retaining wall extends southeast from the southwest corner of the front facade of the former Armour Office Building outside of the landmark boundary. The color of the brick used in the posts is

the same as the orange brick used in the main building, but a different color brick, reddish in color, has been used on the sections between the brick posts, suggesting sections of the wall were possibly rebuilt at an unknown date. The foundation of the wall appears to be concrete that has been painted Kelly green. The wall is also capped in concrete. The wall height varies to compensate for a slight elevation rise on the site and serves as a barrier between the Armour Property and the former sheep pen structure (Le Mouton Noir) to the south. The wall extends along the south elevation of the building for approximately 135 feet. A short section of the wall wraps around the east elevation and terminates at the northwest corner of the building, measuring approximately 10 feet in length. The wall consists of recessed panels of seven-course common bond on a concrete sill and coping. The wall is supported by square posts along its length.

Mature Ponderosa Pine trees/green metal fence/brick pavers on east boundary of parcel

Six mature Ponderosa Pines line the east boundary of the property, along with a three-rail metal fence, painted green, which screens the former Armour Office Building from Packing House Road/National Western Drive. These trees were planted at an unknown date. The trees and green fence do not date to the period of significance and are considered noncontributing features to the property.

Red brick pavers line the area in front of the green fence and mature Ponderosa Pine trees. These do not appear to be historic pavers and do not match the appearance of other historic pavers in the stockyards. Because they are in an area that would have been disturbed to plant the pine trees, they are not considered to date from the period of significance and are noncontributing features.

Shrubs and plants in planter on front, side, and rear elevations

Numerous small shrubs and plants, and several boulders, have been placed on either side of the front entrance in a slightly raised planter. Additionally, numerous shrubs are located next to the building foundation on the rear and side elevations. These were planted at an unknown date but do not date to the period of significance and are considered noncontributing features.

Other vegetation on the property

Numerous trees, shrubs, and small plants are also growing on the property, but these appear to be volunteer species and weeds. These do not date to the period of significance and are considered noncontributing features.

Asphalt driveway

The building is accessed from Packing House Road/National Western Drive through a narrow driveway, and the front, sides, and back of the building have been paved in asphalt at an unknown date. The paved surface does not date to the period of significance and is considered noncontributing.

c. Describe character-defining features; identify the key visual aspects that make up the character of this building.

Exterior: Character-defining features related to the former Armour Office Building's style and form are:

- The regular fenestration and distinctive original windows with transoms grouped in threes.
- The original main entrance with the prominent one-story colonnaded portico.
- The original brick exterior walls with full-height corbelled pilasters defining the bay pattern.
- The exposed concrete foundation and raised water table capped with contrasting belt course.

- The horizontal emphasis of the roofline, with stone belt course and coping on perimeter parapet.
- The brick, stone, and concrete exterior materials.

Interior: Although not protected by this landmark designation, notable character-defining features seen on the building's interior are:

- The regular fenestration and distinctive original windows with transoms grouped in threes.
- The dramatic entry stair hall with oak paneling and banisters.
- The expansive meeting rooms on the first floor with full-height wood panel folding doors.
- The vault rooms on the first and second floors.
- The open work space on the second floor with intact "ticket cage."
- The cafeteria in the walk-out basement and historic boiler that appears to be original to the building.

d. Describe location and setting, including physical context and relationship to neighborhood and other historic structures.

At present, the Armour Property is one of few remaining structures that reflect an earlier time in the life of the DUSY. The building represents the massive investment and development of meatpacking companies and slaughter houses that once dominated the stockyards. The former Armour Office Building is located north of a large concrete building that housed sheep pens (Le Mouton Noir) and shares similar characteristics with the 1916 Livestock Exchange Building at 4701 Marion Street. There are no other known meatpacking office buildings left at the DUSY, and some of the original land of the Armour plant was sold for development in the 1970s. The building is now within an industrial/agricultural area with a mix of 1970s and 1980s warehouses and the buildings, structures, and features associated with the DUSY and the NWSS.

e. Describe major alterations to the exterior of the structure and dates of major alterations if known. Describe any plans to alter the exterior.

The massing, form, and primary features of the former Armour Office Building have not been significantly altered, and most major alterations appear to be reversible, or original features appear to be restorable.

Changes to the Armour Property include the following:

- Green paint on the wood frames and transoms of the windows
- Boarding up of windows and doors on the first floor due to extensive vandalism.
- Adding a single door entrance on the northeast corner of the primary facade, within the original bay that included the original windows. The original opening has been left intact and is easily reversible.

There are no current plans to alter the exterior. Depending on the re-use of the building, wheelchair accessible ramps may be added to the exterior.

- f. **Include a statement describing how the building currently conveys its historic integrity. For example does it retain its original design, materials, location, workmanship, setting, historic associations and feeling?**

The former Armour Office Building's integrity is clearly very high, and it has been noted by previous assessments to retain much of its physical historic integrity.

The building's design, materials, location, and workmanship are all original and in remarkably good condition. Efforts made to restore the building to its former prominence as a 1917 office building would not be difficult given the presence of original materials on the exterior and interior. The masonry wall on the south property line outside of the landmark boundary is an original feature despite the appearance of two colors of brick, indicating some sections might have been rebuilt.

The loss of the rest of the meat packing plant facilities on the larger parcel has had a negative impact on the integrity of the historic setting and feeling of the former site. As a rare survivor of the former massive complex of slaughter houses that dominated the western edge of the stockyards, the Armour Property is able to convey significance as a former administrative office building that was once associated with the meatpacking history of this part of Denver.

8. History of the Structure and Its Associations

Please provide a statement for each of the following:

- a. **Describe the history of the structure and its associations with important individuals, groups, events, or historical trends.**
- b. **Describe specific historical associations including why this structure has direct association with the individual, group, event, or historical trend.**

Summary

The Armour Office Building is associated with the development of meatpacking in Denver and the growth of ranching and the livestock industries in Colorado and other nearby states that shipped animals to Denver for processing. Armour & Company, headquartered in Chicago, led the industry in acquiring smaller packing companies yet allowed plants to retain local personality and personnel. As such, the Armour Office Building is closely tied to the lives of prominent Denver businessman Henry Gebhard (founder of CPPC, Armour's predecessor), and the Gebhard family. The meatpacking plants employed immigrants in nearby neighborhoods of Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea. Businessmen who ran Armour and other large meatpacking companies developed the DUSY into a major terminal market in the early twentieth century, as well as organized and produced an annual event that brought agriculturalists together each January, the NWSS, produced by the WSSA. Finally, the Armour Property is also associated with the development of railroad and Interstate Highway transportation in Denver.

The history of the Armour Property is reflected in the buildings and structures that remain, which are themselves landmarks that reflect the site's former history as a meatpacking plant. The former Armour Office building is a dignified and refined structure that stands out from the utilitarian buildings that line the stockyards. The Armour Office Building is in its historic location, and serves as a distinctive landmark within the stockyards.

- a. Describe the history of the structure and its associations with important individuals, groups, events, or historical trends.

(1) Association with Denver's industrial development and nearby working-class neighborhoods of Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea

The forerunners to meatpacking plants and the DUSY are the smelters who chose this site because of the proximity to railroad yards. The lure of hard rock mining in the mountains to the west stoked a population boom in Denver. The major railroad lines arrived in the 1870s and 1880s, intent on reaching the mining camps to the west. Two of the biggest—the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy and the Union Pacific—built their yards and stored equipment in an unoccupied area approximately 2 miles from the center of downtown, the start of what became an industrialized expanse in the growing city of Denver. The Denver & Rio Grande Railroad also had tracks nearby.

Enterprising businessmen realized the need for large-scale metal processing centers in Denver, and the first smelter in Denver opened in 1878 near the railroad yards. Major smelters included the Omaha and Grant Smelter south of 46th Avenue, the Holden Smelter at West Washington Street and 52nd Avenue, and the Argo Smelter (later the Boston and Colorado) at 50th Avenue and Fox Street. By 1890 smelting was Denver's largest industry. However, the industry faltered in 1893 with the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, which halted the federal government's purchase of massive quantities of silver bullion to uphold the value of the national currency. The repeal caused the devaluation of silver and other precious minerals, and hit Denver's economy hard.²

Other industries such as meatpacking, which began to develop in the 1890s, helped soften the economic blow for workers laid off at the smelters. As more people arrived to support the new industries, Denver's population surged. Streetcar suburbs, such as Curtis Park, became popular with middle- and upper-class families who had the means to escape the dirt and smells of downtown. The smelters, meatpacking plants, and other factories, largely removed from the rest of the city, required armies of laborers, many of whom immigrated from Russia and countries in Eastern and Western Europe. Some settled in company-built houses, but many built their own wooden structures within walking distance of the smelters and factories. These properties included small kitchen gardens, livestock pens, summer kitchens, and shanties and sheds in the back yards. Family members and friends helped one another find work, and immigrants from the same regions typically settled near one another, establishing enclaves, centered around churches, to share and preserve their religious and cultural traditions.³

In 1881 A.C. Fisk and the Denver Land & Improvement Company platted the Town of Elyria east of the South Platte River as a neighborhood for smelter workers. The town plat boundaries were east of Lafayette Street, south of 49th and 48th Avenues, west of Elizabeth and Josephine Streets, and north of 43rd Avenue on the east side of the town and 46th Avenue on the west. Elyria incorporated in 1890, and town ordinances established a fire department, named streets, and provided franchises for water, electricity, and transportation. The Town of Swansea was established in 1870, near a short-lived smelter that started near the junction of the Kansas Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads. Swansea was east of the Town of Elyria at York Street and north of 46th Avenue. After the smelter closed, the Town of Swansea persisted, merging with Elyria to become the Elyria-Swansea neighborhood. In 1889 the Globe Smelter and Refining Company bought the Holden Smelter and named the nearby settlement Globeville. Located on

² Abbott, Carl, Stephen J. Leonard, Thomas J. Noel, *Colorado: A History of the Centennial State*, Fourth (Niwot, Co.: University Press of Colorado, n.d.), 199, 130.

³ Rebecca Ann Hunt, "Urban Pioneers: Continuity and Change in the Ethnic Communities in Two Denver, Colorado Neighborhoods: 1875-1998," 1999, 52, Ph.D. diss., University of Colorado, Boulder; Daniel Doeppers, "The Globeville Neighborhood in Denver," *The Geographical Review* 57, No. 4 (1967): 509.

the west side of the South Platte River, Globeville incorporated in 1891, occupying a shallow pocket of land between 52nd Avenue on the north, the railroad yards and 42nd Avenue on the south, Broadway Street on the west, and the South Platte on the east. By 1904 Denver had annexed Elyria, Swansea, and Globeville. Because West Elyria was the next-door neighbor to the stockyards, the neighborhood was directly affected by the expansion of the meatpacking industry and the stock show grounds.⁴

(2) Association with the development of the livestock industry in Denver and Colorado

After the Civil War, the livestock industry followed a cattle-drive model. For example, cowboys from Texas drove cattle to railheads in Kansas to be shipped to larger markets in Chicago, Cincinnati, or St. Louis. This era initiated the development of railroad networks, efficient stockyard companies, and modern meatpacking facilities, all in the same location, which led to the establishment of large stockyards, or terminal markets, within the industry. Stockyard companies were created by those who recognized the economic benefits of terminal markets: local businessmen, railroads, and meatpackers. New stockyard companies were established in several locations, including Chicago (1865), Kansas City (1871), St. Louis (1872), Denver (1881), Omaha (1884), and Fort Worth (1887). Most of the new companies followed the Chicago model of calling themselves “Union” stockyards, referring to the union of existing small stock pens into one large yard near the railroad.

Within the meatpacking industry, entrepreneurs operated with little competition and created a limited monopoly. Meatpackers chose to work together instead of competing and risking their large capital investments, and as companies consolidated and grew, four (later five) firms dominated the industry. The two largest, Swift & Company, founded in 1855, and Armour & Company, founded in 1867, were Chicago-based and prominent by 1880. Armour & Company built a reputation as an aggressive young company as it led the industry in vertical integration.⁵ Meatpackers bought interest in the stockyards, often a controlling share. Firms like Swift and Armour would often own ranches, the cattle that fed upon it, the railroad cars that transported animals to the stockyards, the stockyards, the packing plant, and, eventually, refrigerated cars carrying processed meat to market, or some combination of these links in the chain.⁶ To further maximize profits, Armour hired chemists to develop marketable products out of packinghouse waste material, which turned animal remains into products ranging from fertilizer to violin strings.⁷

Beyond the few dominant large packers at the top, the meatpacking industry developed into a hierarchy in the early 1900s. Medium-sized packers obtained their animals regionally, generally from central livestock markets, and in some cases shipped their processed meat to other states. Meatpackers who shipped across state lines were subject to federal government inspections; by 1919 federal records indicate 895 plants had been inspected. Small packers were limited to small cities, where they obtained livestock from nearby ranches and sold it locally. There were also thousands of local butchers who did their own slaughtering, and farmers who processed their own animals for home consumption.⁸

Large meatpackers emerged because approximately two-thirds of the livestock in the country came from west of the Mississippi River, while 69 percent of the U.S. population lived east of the river. To transport meat to the eastern

⁴ Elizabeth MacMillan, “Elyria, Denver’s Forgotten Suburb: 1881-1941,” 2004, 63.

⁵ Jimmy Skaggs, *Prime Cut, Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607-1883* (College Station, Tex.: Texas Department of Transportation, 1986), 97.

⁶ J’Nell Pate, *America’s Historic Stockyards: Livestock Hotels* (Fort Worth, Texas: TCU Press, n.d.), 25.

⁷ Skaggs, *Prime Cut, Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607-1883*, 97.

⁸ George E. Putnam, *Supplying Britain’s Meat* (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1923), 82.

market, it was more economical to ship processed meat in refrigerated railroad cars from the west than to ship live animals. In addition to refrigerated cars, large packers built up networks of refrigerated storage buildings, branch (distribution) houses with refrigeration equipment, and delivery trucks. The distribution chain also included sales managers, supervisors, accountants, and salesmen. Branch houses supplied meat to local retailers, and orders were delivered via railcars to towns along railroad lines. Salesmen took orders from local retailers, which were loaded onto refrigerated cars in the order of retail locations on the routes. The packer-owned rail cars were also ideal for transporting other perishable items, such as cheese, eggs, or poultry. Shipping these additional products to the same markets increased the packers profit. While medium meatpackers also shipped across state lines, only the large packers had the facilities and manpower for efficient cross-country shipping and distribution.⁹

In the 1910s only a handful of large meatpacking firms—Swift, Armour, Morris, Cudahy, and Wilson—controlled much of the industry. Calls for industry reform were starting to take root as outcry against working conditions, unsanitary production methods, and unfair competition drove a wave of legislation.¹⁰ Calls for further government regulation came during World War I, when the industry made great profits before America even entered the war. As a result, in 1917 President Wilson directed the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to study the meatpacking industry to determine if monopolistic practices existed. The FTC report indicated the large firms had obtained a significant competitive advantage through the degree of ownership of the stockyards in which they operated. President Wilson issued a proclamation in June 1918 that required all commercial stockyards, commission merchants, and livestock dealers to have a federal license.¹¹ Thus, the era of government regulation of the stockyards began.

The 1921 passage of the Packers and Stockyards Act, which regulated interstate and foreign livestock commerce, led to major changes in the industry. Under the new law, stockyards became semi-public entities that could not deal in the livestock they handled. Further, stockyard officers, agents, and employees were required to register with the government. Meatpackers could not own stockyards, control the flow of livestock amongst themselves, control prices, or create a monopoly. In 1921 Morris merged with Armour.¹² The largest meatpackers challenged the Packers and Stockyards Act and stalled in compliance through the 1920s and 1930s. As a strategy to avoid government regulation at the stockyards, the packers began direct buying from producers.

After World War II the market dominance of the largest meatpackers began to erode. In 1948 the Department of Justice began proceedings to break up the “beef trust,” and although the suit was abandoned in 1954, the government insisted on compliance of earlier anti-trust rulings. Much of the loss was due to aggressive new companies, such as the Iowa Beef Packers (IBP), that entered the market after the war.¹³ Between 1955 and 1965 the livestock industry changed radically. Meatpacking moved to rural plants due to the rise in truck transportation, changes in the auction system, growth of rural ranches, and the desire to move away from the large, unionized urban markets. Monfort, Inc. in Greeley, Colorado, pioneered a system of slaughtering cattle from its feedlots, thereby bypassing the need to transport cattle to the big meatpackers at terminal markets. Monfort and others such as the IBP constructed one-story, energy-efficient plants next to the feedlots, and the IBP introduced boxed beef for ease of shipping. This efficient new model became the industry norm, and by the 1970s Monfort operated the largest feedlot

⁹ George E. Putnam, *Supplying Britain's Meat* (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1923), 81–83, 91.

¹⁰ Meat Inspection Act; Pure Food and Drug Administration.

¹¹ Pate, *America's Historic Stockyards: Livestock Hotels*, 28.

¹² Wenonah Hauter, *Foodopoly: The Battle Over the Future of Food and Farming in America* (New York: New Press, 2012), 159.

¹³ Skaggs, *Prime Cut, Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607-1883*, 187–188.

in the country.¹⁴ The largest meatpackers faced additional challenges, such as aging and obsolete factories in need of modernization, that often proved prohibitively expensive. To remain viable, Armour, Swift, Cudahy, and Wilson closed plants with unsatisfactory profit margins, and sought to diversify into other product lines. While Wilson weathered the storm and emerged as a prosperous company (Wilson Foods) in the 1980s, Swift and Cudahy struggled to remain independent and solvent. Armour & Company, which had once led the industry in acquisitions, was acquired by the Greyhound Corporation in 1970.¹⁵

b. Describe specific historical associations including why this structure has direct association with the individual, group, event, or historical trend:

(1) Association with the Denver Union Stock Yards

The availability of land made Colorado an ideal place for stock raising, and railroad expansion further transformed Denver into a major hub for the livestock industry. In 1870 L.S. Smith established the first meatpacking plant in Denver east of the South Platte River near the railroad; the firm was known as Smith Brothers.¹⁶ During this period there were several scattered stockyards in Denver, such as the Elephant Corral on Wazee Street and another stockyard on Wynkoop Street (the present-day site of Union Station). In 1881 a group of Denver businessmen organized the DUSY. Downtown residents complained about the smells of manure, and as a result the businessmen consolidated at a new site northeast of downtown near the smelters and railyards. The site was a triangular section of land west of Elyria, bordered on the west by the South Platte River, the south by 46th Avenue, the north by the Denver/Adams County line (at 52nd Avenue), and the east by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad tracks. An east-west Union Pacific railroad siding (north of 46th Avenue) provided additional connectivity, and a spur was constructed that extended north into the stockyards in the 1880s.¹⁷

In 1885 a group of investors from Kansas City took over the DUSY. They built a four-story brick building at the stockyards in 1898 (extant, part of the Livestock Exchange building at 4701 Marion Street), and livestock pens that expanded to roughly 105 acres by 1900. However, most locally raised livestock was being sent to other markets for slaughter, something Denver leaders wanted to change. By the 1890s several local meatpacking companies opened at the stockyards near Smith Brothers, including Walters and Aicher, and Hoffer Brothers, who built small plants east of the South Platte River. Two packing houses that would become prominent in Denver were the CPPC established by Henry Gebhard in 1890, and the Western Packing Company (WPC), founded by Charles Boettcher and David C. Dodge in 1904.¹⁸ Henry Gebhard had spent years buying, selling, and shipping cattle in Elbert County, followed by a stint working at the Burghardt Packing and Provision Company, a small Denver packing house. Gebhard employed several of his children at the CPPC plant, including daughter Minnie (who kept the books), and his sons Harry, twins Paul and Otto, and Charles. Henry Gebhard is credited with making the CPPC into the largest packer of beef and pork in the state.¹⁹

¹⁴ Thomas J. Noel, *Riding High, Colorado Ranchers and 100 Years of the National Western Stock Show* (Golden CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2005), 104; Skaggs, *Prime Cut*, 190.

¹⁵ Skaggs, *Prime Cut, Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607-1883*, 196–197.

¹⁶ “Must Pack Our Meat,” *The Denver Times*, November 3, 1898.

¹⁷ “Denver, Colorado, 1890” (New York: Sanborn Map & Publishing Company, Limited, 1890).

¹⁸ Thomas J. Noel, *Riding High, Colorado Ranchers and 100 Years of the National Western Stock Show* (Golden, Co.: Fulcrum Publishing, 2005), 29–30.

¹⁹ Mildred Sherwood MacArthur, “History of the German Element in the State of Colorado” (Cornell University, 1917), 27; “Denver Packing House Industry, Mostly Pass Through,” *Middle Park Times*, July 16, 1909, <https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org/cgi->

The CPPC fronted the Union Pacific railroad siding, and the WPC was located to the south. In the 1890s the CPPC plant was a two-story brick and frame building with refrigerated rooms, two smoke houses, and separate rooms for beef and pork processing and sausage making (see Figure 1 in Attachment B). Research shows that in the early 1900s the CPPC expanded by obtaining portions of adjoining lots that housed cattle pens and the Kroeger and Bein Slaughterhouse. In 1902 the CPPC opened a large brick factory with various frame outbuildings to process hogs and cattle (see Figure 2 in Attachment B).²⁰

The meatpackers and other stockyard businesses, including factories that rendered leather, soap, candles, and other byproducts, employed skilled and semi-skilled workers, many of whom lived in nearby Elyria, Swansea, and Globeville. The hours were long and arduous, and the work was dangerous; many workers incurred serious or fatal injuries while on the job. For example, Elyria resident Frederick Eckenroth lost his life in 1912 when he fell and impaled himself on his knife while working at the CPPC.²¹ Working conditions were appalling throughout the meatpacking industry. Laborers routinely worked in chilled, unventilated, poorly lit rooms. Safety measures and worksite medical facilities were generally not available in the 1910s.²² Despite the conditions and low pay, meatpacking provided the greatest number of jobs for nearby residents. Other nearby employers included pickle and cracker factories, breweries, and flour mills.²³

(2) Association with Chicago meatpackers investing in the Denver Union Stock Yards and the National Western Stock Show

In 1906 the Union Stock Yards in Chicago purchased controlling interests in the DUSY. The Chicago group consisted of the meatpackers Armour, Nelson, Morris, and Swift, which together became the National Packing Company. The new investors, led by president Edward Tilden, announced major changes to the DUSY, including adding a stockmen's hotel, enlarging the bank at the Exchange Building, and increasing the number of wooden pens to stretch between the network of railroad lines, and paving these in brick to lessen the problem with mud in the yards. Cattlemen and Denver leaders recognized the value of a yearly stock show, and the investors provided financial backing for the first NWSS in 1906.²⁴ The Chicago investors announced plans to construct a permanent pavilion, the Stadium Arena, to host the event. Tilden announced that the National Packing Company's master mechanic in Chicago would begin drawing up the plans, and this appears to have been the case; an architectural trade magazine noted later that year that "architects are preparing the plans for the large \$100,000 pavilion of the Denver Stock Show Association, which will be erected at the Union Stock Yards."²⁵

The WSSA formed in 1906, helmed by Elias M. Ammons (state senator and governor of Colorado from 1913-1915), Henry Gebhard (CPPC founder), and other leaders, to encourage the production of "finer grades of stock and

bin/colorado?a=d&d=MPT19090716.2.17#; Charles O. Brantigan, "Henry Gebhard, Summary of Biographical Information" (Denver, Colorado, February 1992), 4–10. Gebhard built an Italianate mansion for his family at 2253 Downing Street c.1882, 5DV.202.15, NRHP Listed, 1992. His other accomplishments in Denver include founding the Stockyards National Bank, serving as a director of the Denver National Bank, and being a noted philanthropist in Denver (<http://www.drbrantigan.com/history/index.htm>).

²⁰ "New Packing Plant Has Try-Out on Hogs," *The Denver Times*, December 17, 1902, 3.

²¹ "Fell on Butchers Knife and Dies in Hospital," *Denver Post*, April 16, 1912, 17.

²² Skaggs, *Prime Cut, Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607-1883*, 110–111.

²³ MacMillan, "Elyria, Denver's Forgotten Suburb: 1881-1941," 62.

²⁴ Noel, *Riding High, Colorado Ranchers and 100 Years of the National Western Stock Show*, 2005, 45.

²⁵ *The American Architect and Building News* 90 (September 1, 1906). The Stadium Arena was completed in 1909.

horses,” and promote Denver as an ideal distribution center.²⁶ The investors in Chicago dispatched Colonel William E. Skinner to Denver to help boost the local stock show, as he had previously managed the International Live Stock Show in Chicago.²⁷

Also in 1906, the new investors announced that improvements and enlargements would be made to the packing plants at the stockyards. One million dollars was spent to double the capacity of the CPPC and WPC plants, which created an additional 1,000 jobs. The new investors intended to bring Denver up to the level of other meatpacking centers such as Omaha, Kansas City, St. Joseph, and Sioux City, as well as create the nation’s greatest sheep market. The National Packing Company transferred its hog division to Denver as well, which made it the primary hog processing and distributing point west of the Mississippi.²⁸ Through all these changes, Henry Gebhard remained head of CPPC, and in 1908 his son Charles was made manager of the plant.²⁹

(3) Association with Armour & Company

In 1912 Armour & Company bought out the CPPC. The same year, Swift & Company took over the WPC, and both meatpacking plants began to expand into massive, multi-storied complexes next to the river.³⁰ The Swift and Armour purchases were challenged by the Justice Department, who viewed the large companies acted as a trust. While the meatpackers voluntarily agreed to dissolve the National Packing Company in 1912 to avoid further litigation, Armour responded by purchasing controlling interests in the DUSY. In 1916 Armour constructed the DUSY Exchange Building on the front of the 1898 Exchange Building at 4701 Marion Street.³¹ The new building was built in the Neo-Classical Revival style, as was the Armour Office Building the following year. Although the two buildings have similar design motifs, it is unknown whether they shared architect(s) or builders. Armour was the parent company, but historic photos suggest the CPPC retained its original identity with its name above the entrance of the office building (see Figures 5 and 6 in Attachment B). The Gebhard family continued to run the business, including founder Henry and his son Charles, who worked as plant manager until his death in 1919.³² Armour invested considerable funds into the stockyards and attempted to build up the yards by prohibiting livestock firms operating in the Denver market from doing business elsewhere. This unpopular regulation resulted in a lawsuit that reached the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled against Armour.³³

Even with the passage of the Packers and Stockyards Act, and its associated regulations, many consider the 1920s as the heyday of the stockyards. A two-story concrete sheep pen was constructed next to the Armour & Company plant in 1920, and when it was enlarged in 1929 the building became the largest such pen in the country (Le Mouton Noir, 4877 Packing House Drive). By 1929 the packing plants had developed into sprawling multi-storied complexes that ringed the DUSY. East of the stockyards, the Cudahy plant sprawled. West of the stockyards, Swift & Company

²⁶ “Thousands to Better the Yards,” *Denver Post*, October 30, 1906, 1,5.

²⁷ “Live Stock Show to Be the Greatest,” *Denver Post*, December 23, 1906, sec. 2, 3.

²⁸ “Plans for Great Yards and Packing Houses to Handle Product of The Entire West,” *The Denver Rocky Mountain News*, February 3, 1906, Saturday edition.

²⁹ MacArthur, “History of the German Element in the State of Colorado,” 27.

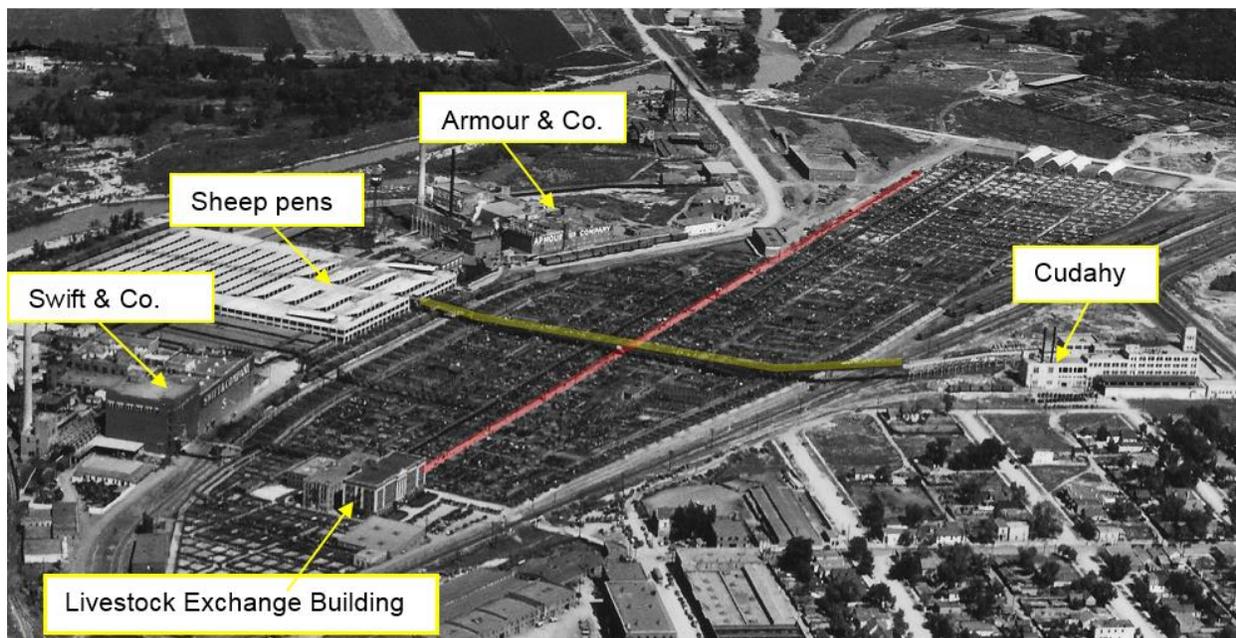
³⁰ Thomas J. Noel, *Riding High, Colorado Ranchers and 100 Years of the National Western Stock Show* (Golden CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2005), 30; Skaggs, *Prime Cut, Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607-1883*, 101.

³¹ Skaggs, *Prime Cut, Livestock Raising and Meatpacking in the United States, 1607-1883*, 104; Noel, *Riding High, Colorado Ranchers and 100 Years of the National Western Stock Show*, 2005, 30.

³² Charles O. Brantigan, “Henry Gebhard, Summary of Biographical Information” (Denver, Colorado, February 1992), 3–6, 15.

³³ Noel, *Riding High, Colorado Ranchers and 100 Years of the National Western Stock Show*, 2005, 30.

anchored the southwest corner, and the Armour & Company plant dominated the northwest corner, with a large hog barn and new sheep pen located between the plants. Elevated walkways crisscrossed the stockyards, providing circulation for people and animals (see following photo).



Aerial image showing meatpacking plants adjacent to the stockyards. Catwalks used for the circulation of people and animals are shown in red and yellow.³⁴

In 1929 the Armour & Company plant was a sprawling complex of buildings and outbuildings, each with a dedicated function to utilize and process every part of the livestock (see Figure 10 in Attachment B). The Armour Office Building anchored the southwest corner of the property, accessed from Packing House Road (now National Western Drive). The new building housed administrative offices and meeting space, a cafeteria in the basement, and a concrete paved driveway, with an auto shed to the rear. Outbuildings clustered near the office included an ice house and a maintenance shop. A reservoir, two wells, and the Armour Water Tower located north/northeast of the office provided water to the plant and supported an extensive sprinkler system. The main factory consisted of a cluster of buildings oriented to the southwest. The western building housed engine rooms and boiler rooms, providing power to the massive plant. The killing building was located to the north, near covered and open stock pens at the rear of the lot, and a central-cooling building featured areas for pork and beef processing. The eastern portion housed separate areas to process fertilizer and refine lard, and a smokehouse and sausage factory were located in the southern portion of the plant. The southeast corner of the main plant building was dedicated to storage and shipping, and housed a warehouse, store rooms, and a box factory. A wagon dock was located east of the warehouse, and a long shipping dock stretched nearly the entire south elevation fronting the DUSY joint rail line. The Armour & Company site also had a separate fertilizer plant, combined stable/garage, and detached garage at the east end of the property.

In 1937 the Armour and Swift companies each invested \$20,000 to construct new buildings to process the animal refuse from their killing houses. The new screening and pressing plants were necessitated when the new Denver

³⁴ Unknown, *Denver Union Stock Yards*, photo, 1934, National Western Stock Show.

sewage disposal system became operational, and solids from the packing houses were no longer allowed to drain into the South Platte River.³⁵

(4) Association with the decline of the large packinghouses

The DUSY continued to underwrite the NWSS and retained ownership of the land and buildings used by the stock show through the 1950s. However, between 1955 and 1965 the livestock business had changed radically and the DUSY was no longer a prime player. The large meatpackers at the DUSY were saddled with aging and obsolete facilities, which all but Armour deemed prohibitively expensive to modernize. Business migrated to rural meatpackers such as Monfort, Inc. in Greeley, with the rise of the feedlot system and boxed beef from modern plants next to the feedlots. As a result of declining profits, the big companies closed their DUSY plants one by one.³⁶

In the 1960s the DUSY made efforts to streamline market facilities and procedures to strengthen the position of the Denver livestock market. Measures included reducing the area needed for livestock sales by centering the operation in the southern end of the yards, with the surplus area available for other uses. About 50 acres of land on the north end of the yards were sold for development, with a focus on drawing food processing and distributing industries to the site. The DUSY worked with the Denver Urban Renewal Authority and the City to plan for timely development.

During this tumultuous time in the livestock industry, Armour & Company boldly expanded in Denver, investing \$750,000 in capital improvements as an effort to revitalize the then “100-years-old-and-going-on-200-years-old-company.”³⁷ By the 1960s the meatpacking company had diversified and boasted more than 400 products in the international market. Despite waning profit from the Denver market, Armour opened a new state-of-the-art plant for smoking meats at 4800 Washington Street in Globeville in 1967. The new initiative, dubbed “Operation Fresh Start,” also included remodeling portions of the existing plant on Packing House Road, increased investment in livestock and workers’ salaries, and a new delivery fleet.³⁸ Just two short years after the Denver expansion was completed, Armour & Company announced that its Denver operations would close September 6, 1969, due to unsatisfactory profit performance.³⁹ The DUSY bought the closed Armour plant, as well as Swift land and holdings (which closed in 1966), but could not successfully convert either plant to alternative uses. Most of the buildings in the Swift and Armour plants were eventually demolished to make way for parking lots.⁴⁰

(5) Association with transportation at the DUSY

The Armour Property, as part of the DUSY, is directly associated with the history of railroad and highway development in Denver. Meatpackers initially chose the site because of its proximity to established stockyards and major railroad connections. As the site grew, it became part of one of the busiest and most congested locations in the metro area. By 1929 the yards featured a network of tracks and spurs that connected the facilities throughout the stockyard area.⁴¹ Historian J’Nell Pate, who researched the history of stockyards in the United States, observed “the triumvirate

³⁵ “Two City Packing Plants Plan \$40,000 Expansion,” *The Denver Post*, April 23, 1937.

³⁶ Noel, *Riding High, Colorado Ranchers and 100 Years of the National Western Stock Show*, 2005, 112.

³⁷ Willard Haselbush, “Armour & Co. Expands in Denver,” *The Denver Post*, March 6, 1967.

³⁸ Haselbush, “Armour & Co. Expands in Denver.”

³⁹ Willard Haselbush, “Armour Co. Will Close Denver Plant,” *The Denver Post*, March 7, 1969.

⁴⁰ Noel, *Riding High, Colorado Ranchers and 100 Years of the National Western Stock Show*, 2005, 112.

⁴¹ P.M. Wallace, “Denver Union Stock Yards” (Denver, Colorado, 1929).

of rail lines, stock pens, and slaughtering facilities dominated livestock marketing in America.⁴² This was particularly true before 1950, when stockyards required rail transportation, slaughter houses, and a reliable stream of animals to prosper. Meatpacking companies typically had financial interests in railroads and clustered these industries together for efficient transportation.

Many different railroad companies operated through the stockyards from 1886 to 1970, and only a few lines remain in their original locations. When new junctions and connections were built, the old ones were often removed. It is assumed that the DUSY built the tracks parallel to Packing House Road (DUSY No. 2) and along the South Platte River (DUSY No. 20) because the DUSY owned the land under the tracks and leased the rail line to the various railroads that operated in the yards. The DUSY never operated its own trains and frequently designated the Colorado & Southern as interchange operator. The train traffic within the yards functioned as a joint agency, operated by six railroads during the period of DUSY operations: Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF); Chicago, Burlington & Quincy; Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific; Union Pacific, Colorado & Southern, and Denver & Rio Grande Western.⁴³

Commuter, passenger, and freight rail transportation began to decline in the U.S. after World War II, as more Americans bought cars and American companies gravitated toward highways for freight transportation, particularly after the federal government made tremendous investments in Interstate Highways. At the same time, the big meatpackers at the DUSY were suffering because they could not compete with modern slaughter houses built next to rural feedlots that streamlined the process of meatpacking. Trucks provided a much more flexible method of transportation to and from these rural locales, and limited-access Interstate Highways made truck transportation even more efficient. By the early 1970s the railroads had discontinued livestock service at the stockyards, and all animals and other products came in and out via trucks.⁴⁴ The joint track system owned by the DUSY was transferred to the WSSA when the DUSY ceased operations in 1983.

As the number of automobiles on the roads increased, they created severe bottlenecks, and the stockyard roads were among the most congested in the city. Brighton Boulevard was part of U.S. Highway 85, a busy truck route between Denver, Commerce City, and Brighton. 46th Avenue was a major arterial on the east side of Broadway, with 48th Avenue carrying most of the traffic on the west side of Broadway. Severe congestion at the stockyards and meatpacking plants was exacerbated by the at-grade railroad crossings that halted car traffic. The City planned to build a limited-access freeway to alleviate the congestion, and between 1948 and 1958 constructed the Valley Highway (now I-25) to roughly follow the South Platte River between 52nd Avenue on the north and Evans Avenue on the south. The new highway cut through the middle of Globeville less than one mile from the DUSY. An important component of the Valley Highway plan was a future connecting freeway along East 46th and West 48th Avenues (I-70) that would separate local traffic from vehicles using the streets as cross-town thoroughfares.

Beginning in 1962 the Colorado Department of Highways started building I-70 on a viaduct between Colorado Boulevard and Inca Street. The viaduct was necessary to pass over the railroad lines, but it also cut off the street grid of Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea, along 46th Avenue. I-70 also crossed over the covered concrete pedestrian/livestock walkway built between the Stadium Arena and the Denver Coliseum in 1951, effectively splitting the site in half. In 2000 the viaduct on the west side of Brighton Boulevard to the junction of I-25 was rebuilt, further

⁴² J'Nell Pate, *America's Historic Stockyards, Livestock Hotels* (Fort Worth, Tex.: TCU Press, 2005), xi.

⁴³ Kenton Forrest and Charles Albi, *Denver's Railroads: The Story of Union Station and the Railroads of Denver* (Golden, Co.: Colorado Railroad Museum, 1981), 205.

⁴⁴ Noel, *Riding High, Colorado Ranchers and 100 Years of the National Western Stock Show*, 2005, 138.

changing the historic setting and increasing the massive width of the structure between the two buildings. The viaduct created physical changes to the buildings and local streets, transforming Brighton Boulevard into the main connection between the NWSS Complex and the rest of the city.

After 1950 the need for parking was a constant issue during the NWSS and other major events. The expansive lots that had once been meatpacking plants (which started to be demolished in the 1960s and 1970s) provided more vacant land for parking.

(6) Association with the NWSS and DUSY after 1967 at the Armour Property

The 1967 expansion and remodel of the Armour plant included new office space in the Washington Street facility, and it appears that in the 1960s the Armour Office Building began to house other businesses such as the Day Fresh Egg Factory. After the DUSY purchased the closed Armour plant, commercial tenants leased the space, such as Howards Distributors, Inc. and Blakely Stock Commission in the 1970s, and A.A. Blakely Livestock, F.J. Blatnik Livestock, and S.B. Nowack Livestock in the 1980s.⁴⁵

In 1970 the DUSY reorganized as a landholding company, the Denver Union Company, and began to cut ties with the livestock business. The DUSY went out of business in 1983, leaving the WSSA on its own to continue to operate the show. The NWSS has continued to grow, breaking its own records for visitors each year, and continues to attract people from across the United States to participate in and attend the shows.⁴⁶ The WSSA assumed many of the DUSY's other responsibilities, including the Armour & Company property, after the DUSY went out of business.

In the 1980s a series of fires at the former Armour & Company plant on Packing House Drive caused extensive structural damage to the larger meatpacking buildings. In 1985 and 1986 small fires in the former plant were put out by Denver firefighters. The largest and most destructive fire occurred on July 7, 1987. Newspaper reports recount how the building had to be torn apart as more than 85 Denver firefighters struggled to extinguish the three-alarm blaze. A crane was used to tear out sections of the interior, thereby removing the "seat of the fire."⁴⁷ The plant and most associated buildings were subsequently razed in 1987.⁴⁸

The former Armour Office Building continued to house businesses in the 1990s, including P. Genack and the American Gelbvieh Association. In 2006 the WSSA granted the building to Thomas Anthony. Anthony lived in the building with his family until 2017, when the City and County of Denver bought the property.⁴⁹ The Former Armour Office Building and the Armour Water Tower are all that remain of the massive Armour & Company plant; these structures stand testament to the once dominant meatpacking presence that dominated Denver's stockyards.

c. Describe other structures that have similar associations and the relationship/comparison of this structure to these other structures.

⁴⁵ SAIC, *Colorado Cultural Resource Survey Architectural Inventory Form 5DV.10083*.

⁴⁶ Noel, *Riding High*, 112-113.

⁴⁷ Robert Jackson, "Firefighters Battle Blaze at Vacant Plant," *Rocky Mountain News*, July 8, 1987; Karen Bowers, "Crane Tears Parts of Meat Building to Conquer Blaze," *Rocky Mountain News*, July 9, 1987.

⁴⁸ SlaterPaull Architects, Inc., *National Western Historic Preservation Study* (Denver, Colorado, August 25, 2014), 8.

⁴⁹ Denver Assessor Records Online, 5001 Packing House Rd., <https://www.denvergov.org/property/realproperty/chainoftitle/164050027>

There are no other known office buildings remaining from the large meatpacking plants that have this architectural significance and with this degree of integrity. The Armour Company built a new plant at 4800 Washington in 1967, but more research is needed to determine whether this building is still extant. The Swift Company administrative offices have been razed, although two other extant buildings remain on the former Swift parcel: the Artist Studio (5DV.10081) and McConnell Welders (5DV.10082). Research indicates these buildings were used as a poultry barn and garage, respectively.

9. Owner Consent to Designation

I/We, the undersigned, acting as owner(s) of the property described in this application for landmark designation, do hereby give my consent to the designation of this structure as a Structure for Preservation.

I understand that this designation transfers with the title of the property should the property be sold, or if legal or beneficial title is otherwise transferred.

Owner(s): _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Owner(s): _____ Date: _____
(signature)

If the owner does not consent to designation, please describe the reasons for recommending designation:

It is strongly suggested that if the owner does not consent to designation the applicant should meet and discuss application with owner prior to filing an application. Provide a statement describing efforts that have been made to contact the owner to talk about designation and possible alternatives if owner does not consent to designation:

Applicant(s): _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Applicant(s): _____ Date: _____
(signature)

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant(s): _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Applicant(s): _____ Date: _____
(signature)

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant(s): _____ Date: _____
(please print)

Applicant(s): _____ Date: _____
(signature)

Applicant Address: _____

Three applicants are required if the designation does not have owner consent. All three applicants will need to be either a Denver resident, property owner or representative of a Denver based organization or business.

10. Resources

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Unknown. *Denver Union Stock Yards*. Photo, 1934. National Western Stock Show.

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The American Architect and Building News 90 (September 1, 1906).

11. Photographs: See Attachment B

Attach at least four 5" x 7" or larger color photographs showing the views of the property from the public right of way(s) and any important features or details. If available, attach copies of historic photographs of the structure.

12. Site Map: See Attachment A

An overall site plan should be included graphically depicting the building, the location of other significant site features and the boundaries of the designation.

13. Staff Visit

Site visit by LPC staff

14. Application Fee

There is a non-refundable application fee of \$250 for an individual structure with owner consent or \$875 for an individual structure without owner consent. (Make check payable to Denver Manager of Revenue).

The designation process is outlined in Denver Revised Municipal Code; Chapter 30 which is based upon the criteria used by the National Register of Historic Places. National Register evaluation principles regarding criteria, categories, and integrity have been adapted for local applications. More information may be found at www.denvergov.org/preservation

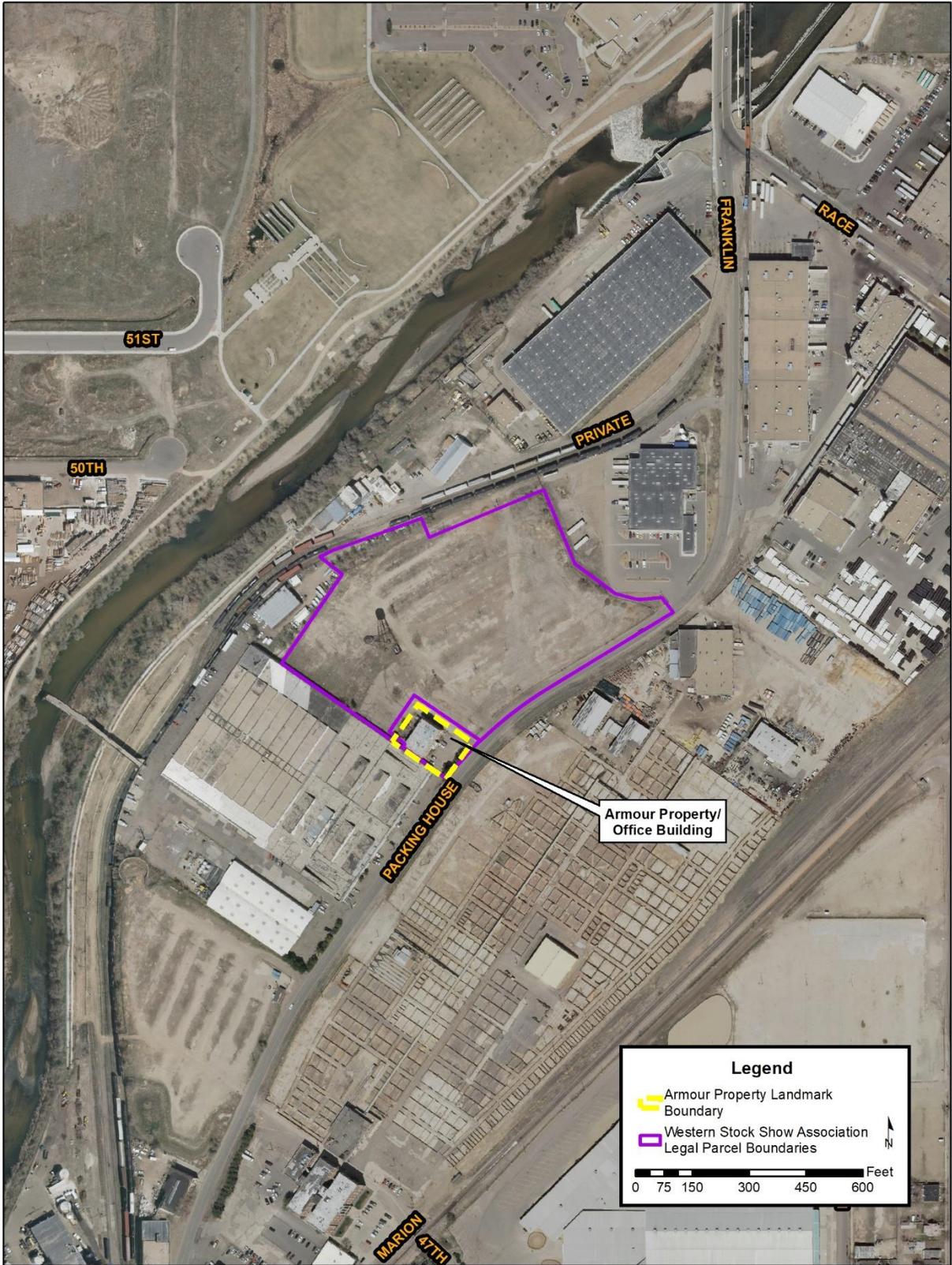
Attachments

A: Site Map and Legal Parcel Boundary Sketch Map

B: Site Chronology, Photographs, Figures

C: Survey (forthcoming from Denver Landmarks office)

Attachment A.
Site Map and Legal Parcel Boundary Sketch Map





Armour Property/
Office Building

Legend

-  Armour Property Landmark Boundary
-  Western Stock Show Association Legal Parcel Boundaries

0 37.5 75 150 225 300 Feet

N

**Attachment B.
Site Chronology, Photographs, Figures**

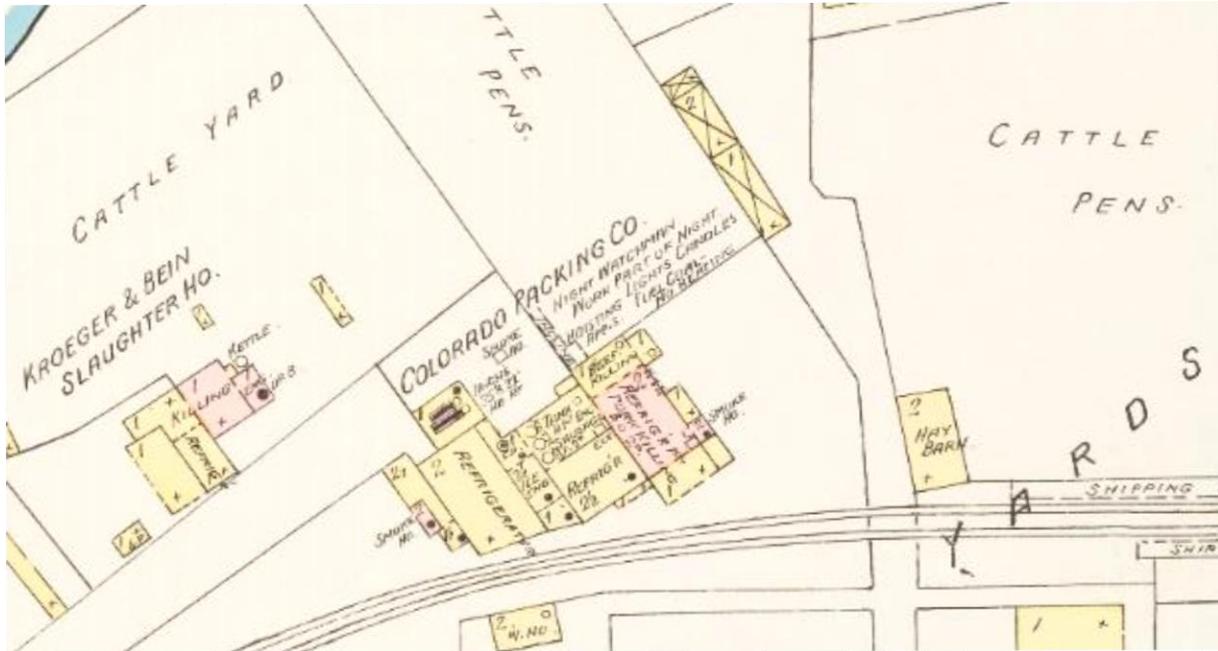


Figure 1. 1890 Sanborn map showing predominantly frame CPPC plant.⁵⁰

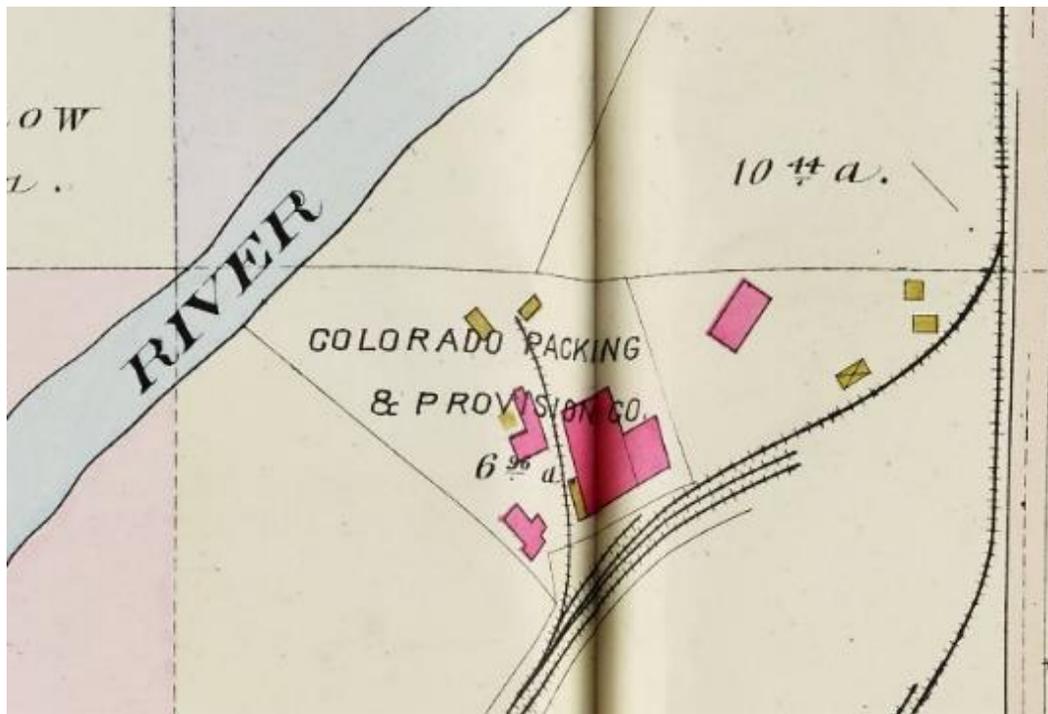


Figure 2. 1905 Baist Plate showing large brick plant building and brick and frame accessory buildings.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Sanborn Map Company, "Denver, Colorado, 1890" (Denver, Colo.: Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, 1890).

⁵¹ G.W. Baist, "Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Denver Colorado" (Denver, Colo.: G.W. Baist, 1905), Plate 26-27.



Figure 3. c.1905-1908 image of predominantly brick CPPC plant.⁵²



Figure 4. c.1912 image of the CPPC plant, after investors double the capacity.⁵³

⁵² Unknown, c.1905 Colorado Packing & Provision Plant, Photograph, c 1905, History Colorado Online Collection, CHS.X7823.

⁵³ Louis Charles McClure, Denver Union Stockyards Company Pens, Photograph, c 1912, L. C. McClure collection 1890-1935, Denver Public Library.



Figure 5. c.1917 image of the Armour & Company plant showing the new office building and the CPPC signage on the plant building.⁵⁴



Figure 6. The 1917 Armour Office Building shortly after completion.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Rocky Mountain Photo Company, *Denver Stock Yards and Colorado Packing and Provision Company Building*, c 1917, Denver Public Library. WH2129

⁵⁵ Rocky Mountain Photo Company, *Colorado Packing & Provision Company*, c 1917, Denver Public Library, X-24328.



Figure 7. c.1917 image of the Armour Office Building with CPPC signage on the facade. “Armour & Co.” appears to be chiseled in the stone portico above the entrance. The outline of the concrete walkway is evident in the parking area.⁵⁶



Figure 8. CPPC Complex, probably taken from the Swift & Company plant, before Le Mouton Noir was enlarged in 1929.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Rocky Mountain Photo Company, *Colorado Packing & Provision Company*, c 1917, Denver Public Library, X-24329.

⁵⁷ Rocky Mountain Photo Company, *Colorado Packing & Provision Company*, c 1917, Denver Public Library, WH2129.



Figure 9. 1903-1904 Sanborn map, updated to 1925, showing the Armour Office Building and sprawling plant complex.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Sanborn Map Company, "Denver, Colorado, 1903-1904, updated to 1925" (Denver, Colorado: Sanborn Map & Publishing Company, Limited, 1925).



Figure 11. Sanborn map updated to 1961, showing little change in the footprint.⁵⁹

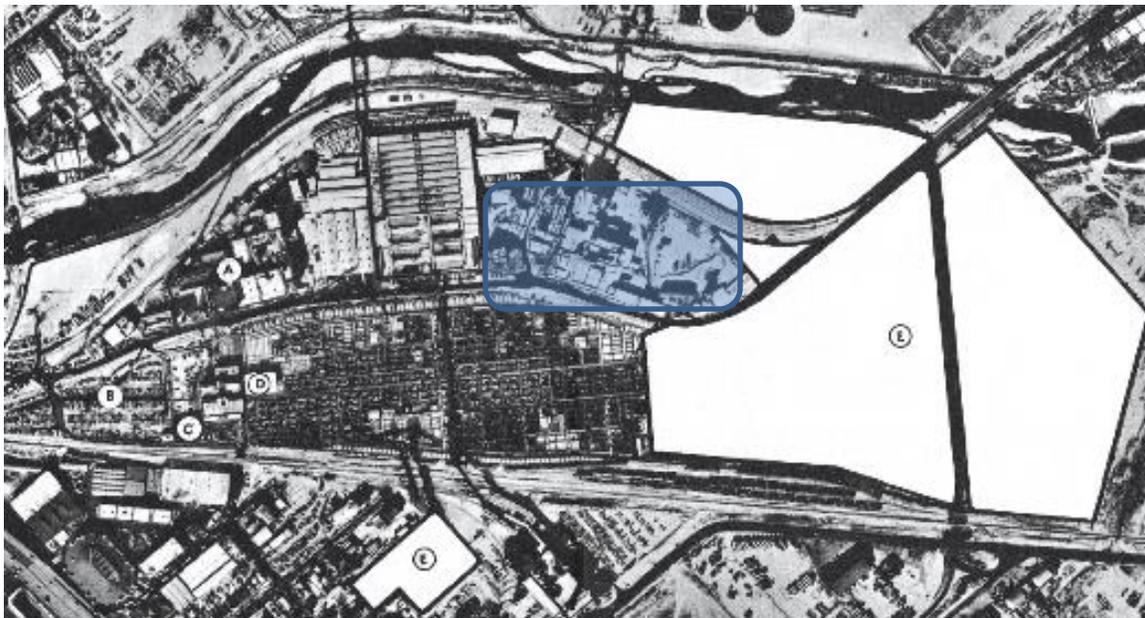


Figure 12. 1966 view of the stockyards with the Armour plant highlighted in blue and areas of the DUSY opened to development shown in white.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Sanborn Map Company, "Denver, Colorado, 1929-1930, Updated to 1961" (Sanborn Map & Publishing Company, Limited, 1961).

⁶⁰ Crew, W.C., President, *The Denver Union Stock Yard Company Annual Report, 1966* (Denver, Colorado: Denver Union Stock Yard Co., 1966), 8–9.



Figure 13. Overview of the Armour complex from the elevated walkway in the stockyards showing the former Armour Office Building and Water Tower. Note the noncontributing Ponderosa Pines that line the east boundary of the parcel and a train on the tracks currently operated by Denver Rock Island Railroad, which parallels National Western Drive.⁶¹



Figure 14. Former Armour Office Building, front (east) facade and side (south) elevation view facing northwest.⁶²

⁶¹ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017,

⁶² Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017,



Figure 15. Former Armour Office Building, east and north elevations, view facing southwest.⁶³



Figure 16. Masonry wall between the Armour Property and Le Mouton Noir not within landmark boundary, view facing north.⁶⁴

⁶³ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017,

⁶⁴ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017,



Figure 17. Image of non-contributing pavers with Armour Water tower in distance. View facing north.⁶⁵



Figures 18 and 19. Ponderosa Pines, green metal fence, and non-historic pavers on the east boundary line of the parcel. All were placed after the period of significance and are noncontributing features.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017,

⁶⁶ Right: Mead Hunt photograph, right, September 2017; Left: Google Earth street view, October 2017.



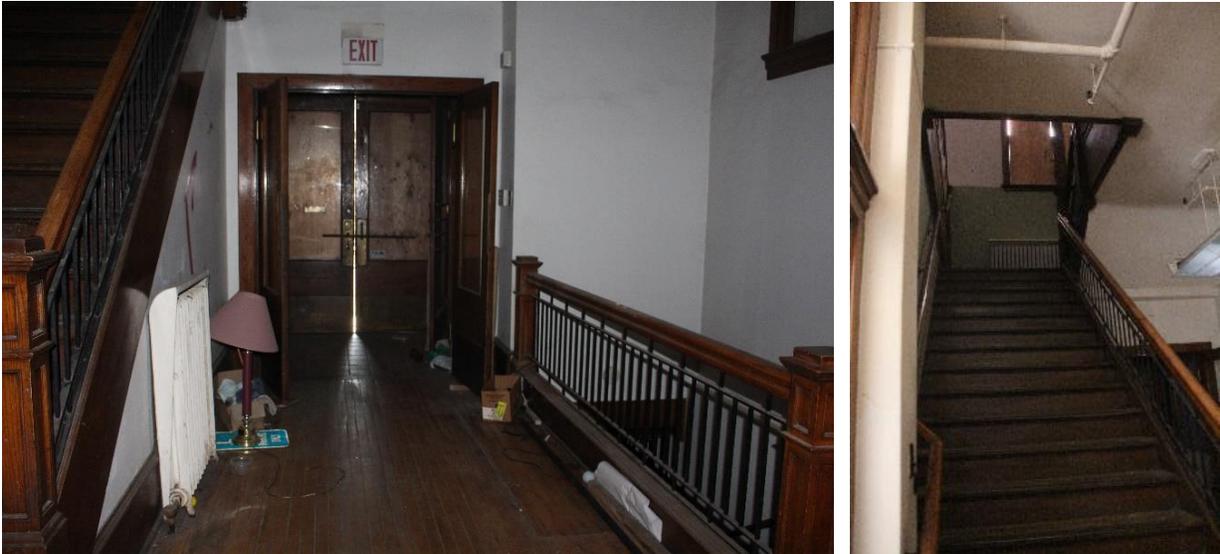
Figure 20. Interior view of full-height wood oak room dividers on the first floor.⁶⁷



Figures 21 and 22. Interior view of the ticket booth/cage on the second floor.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017.

⁶⁸ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017.



Figures 23 and 24. Front interior entrance and stairway from first to second floor. ⁶⁹



Figure 25. Original offices with wood doors and transoms on second floor. ⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017.

⁷⁰ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017.



Figure 26. Walk-in vault/safe on the first floor.⁷¹



Figure 27. Original boiler in basement/cellar.⁷²

⁷¹ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017.

⁷² Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017.



Figure 28. Armour Water Tower, view facing north.⁷³

⁷³ Mead & Hunt photograph, September 2017.