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## RiNo Art District Named #6 Best Arts District in the Nation in USA TODAY 10Best Readers' Choice Awards

*Up from #9 in 2025, the district continues its rise on the national stage.*

**Denver, CO — February 25, 2026** — The RiNo Art District has been named the **#6 Best Arts District in the United States** in the 2026 USA TODAY 10Best Readers' Choice Awards, rising three spots from a #9 ranking in 2025.

This year's recognition highlights not only the district's nationally known murals, music scene, culinary creativity, and independent businesses, but also the grassroots artistic identity that built RiNo from the ground up. As the second Creative District certified by the State of Colorado, River North (RiNo) has long been home to visual artists, brewers, creative entrepreneurs, and visionaries who shared warehouse space and created a community defined by experimentation, collaboration, and care.

"Climbing from #9 to #6 is a powerful acknowledgment of the people who made this arts district what it is," said Daisy Fodness-McGowan, Executive Director of the RiNo Art District. "RiNo Art District was shaped by artists taking risks together, building community with their own hands, and bringing others along. This national recognition honors that past, and fuels our vision for the future."

### Three Pillars Guiding the District's Future

The RiNo Art District's strategic direction is anchored in three core pillars:

**Accessibility |** Expanding access to the creative life of the district by opening doors, lowering barriers, and ensuring people of all backgrounds can participate. Access has been part of RiNo Art District's makeup since the earliest days and remains a guiding principle.

**Wellness |** Creating and sustaining spaces where people can gather, breathe, rest, celebrate, and feel connected. From the community-centered programming at ArtPark at Arkins Park to the district's small businesses and independent venues, wellness is intentionally woven into RiNo Art District's public life.

**Creativity + Community |** The heart of RiNo Art District is our creative community. Muralists, musicians, culinary innovators, designers, and makers continue to shape a district that is vibrant, experimental, and alive. Their

contributions are the reason the national spotlight keeps returning to this Creative District.

**A Community Achievement |** The 10Best Readers' Choice Awards are determined entirely by public vote. Over several weeks, artists, residents, small businesses, supporters, and partners rallied together to elevate RiNo into the top six.

"This is a reflection of a community that continues to believe in the power of creativity," said Fodness-McGowan. "We're grateful for everyone who voted, shared, and championed RiNo for the 2026 distinction."

**Looking Ahead |** As the district celebrates its 20th anniversary, RiNo is preparing for a new chapter rooted in accessibility, wellness, culture and community. Investments in community programming, partnerships, and affordable creative spaces, along with expanded initiatives at ArtPark, reflect a future built on the same grassroots spirit that shaped the district from the beginning.

For more information about the RiNo Art District, upcoming events, and ways to get involved, visit **https://rinoartdistrict.org**

## Media Contact

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