M E M O R A N D U M
September 4, 2013

TO: Landmarks Board

FROM: Susan Richstone, Deputy Director of Community Planning & Sustainability
Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager
James Hewat, Senior Historic Preservation Planner
Marcy Cameron, Historic Preservation Planner

SUBJECT: Public hearing and consideration of the Historic Preservation Plan and recommendation to City Council for acceptance.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Landmarks Board adopt the following motion:

The Landmarks Board recommends acceptance of the Historic Preservation Plan to City Council.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The prioritization chart on page 41 is intended to be used as a guide to inform the annual work program. Recognizing that all of the "Near-Term" recommendations cannot be undertaken over the next two years, it is important to identify the top two or three recommendations to guide the program in the immediate future.

Feedback from the public, stakeholder group, Historic Boulder, Inc. and the Landmarks Board has indicated that the program should strengthen its community engagement efforts and establish a proactive approach to historic resource protection. Staff considers the top two recommendations to be undertaken in the next two years to be:

- 1.1 Develop a plan to identify and prioritize historic resource protection and implement strategies for their protection
- 2.2 Collaborate with owners of existing landmarks and properties in historic districts; Establish neighborhood liaisons.

Input from the Landmarks Board will be forwarded to City Council to help inform the annual work plan.

1. Which "Near-Term" recommendations does the Landmarks Board consider to be the top priority for the program over the next 1-2 years?

SUMMARY

In 2012, the City of Boulder was awarded a Certified Local Government grant to develop a Historic Preservation Plan. This eleven month initiative has integrated feedback from various community members, organizations, boards and City Council. The goal of the plan to establish a long-term vision for historic preservation in Boulder, identify specific strategies for achieving the identified goals and objectives of the plan, and to set priorities for the plan's implementation.

The purpose of this item is to review the final Historic Preservation Plan and recommend acceptance by City Council with any suggested refinements. The Landmarks Board reviewed the Draft Historic Preservation Plan at their July 18, 2013 meeting. Public and board feedback was incorporated into the draft plan and reviewed by City Council on August 13, 2013. Minor revisions were made to the document based upon the City Council's comments, and the plan was submitted to History Colorado on August 30th, 2013 as a requirement of the grant contract. Pending recommendation by the Landmarks Board, it is anticipated that City Council will review the Historic Preservation Plan in October.

METHODOLOGY AND PUBLIC PROCESS

Development of the plan included a program assessment, a comparison to other historic preservation programs, a customer survey of applicants, public, development of Goals and objectives, priorities, recommendations and an implementation plan. Through the course of developing these components of the plan, input was solicited through Landmarks Board meetings, stakeholder group meetings, a joint City Council and Landmarks Board Study Session, a Planning Board meeting, a forum hosted by PLAN-Boulder and a discussion by City Council.

Current Program Assessment

Development of the plan included a program assessment of the current program that was reviewed by the Landmarks Board and City Council on Feb. 12, 2013. This document has been revised per the group's comments and is available through the city's Community Planning & Sustainability Department.

Comparison with Other Communities

A chart was developed that compares Boulder's historic preservation program to other programs around the state and across the country in terms of review processes, architectural survey, incentives, and other program areas. It is available online at: https://bouldercolorado.gov/links/fetch/10766

Customer Survey

A survey was mailed to 448 applicants that had applied for a Landmark Alteration Certificate, Landmark Designation, or demolition review in the last year. Surveys were also sent to applicants who had applied for Historic Preservation Tax Credits in the last five years. The survey asked respondents to provide feedback on their experience with the Historic Preservation program and provide suggestions for changes that might improve the program.

City Council, Landmarks Board, Stakeholder Group and Public Input

Public involvement is a critical piece of the development of the plan. Public outreach efforts include a customer survey, public meetings, and stakeholder group meetings. Previous memos have summarized the process, including 15 meetings and events with public input opportunity from Jan. through Aug. 2013. A summary of feedback to date is available online at: https://bouldercolorado.gov/links/fetch/16681

On July 18, 2013, the Landmarks Board and staff held a public meeting to review the draft plan, which specific attention paid to the recommendation section.

Key comments from the Landmarks Board at the July 18th meeting included:

- Overall, the draft plan is very comprehensive and reflective of community feedback;
- Add as objective: "Cultivate and maintain relationships with already landmarked districts and landmarks;"
- Clarify how the plan will be used;
- Move "Explore designation of eligible smaller buildings" to Near-Term time frame;
- Move "Develop a disaster response plan…" to Near-Term time frame;
- Add reference to Greenpoints program in objective to align city policies;
- Remove recommendation to "Promote Compatible Design Solutions Suited to Postwar Homes" should be further vetted prior to inclusion in a long-term plan.

Key Comments from the public at the July 18th meeting included:

- Critical that the overarching goal of the program to be "Establish a shared community vision for historic resource protection." A proactive approach should be established by evaluating currently designated resources, assessing the types of unprotected resources, and prioritizing resources through a community process.
- The demolition process is difficult because there is no community agreement on what resources are most important to preserve. The intent of the ordinance is sometimes lost when the focus is on design review.
- The website should be improved in terms of content, format, and ease of navigation. The review processes should be clearly outlined to reduce confusion. Design guidelines for each of the historic districts should be prominently featured and easily accessible.
- Universal Accessibility considerations should be highlighted in the plan; the program should be aligned with local, state and federal policies.

Key comments from City Council discussion on August 13th included:

- It is a great idea to have a vision for the program and it is important to be proactive instead of reactive, but clarify what being proactive means;
- It is important that the plan recommends improvements to the current program to increase clarity and predictability;
- Clarify what it means to "Foster greater awareness for postwar architecture;" Greater community dialogue is needed to determine if and how postwar neighborhoods should be preserved;
- Encouraging the preservation of smaller houses a good idea, but outreach is needed to explain what designation entails;
- Stories are the engaging part of preservation; continue to develop historic context reports;
- The integration of sustainability and historic preservation continues to be a point of apprehension for many; current treatment of this issue is lacking.

THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

The Plan begins with an overview of the purpose of the plan's development and a brief history of historic preservation efforts in Boulder. The second section includes description and analysis of the current Historic Preservation program areas and is a summary of the Current Program Assessment the board and public reviewed in February. The third section, *A Sense of Purpose*, establishes the Goals and Objectives of the Plan and describes the Recommendations, which are organized by theme (Historic

Resource Protection, Community Engagement and Collaboration, and Program Operation). The chart on page 41 prioritizes the action items into Near-Term (1-5 years) and Long-Term (5-10) timeframes and identifies the related objective and responsible parties. The prioritization takes into account the resources currently available and reflects the philosophy that the current program should be strengthened prior to the commencement of additional initiatives.

NEXT STEPS

It is anticipated that City Council will review the Historic Preservation Plan in October. After the plan is accepted, it is anticipated to be a dynamic document that is revisited on an annual basis to guide the future of the program and inform work program priorities.

ATTACHMENT

A: Historic Preservation Plan

A Sense of Place, a Sense of Purpose

A Plan for the City of Boulder's Historic Preservation Program

-- 2013 --

Cover Image: Adapted from “Boulder: The Place to Live!” Postcard, c.1910.

A Sense of Place, a Sense of Purpose

A Plan for the City of Boulder's Historic Preservation Program

- 2013 -

City of Boulder, Colorado
Community Planning &
Sustainability Department
1739 Broadway, 4th Floor
Boulder, Colorado 80306

Certified Local Government
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Consultant
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Kirsten Snobeck
John Spitzer

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Matt Applebaum, Mayor
Suzy Ageton
KC Becker
Macon Cowles
Suzanne Jones
George Karakehian
Lisa Morzel
Tim Plass
Ken Wilson

Historic Preservation Plan Stakeholder Group
Abby Daniels, Historic Boulder Inc.
Jancy Campbell, Historic Boulder, Inc.
Susan Connelly, Colorado Chautauqua Association
Crystal Gray, Whittier neighborhood representative
Tom Hay, Board of Area Realtors
Larry Kaptein, Floral Park representative
Jyotsna Raj, University Hill representative
Valerie Yates, Mapleton Hill representative

City of Boulder Staff
James Hewat, Senior Historic Preservation Planner
Marcy Cameron, Historic Preservation Planner
Susan Richstone, Deputy Director, CP&S
Lesli Ellis, Comprehensive Planning Manager
Deb Kalish, Senior Assistant City Attorney
Juliet Bonnell, Administrative Assistant
Ingrid Borreson, Historic Preservation Intern
Nick Wharton, Historic Preservation Intern
Chris Toebe, Project Specialist
Brian Holmes, Zoning Administrator
Megan Cuzzolino, Sustainability Specialist
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Julie Johnson, Cultural Resources, OSMP
Dave Thacker, Chief Building Official
Michelle Allen, Housing Planner
Joe Castro, Director, Facilities Manager
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Carnegie Branch Library for Local History
All historic photographs courtesy of the Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder Historical Society Collection.

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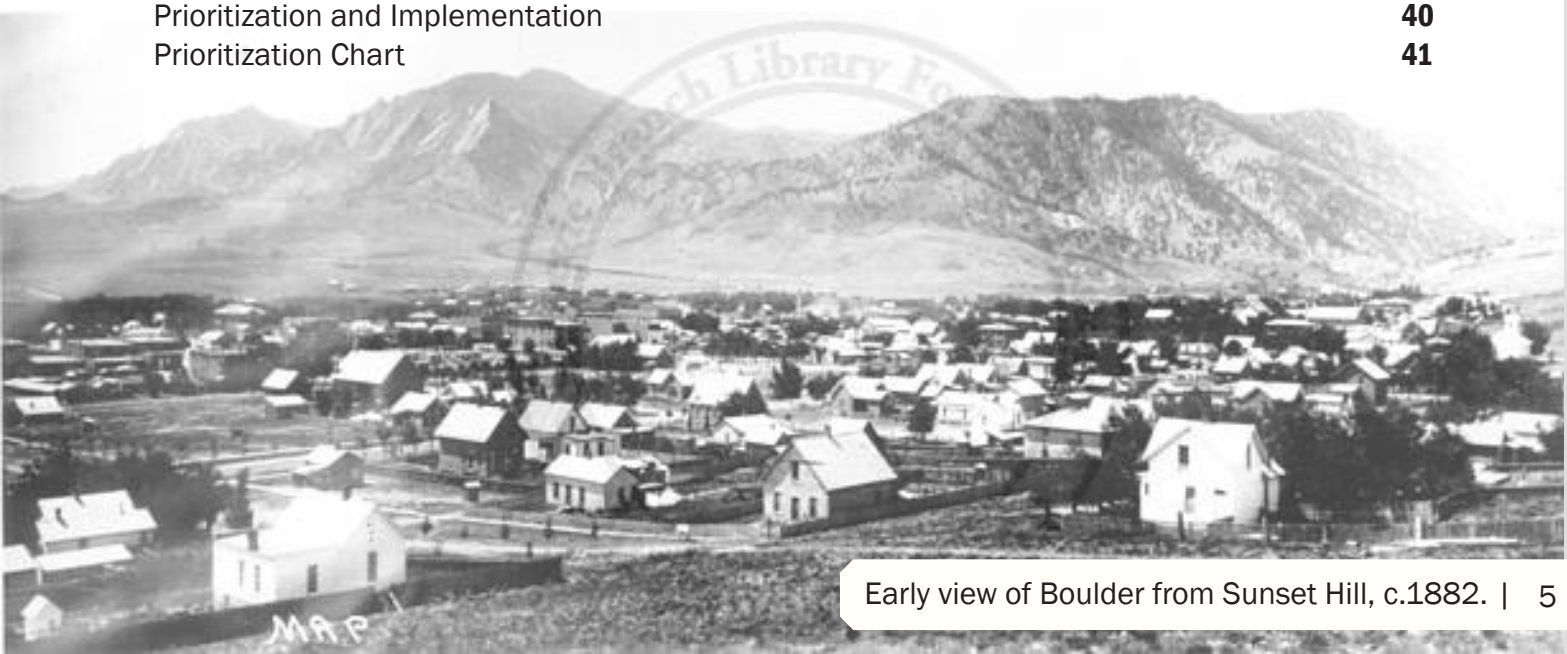


Early view of Boulder from Sunset Hill, c.1882. | 5

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2012, the City of Boulder was awarded a Certified Local Government (CLG) grant to develop a Historic Preservation Plan. The purpose of the plan is to establish an enduring vision for the city's Historic Preservation program, to set near- and long-term priorities for the program, and to identify proactive and innovative strategies for achieving the identified goals and objectives.

The vision set out in the plan is for the City of Boulder to continue to be a leader in historic preservation by proactively identifying historic resources and creating a shared community vision for the preservation of sites and areas that are significant to Boulder's past. The plan establishes five goals to guide the program:

- Ensure the Protection of Boulder's Significant Historic, Architectural, and Environmental Resources
- Actively Engage the Community in Historic Preservation Efforts
- Make Review Processes Clear, Predictable, and Objective
- Continue Leadership in Historic Preservation and Environmental Sustainability
- Encourage Preservation of Historic Resources

The recommendations are organized into three themes: Historic Resource Protection, Community Engagement and Collaboration, and Program Operation. The recommendations are prioritized to ensure that existing historic preservation activities are addressed before expanding the program through new initiatives.

Key Near-Term Action Items Include:

Historic Resource Protection

- Develop a plan to prioritize historic resource protection;
- Develop additional historic context reports;
- Promote, as demonstration projects, city-owned buildings that incorporate historic preservation and sustainability; and
- Foster greater awareness of postwar architecture.

Community Engagement and Collaboration

- Establish neighborhood liaisons;
- Share stories of Boulder's historic places;
- Honor property owners for careful stewardship of historic properties; and
- Improve the Historic Preservation website.

Program Operation

- Establish follow-up processes for Landmark Alteration Certificates;
- Revise applications and forms;
- Explore ways to make design review more consistent and predictable; and
- Develop a disaster response plan for the Historic Preservation program.

The plan will be used to help guide upcoming annual work plans for the Historic Preservation program. Each year, it is recommended that a report and presentation be prepared for the City Council to gauge the progress of the recommendations and help prioritize initiatives for the next year.

Public and Board Input

The plan has been shaped by considerable input from members of the public, a stakeholder group, various city departments, City Council and the Landmarks Board. The development of the plan included a program assessment, comparisons with other historic preservation programs, a customer survey of applicants, public and Landmarks Board meetings, internal and external stakeholder group meetings, input from Historic Boulder, Inc., a joint City Council and Landmarks Board Study Session, a Planning Board meeting, and a forum hosted by PLAN-Boulder County. The stakeholder group met three times and included representatives from designated and potential historic districts, realtor and business associations, and local historic preservation organizations.

Implementation of the plan will require strong partnerships between the city, Landmarks Board, property owners, community members, historic preservation organizations, real estate groups and neighborhood associations.

A SENSE OF PLACE:
DEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

Cottage at base of Flatirons, c.1900

DEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

In 2012, the City of Boulder received grant funding to develop a plan to establish a long-term vision for the city's Historic Preservation program, proactively set priorities for future activities, and identify innovative strategies for achieving the identified goals and objectives. Over the course of its nearly forty years, Boulder's Historic Preservation program has accomplished much and today is often cited as a model of historic preservation at the local government level. Its successes are the result of innovative thinking in a community that places great value on the character of its city. While few would dispute the importance of preserving Boulder's irreplaceable historic and architectural resources, establishment of a comprehensive plan to guide these efforts will ensure historic preservation efforts remain relevant and dynamic.

Few communities with established historic preservation programs have adopted plans. This may be due to the perception that preservation is largely reactive in nature, responding to threats only at the last moment. In reality, current historic preservation practice is often woven into many facets of a city government's activities and plans. This is the case in Boulder.

The Historic Preservation Plan builds on past successes by identifying what roles historic preservation will play in shaping Boulder's urban form and character and how it will contribute to the city's goals of environmental, social and economic sustainability. The plan also aspires to bring vision to the diverse initiatives, programs, needs, opportunities, goals, and principles of the City of Boulder's historic preservation activities in the twenty-first century. On a practical level, the plan is intended to establish implementable work program priorities that will assist in streamlining the city's historic preservation processes.

Adoption of a historic preservation plan for the city and county is recommended in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan as a way to integrate historic preservation issues into broader goals and policies in the Boulder Valley. This plan is more limited in scope, applying only to the City of Boulder's historic preservation activities, but may be useful in developing a broader historic plan for the Boulder Valley.

The plan briefly describes and analyzes fourteen program areas, establishes goals and priorities for the program, and includes recommendations and a plan for implementing those recommendations under three themes: Historic Resource Protection, Community Engagement and Collaboration, and Program Operations. It provides concrete strategies for implementation, with near- and long-term outcomes to refine and improve the city's Historic Preservation program over the next 10-15 years.

COMMUNITY INPUT

The planning effort reflects considerable public input from a broad range of stakeholders, some with a more direct interest in historic preservation. It recognizes the value of community engagement in undertaking an honest assessment of Boulder's Historic Preservation program and developing strategies for the future that will benefit the community as a whole. Groups engaged through the plan development process include the Boulder Area Realtors Association (BARA), the Boulder County historic preservation program, the Boulder History Museum, the Colorado Chautauqua Association, Downtown Boulder, Inc. (DBI), the Carnegie Library for Local History, Floral Park Neighbors, Historic Boulder, Inc., the Mapleton Hill Neighborhood Association, PLAN-Boulder County, the city's Planning and Development stakeholder group, and the Whittier Neighborhood Association. The plan also integrates the six goals for local historic preservation as outlined in "The Power of Heritage and Place: The Statewide Plan for Historic Preservation in Colorado" (2013).

Small group discussions at a January 2013 meeting helped identify key issues for the plan.

A SENSE OF PLACE

Boulder possesses remarkable environmental, cultural, and historic wealth and an unmistakable sense of place. Archaeological finds indicate that humans have lived in, what now comprises, Boulder's city limits for at least 10,000 years. The Southern Arapaho people also recognized Boulder Valley's appeal, establishing a village near Haystack Mountain. Over the centuries, Utes, Cheyennes, Comanches, and Sioux are known to have visited and camped in the area.

When permanent settlement by European descendents first took place in the 1850s, Boulder was part of the Nebraska Territory. On February 28, 1861, the Territory of Colorado was created by the U.S. Congress. The 1860s saw the town quickly grow into a supply base for miners searching for gold and silver. Early Boulder was a rough-hewn place, providing miners with needed equipment, agricultural products, housing, transport services, as well as numerous gambling and drinking establishments.

The city's first residential areas were located in what is now downtown and in some parts of the Goss-Grove, Whittier and Mapleton Hill neighborhoods. In 1860, Boulder citizens began lobbying to have the University of Colorado located in the town, and in 1874, the small community was granted the location, secured a donated 44.9 acre site and raised $15,000 to match a similar grant by the state legislature. By 1900, growth of the university led to the development of parts of the University Hill neighborhood.

By 1905, the economy was faltering and Boulder looked to tourism and health seekers to boost its fortunes; however, it had no first-class lodgings to attract summer visitors and group meetings. By 1906, a subscription drive had raised enough money to construct a large hotel in the center of town. The hotel's first event was a reception for Boulder citizens on December 30, 1908, and the Hotel Boulderado opened to guests on January 1, 1909. Tourism continued to dominate the Boulder economy for the next 40 years. Each summer, shopkeepers, transport firms, and lodging managers eagerly awaited the influx of Chautauqua visitors, primarily from Texas.

EARLY PLANNING AND PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Efforts to protect Boulder's setting and natural resources represent some of the first conservation efforts within the community. A voter-approved ballot measure in the late 1890s allowed the city to purchase 40 acres of land to establish the Colorado Chautauqua, marking the community's commitment to preserving and celebrating Boulder's natural beauty. Boulder citizens continued to play a strong role in determining the town's future growth. In 1903, the Boulder City Improvement Association was established to develop park lands and encourage desirable city improvements. This body had similar goals to Boulder's Park Board, which actively acquired lands along Boulder Creek and other areas surrounding the city for park use. In 1908, the Improvement Association commissioned nationally-recognized landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to suggest ways to improve Boulder's physical environment. Olmsted advised the city to promote itself as a residential community to ensure its stability, and to distance polluting industries from central Boulder. Olmsted's report established a guide for growth in Boulder. In 1926, the city hired Denver planning consultant Saco R. DeBoer to formulate a zoning ordinance. Adopted

The Rischar Band poses in front of Chautauqua Auditorium, c.1901. | 9

in 1928, this ordinance established seven zoning districts and made Boulder one of the first western cities to have such land-use guidance.

MID-CENTURY HISTORIC PRESERVATION EFFORTS

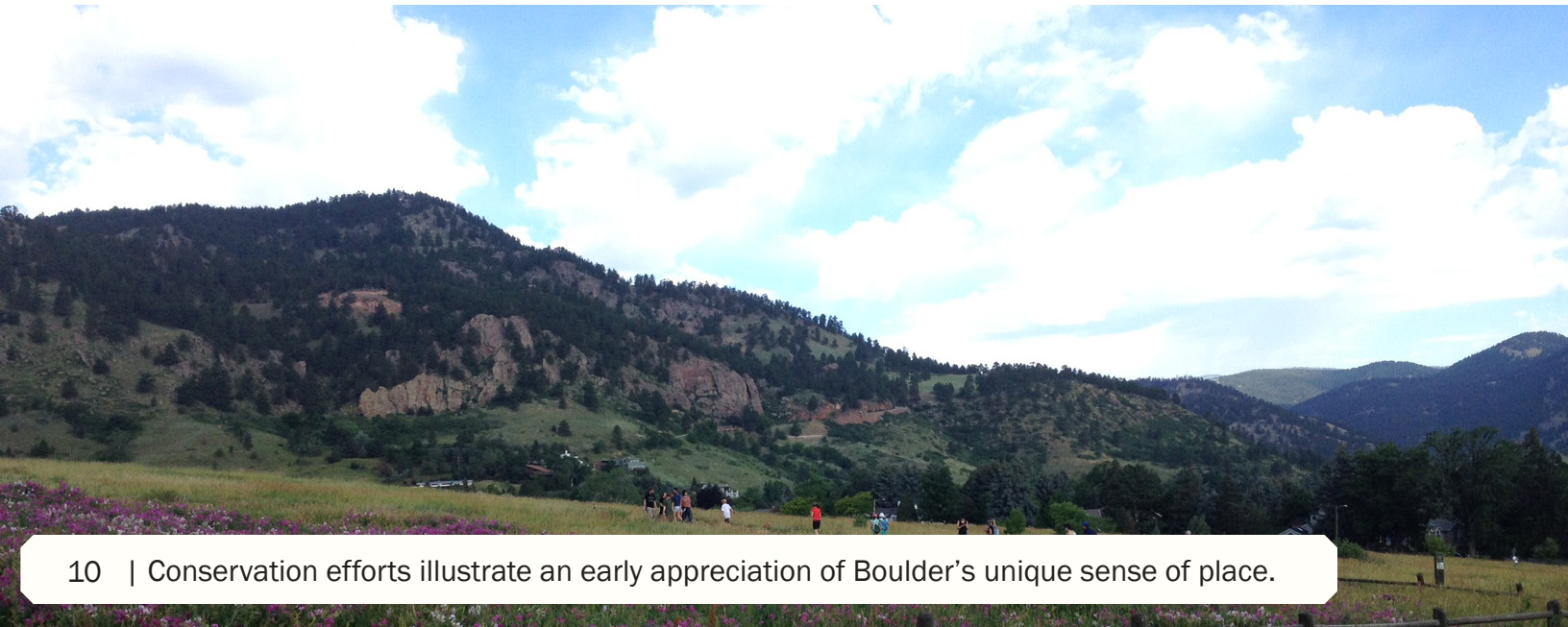
Like so many other communities across the western United States, Boulder experienced tremendous post-World War II population growth. A rising population, along with a national mood that emphasized the "new" after years of Depression-era and wartime deprivation, was perceived as a threat to both the natural setting and many older buildings. As a result, historic preservation and conservation efforts re-emerged from a combination of concerns about the effects of dramatic growth and a desire to protect the city's distinct sense of place. In 1959, after a successful grassroots campaign, Boulder voters approved an amendment to the city charter that introduced a "blue line" restricting water service at higher elevations as a way to preserve the views and character of nearby mountain areas. In 1967, Boulder was the first city in the United States to vote for an open space tax, and as a result, over 45,000 acres of protected parks and open space surround the city today. In 1971, Boulder citizens again supported an effort to protect Boulder's character. Construction of the nine-story Colorado Building at 14th and Walnut streets encouraged voters to pass a law restricting the height of new buildings to fifty-five feet.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

Responding to the loss of several important historic buildings in the 1960s and early 1970s, Historic Boulder, Inc. drafted a historic preservation ordinance, which City Council unanimously adopted in 1974. It established an official municipal process to preserve and protect the historic, architectural, and environmental assets that contribute to Boulder's unique sense of place.

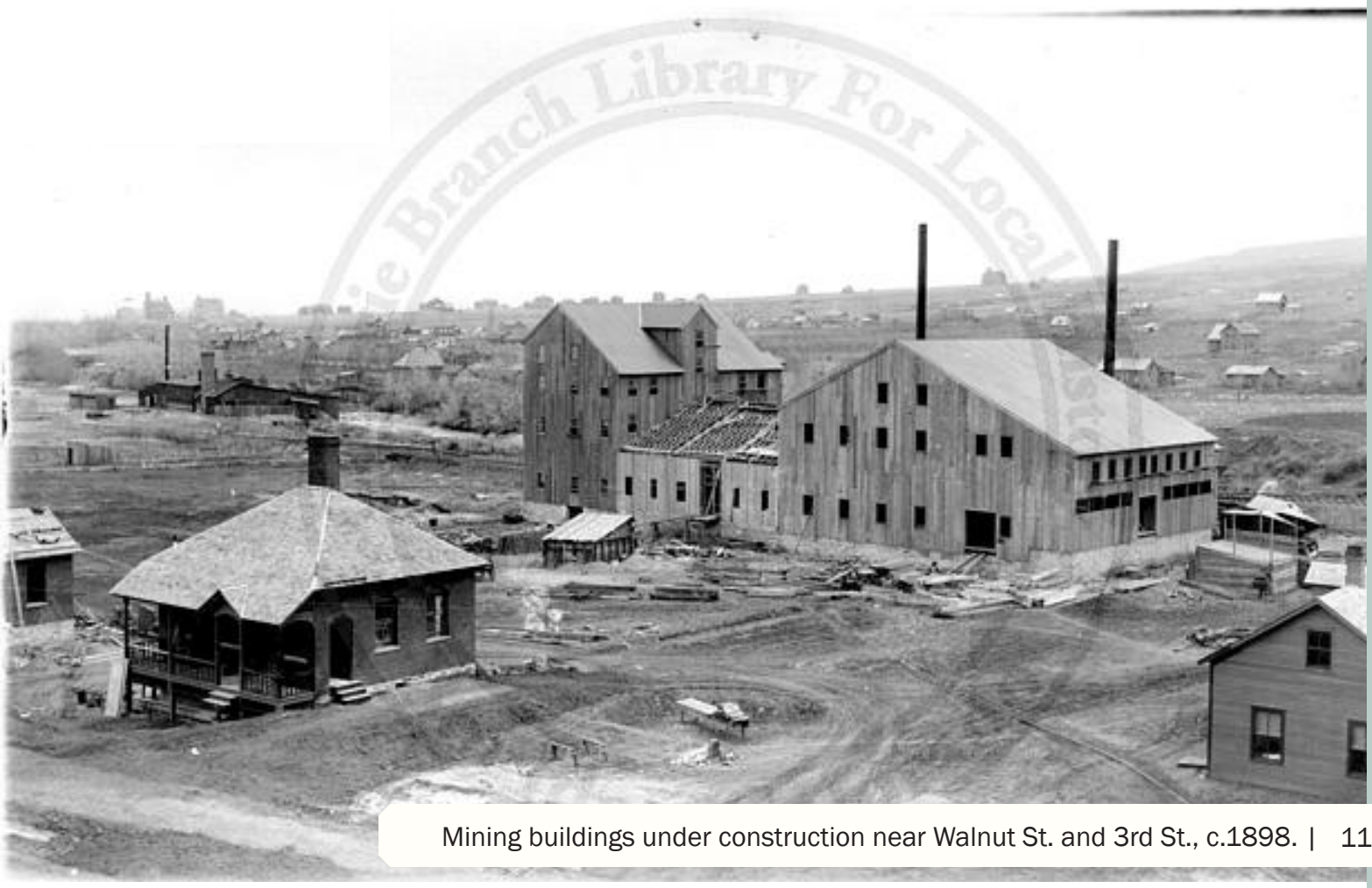
THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM TODAY

During its nearly 40-year history, the city's Historic Preservation program has grown, evolved, and matured. Today, Boulder boasts a well-established and dynamic program that is cited as a model in Colorado and nationwide. The local historic preservation ethic in the city is complex and focused on preserving vital aspects of the community's character that improve the urban quality of life by promoting distinct, lively, and sustainable neighborhoods. Designated properties span from the 1866 Squires-Tourtellot House to Modernist architecture of the 1960s. While these landmarks represent a broad diversity of cultural resources, Boulder still has properties and areas worthy of recognition and in need of protection. From the outset, the Historic Preservation Ordinance has sought to balance private property rights with the public interest of resource protection, and this fundamental principle continues to guide the city's Historic Preservation program. While this balance is not always easy to achieve (and sometimes results in controversy), historic preservation efforts in Boulder have resulted in the designation of many significant buildings and neighborhoods, enhancing the community's character for citizens today and generations to come.



10 | Conservation efforts illustrate an early appreciation of Boulder's unique sense of place.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS



Mining buildings under construction near Walnut St. and 3rd St., c.1898. | 11

Squires-Tourtellot House
1019 Spruce Street
Built in 1865

First Congregational Church
1128 Pine Street
Built in 1908

The Armory
934 Pearl Street
Built in 1898

Boettcher-Valentine Building
1142-48 Pearl Street
Built in 1878

Grill Mansion, 2305 Broadway, built in 1904

Highland School, 885 Arapahoe Avenue, built in 1892

 | The first six landmarks (pictured above) were designated by the City of Boulder in 1976.

OVERVIEW

The City of Boulder's Historic Preservation program was established in 1974, following a citizen-driven effort to recognize and protect buildings and sites important to Boulder's history. The program began with the designation of five individual landmarks, and in 1978, Floral Park was designated as the city's first historic district. Over the past 40 years, the program has grown to include 162 individual landmarks and 10 historic districts, for a total of over 1,300 designated properties.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM (CLG)

The City of Boulder has been a Certified Local Government (CLG) since 1985. The purpose of the program certification is to encourage and expand local involvement in preservation issues and establish strong local preservation programs. Certified programs are eligible for grants from a designated fund, and landmarks within the CLG jurisdiction are eligible for a 20 percent State Historic Preservation Income Tax Credit.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 established State Historic Preservation Offices, funded by the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service. History Colorado's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation administers the state program, including state and federal grants, review and maintenance of survey records, and nomination of properties to the State and National Registers of Historic Places. In 1980, the state-federal partnership was expanded to local governments.

A Certified Local Government must establish a historic preservation ordinance, an adequate and qualified Historic Preservation Commission such as the Landmarks Board, a system for survey and inventory of historic properties, and encourage public participation in historic preservation programs.

Boulder has been successful in securing grant funds nearly every year since it was certified, which have funded survey and historic context projects, staff and board member training, and public outreach efforts. CLG evaluations occur every four years and provide third-party analysis of the program to ensure compliance with the CLG requirements.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM AREAS

The Historic Preservation Ordinance outlines the key functions of the Historic Preservation program, including designation of individual landmarks and historic districts, recognition of properties as Structures of Merit, ruling on Landmark Alteration Certificates, enforcement of historic preservation violations, and granting permits for demolition of buildings over 50 years old.

In addition to these key functions, the program includes public outreach efforts and functions related to the operation of the program within the Community Planning and Sustainability Department and the city organization.

The program descriptions and analyses are organized into three themes: **Historic Resource Protection, Program Operation, and Community Engagement and Collaboration.**

The Municipal Building, 1777 Broadway, was designated as a local landmark in 2009.

BOULDER'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

Boulder's Historic Preservation Ordinance is the foundation for Boulder's Historic Preservation program. It outlines the intent, processes and standards by which preservation activities are undertaken by the city and continues to guide the program. Its stated purpose is to:

> *Promote the public health, safety and welfare by protecting, enhancing, and perpetuating buildings, sites, and areas of the city reminiscent of past eras, events, and persons important in local, state, or national history or providing significant examples of architectural styles of the past... to develop and maintain appropriate settings and environments for such buildings, sites, and areas to enhance property values, stabilize neighborhoods, promote tourist trade and interest, and foster knowledge of the city's living heritage.*

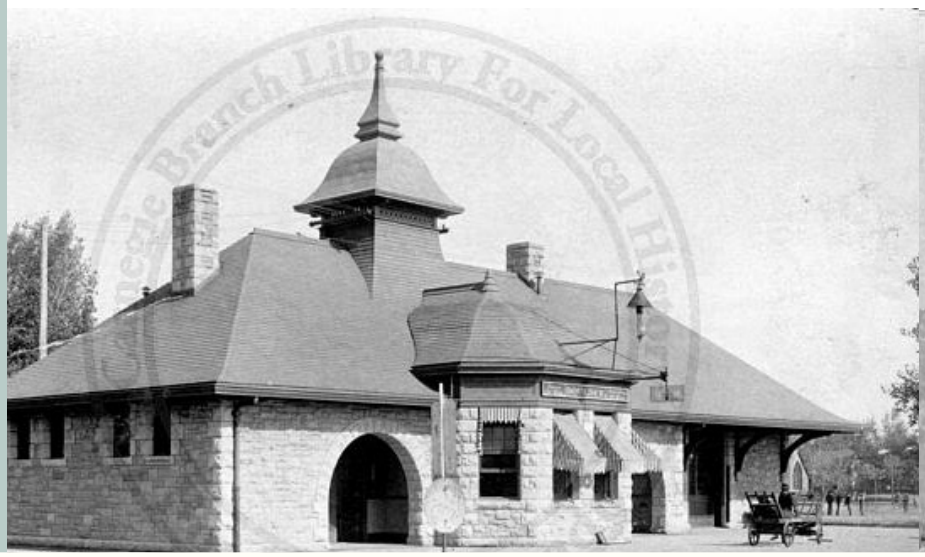
The intention is not to "preserve every old building in the city, but instead...draw a reasonable balance between private property rights and the public interest..." At its adoption, the ordinance established:

- The procedure for designation of individual landmarks and historic districts
- The process for the review of alterations to or demolition of designated buildings
- The Landmarks Historic Preservation Advisory Board (now known as the Landmarks Board)
- The enforcement penalties to be levied if alteration or demolition decisions are violated

ANALYSIS

Boulder's ordinance has served the city well over the past 39 years, establishing a solid framework for the Historic Preservation program. Both adopted rules and ordinance revisions have allowed the program to change and adapt as needed. The most significant change occurred in 1994 and established a review process for the demolition and relocation of non-designated buildings over 50 years old. The Landmarks Board's authority to initiate landmark designation over an owner's objection strengthens Boulder's historic preservation program. Although rarely and judiciously used, this has resulted in the preservation of a number of significant properties that might otherwise have been lost. In comparison with historic preservation ordinances in similar communities, Boulder's ordinance is comprehensive, with a clear purpose and articulated roles of the Board, staff, and various review processes.

However, recent feedback from the public, the Landmarks Board, and staff indicate the demolition section of the ordinance is unclear and the process often results in an unintended outcome. Revisions to this section of the ordinance, providing for more flexibility in its application, might be appropriate. Likewise, the Landmarks Design Review Committee (LDRC) process might be better articulated to clarify the subcommittee's role and increase overall consistency.



LANDMARKS BOARD

Boulder's original historic preservation ordinance established the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, a body assigned designation and review responsibilities for the City of Boulder's Historic Preservation program. Renamed the Landmarks Board in 2007, the five City Council-appointed members, two of whom are design professionals, serve five year terms and include at least two representatives from the architecture or urban planning professions. The board fulfills four major roles and has the authority to make rules and regulations to interpret the ordinance. The Landmarks Board also includes a single non-voting member from the Planning Board who attends meetings and comments on historic preservation issues that may have larger planning implications. Members of the Landmarks Board and staff attend conferences, forums, and workshops annually to increase current knowledge that will assist in designation, design review, and review of non-designated buildings older than 50 years. As Boulder property values and development pressures continue to rise, the board is increasingly faced with more complex issues that require balancing community interests when making decisions regarding designation, design review, and demolitions.

ANALYSIS

Landmarks Board members are volunteers who devote considerable time carrying out the intent of the city's Historic Preservation Ordinance. The board frequently forms subcommittees to engage in special initiatives, including drafting design guidelines and public outreach efforts. Over the years, these subcommittees have been effective in promoting historic preservation in the city and can be credited with a number of accomplishments, including establishment of the Structure of Merit program and the Historic Preservation and Environmental Sustainability Initiative. Public feedback indicates a desire to increase objectivity and consistency in the review of projects. To this end, staff and the Landmarks Board should engage in regular training to ensure decisions are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation and the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Key Duties of the Landmarks Board, as Specified in the Ordinance:

- Designating individual landmarks and historic districts
- Recognizing properties for the Structure of Merit list
- Ruling on Landmark Alteration Certificates
- Review of permit applications for demolition of buildings over 50 years old.

Other Landmarks Board Activities:

- Annual retreat to discuss past year and plan future initiatives
- Certified Local Government training workshops, hosted by History Colorado
- Attendance at annual Saving Places conference
- Annual letter to City Council

The Landmarks Board meets each month to discuss and review historic preservation projects.

LANDMARK AND HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

Boulder's Historic Preservation Ordinance authorizes the Landmarks Board to recommend to City Council the designation of sites and areas of historic, architectural, and/or environmental significance. Designation of important historic properties helps ensure their protection while providing financial and other incentives for rehabilitation. Property owners, historic preservation organizations, the Landmarks Board or City Council may start the designation process. In rare cases, the board has initiated landmark designation over an owner's objection. Historic Preservation staff researches the significance of the site or area and prepares a summary report with a recommendation regarding designation for a Landmarks Board public hearing. The Landmarks Board makes a designation recommendation to the City Council, which decides whether the property or district should be landmarked. Once City Council approves a designation, a copy of the document is placed in the Boulder County real estate records, notifying future owners of the listed status of their building. Because the local landmark program is dynamic and because of the high level of protection it provides, there are relatively few properties in Boulder listed in the State or National Register of Historic Places.

ANALYSIS

The rate of designations in Boulder, both individual landmarks and historic districts, has remained fairly stable over time. Designations of individual landmarks and historic districts have generally been reactive, and often due to a perceived threat. The majority of historic districts were designated in the 1980s and 1990s, with over half of those in the 1990s. Many designations of districts have occurred following historic survey. The program should seek to adopt a more proactive approach in the future.

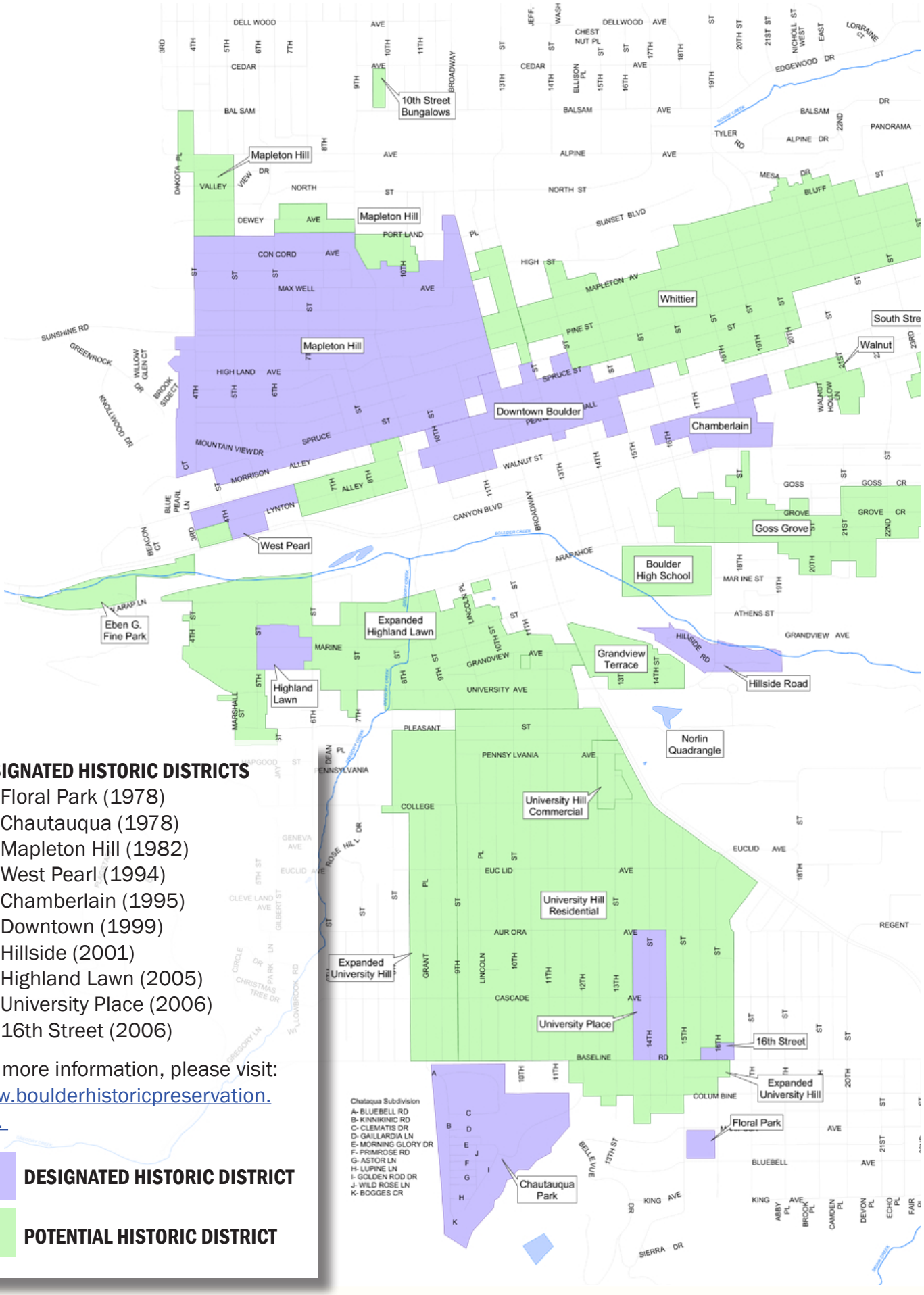
The majority of Boulder's landmarks and historic districts reflect the city's early history, as is typical of historic preservation programs that tend to focus, at least initially, on older and rarer resources. While broad landmark representation exists for most types and eras from the pre-World War II years, few buildings are designated from the post-World War II era.

There are many identified areas and buildings in the city that are not protected through designation. These include older areas that have been previously identified as potential historic districts (often representing vernacular buildings and resources associated with minority populations), and modern buildings constructed during the 1950s through the 1970s. Data on the most vulnerable and underrepresented resources needs to be updated and analyzed.

A 2007 ordinance revision allowed for a longer time period between historic district initiation and designation, which placed greater emphasis on property owner support and collaboration. Historic districts designated since 2004 represent smaller geographic areas than districts established prior to that time. The trend toward smaller districts reflects the complexities of listing larger areas and also makes the public outreach process more manageable. Public input indicates that the Historic Preservation program should better publicize information about the designated historic districts and ensure property owners are aware of the benefits and responsibilities of living in a historic district.

16 | Floral Park, designated in 1978, was the city's first historic district. Photo take c. 1940.

DESIGNATED AND POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS



DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICTS

- Floral Park (1978)
- Chautauqua (1978)
- Mapleton Hill (1982)
- West Pearl (1994)
- Chamberlain (1995)
- Downtown (1999)
- Hillside (2001)
- Highland Lawn (2005)
- University Place (2006)
- 16th Street (2006)

For more information, please visit: [www.boulderhistoricpreservation.net.](www.boulderhistoricpreservation.net)

DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICT

POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Map of designated and potential Historic Districts, as identified in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan |

DESIGN REVIEW

Change continually occurs in Boulder's historic districts and to individually landmarked properties. The Design Review process, and the requirement of a Landmark Alteration Certificate for exterior alterations, is in place to ensure that changes are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation by preserving key architectural features while addressing the needs of modern living. Through this process, staff reviews minor alterations, such as the construction of rear fences and roofing. The Landmarks Design Review Committee reviews applications for more significant changes, including front and side yard fences, window rehabilitation and replacement, and additions to designated buildings.

Composed of two rotating Landmarks Board members and one Historic Preservation staff member, the Landmarks Design Review Committee meets weekly and works collaboratively with property owners, architects, and builders within the framework of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation and relevant design guidelines. If the three committee members do not agree that the proposal is consistent with the guidelines, the request is referred to the full Landmarks Board for review at a public hearing. If an applicant does not agree with the committee recommendation, he or she may also request a full board public hearing. Full Landmarks Board review is required for demolition or construction of a new building over 340 square feet on a landmarked property or in a designated historic district. The Landmarks Board's decisions are forwarded to the City Council for review and possible "call up" for their own consideration. Members of the Landmarks Board and staff attend conferences, forums, and workshops annually to assist in their design review activities.

18 | The Ldrc meets weekly to review Landmark Alteration Certificate applications.

ANALYSIS

Design review is vitally important in maintaining the visual and material character of Boulder's historically designated areas and properties. Landmarked sites, subject to design review over the years, represent some of the most dynamic areas and valuable properties in the city. Boulder's Design Review process has evolved into an efficient, thorough, and collaborative means to appropriately manage change to the city's historic fabric. The vast majority of the over 200 Landmark Alteration Certificates reviewed annually are approved or approved with modifications. As rising real estate values and land use pressures have continued to increase over the past decade, more ambitious proposals within historic districts are being seen. Such projects present ever-increasing challenges in balancing private property rights with the public interest.

Public feedback suggests there is sometimes confusion about the review process and a perceived lack of consistency regarding decisions. Such criticism of historic preservation design review is not unique to Boulder and underscores the challenges of reviewing changes to historic properties, where flexibility is required and "one size fits all" regulations do not work. Care needs to be taken in citing the specific design guideline provisions that inform review decisions, as this approach illustrates to the public how such review decisions are both objective and predictable. Historic Preservation staff should provide applicants with clear information about what to expect from the review process and explain the rationale behind the design guidelines and how decisions are made. Landmarks Board members and staff should be encouraged to participate in regular design training sessions to ensure the highest level of historic preservation design review. Consideration might also be given to an independent evaluation of the design review process.

HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

Boulder's historic district design guidelines are written to provide guidance for property owners undertaking exterior changes to designated individual landmarks or buildings within historic districts. They are based on the federal Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and assist staff and the Landmarks Board in evaluating alterations in a consistent, equitable, and predictable manner. The City of Boulder has a total of eight design guideline documents, including the General Design Guidelines and seven district-specific guidelines. In 2008, the city received a best practices award from the National Alliance of Historic Preservation Commissions for developing design guidelines that assist in achieving Boulder's sustainability goals in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Early design guidelines were prepared after historic district designation, but more recently, staff has worked collaboratively with property owners to develop appropriate design guidelines prior to designation. Using this approach, specific issues identified by residents can be integrated into the guidelines. This approach incorporates the proposed design guidelines into the pre-designation outreach process and has proven effective in cultivating critical public support for new historic districts. The guidelines are available on the city's Historic Preservation website and in printed form.

ANALYSIS

Boulder's historic preservation design guidelines provide more specific guidance for design review than in similar communities. It is important that the guidelines are as understandable, accessible, and comprehensive as possible. Public and the Landmarks Board comments indicate that people are often not aware of the guidelines and their rationale. Furthermore, public and the Landmarks Board comments show that difficulties arise when proposals are submitted for alterations not fully addressed in current guidelines, such as the use of alternative materials or new construction in historic districts.

DISTRICT-SPECIFIC DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Mapleton Hill Design Guidelines (1985, Revised 1994)
- Chautauqua Design Guidelines (1989)
- Chamberlain Design Guidelines (1996)
- West Pearl Design Guidelines (1996)
- Downtown Design Guidelines (2002)
- Highland Lawn Design Guidelines (2005)
- University Place Design Guidelines (2006)

GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

- General Design Guidelines (2007)

Guidelines are available online on the city's website: www.boulderhistoricpreservation.net

The design guidelines are based on the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation

DEMOLITION REVIEW

Intended to prevent the loss of buildings that may have historic or architectural significance, and to provide the time necessary to consider alternatives to demolition (including landmark designation), the Historic Preservation Ordinance outlines a review process for non-designated buildings over 50 years old that are proposed for demolition. If a building is found to be potentially eligible for designation as an individual landmark, a Landmarks Board public hearing is scheduled. If the board determines the property is not eligible for designation as an individual landmark, a building permit is issued. However, if the board finds there is "probable cause" that the building may be eligible for landmark designation, a 180-day stay of demolition is imposed. During the "stay" period, the board may take any action it deems necessary to preserve the property, including consulting with civic groups and citizens, recommending acquisition to preserve the building or moving the building. In rare cases, the Landmarks Board has initiated landmark designation over an owner's objection.

During this period, staff and the board engage in discussions with the applicant to explore alternatives to demolition. Historic Boulder, Inc. has also played a key role in proposing alternatives to demolition. If it is determined there is not probable cause for landmarking, or no action is taken during the stay, a demolition permit is issued.

ANALYSIS

While Boulder's demolition ordinance has been effective in preventing the loss of historically significant properties, it is intended to be a "last resort" form of resource protection. Nonetheless, it is one of the city's main resource protection activities and more time is spent administering the demolition ordinance than is spent on proactive historic resource protection.

Strong housing demand and limited opportunities for new single-family housing growth means land use pressures are likely to continue in Boulder and demolition reviews will likely remain a significant aspect of the city's Historic Preservation program workload. Because the community does not have a clear understanding of the demolition process or agreement on the priorities and strategies for protection of historic resources, this process is more reactive than it might otherwise be. While the program generally has historic information on nearly all buildings over 50 years of age, this information is dated and does not include a clear determination of local significance (typically, only state or national register eligibility is highlighted). For this reason, staff must research each building and make a recommended determination for local landmark designation, and everyone must react to the information and the recommendation in a short time frame. To make the demolition review process more predictable and efficient, priority should be given to updating historic survey information, developing historic contexts and identifying historic resource types most in need of protection (see Survey and Historic Context Section).

For purposes of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, "demolition" is defined more narrowly than it is elsewhere in the city code. The definition was revised in the early 2000s in reaction to the de-facto demolition of significant resources that, for example, kept one wall standing as a way to avoid review by the Historic Preservation program. Nevertheless, it can trigger a demolition review for non-historic features (e.g., demolition of a 1980s addition) or other alterations that may not have a significant impact of the historic building. Steps have been taken to revise the definition of demolition (for instance, establishing a minimum width of a street-facing wall to be considered a demolition, and to not include additions less than fifty years in age to a building older than fifty years in the wall and roof calculation). It would be beneficial to continue studying these cases and refine the definition in the code to address unintended consequences of a narrow definition of demolition.

Another challenging aspect of the demolition review process is when the Landmarks Board reviews an application where the "demolition" does not involve demolition of a building (i.e. removal of 55 percent of the roof), the board may review only whether the subject building is potentially eligible as an individual landmark and does not have the authority to assess the relative impact of the "demolition" on the potential historic building. Continued consideration should be given to revising the ordinance to allow for the level of demolition to be taken into consideration or the possibility that such a change could be made through adoption of an administrative regulation.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION INCENTIVES

Boulder currently administers 14 different incentives to encourage the stewardship of landmarked buildings and properties located in designated historic districts. Incentives, such as the state tax credit and the city sales tax waiver, convey a direct financial benefit. Other available incentives allow for relief from land use regulations or honor owners of historic properties. The most utilized incentive is the state tax credit. As a Certified Local Government, Boulder reviews these applications in-house, usually as part of the Landmark Alteration Certificate process. Between 2003 and 2009, a total of 39 State Tax Credit applications, the second-highest number of any municipality in Colorado, were approved. The practice of providing free plaques to all owners of individual landmarks is also popular.

ANALYSIS

Boulder has been creative in developing incentives to encourage historic preservation. While specialized tax revenues for historic preservation projects currently are not available in the city as they are in Louisville, Boulder's zoning incentives are more expansive than those available in most other Colorado communities. Public input revealed that many owners of historic properties are not aware of available incentives. Enhanced promotion of existing incentives would be beneficial, and the city should explore additional financial incentives.

AVAILABLE INCENTIVES FOR LANDMARKED PROPERTIES

- Eligibility for a 20% Federal Tax Credit for income-producing properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places
- Eligibility for a 20% Colorado State Income Tax for individually landmarked properties and those located within a historic district
- City sales tax waiver on construction materials when applying for a building permit if at least 30% of the value of materials will be used for the building's exterior
- Eligibility for grants through the State Historical Fund. Projects must demonstrate a public benefit to be eligible for a grant
- Potential exemptions or variances from select building code and zoning standards, including floodplain, height, solar and residential growth management requirements
- Newly-designated landmarks are honored with a bronze plaque presented at a public ceremony
- Staff assistance for applicants for development review, Landmark Alteration Certificate, and building permit processes

INTERNAL COORDINATION

The city's Historic Preservation program intersects with many other city departments, reflecting the institutional value of historic preservation in Boulder. This arrangement also illustrates the complex relationship of historic preservation with other city goals, such as housing, economic vitality, transportation, and environmental sustainability. In addition, the Community Planning and Sustainability Department and Historic Preservation program collaborates with the Development Review, Land Use, and the Local Environmental Action divisions. For example, alteration permits pertaining to disability access are evaluated on a case-by-case basis in an effort to provide maximum accessibility with minimum impact to historic structures. If significant historic resources are identified, a condition of Site Review approval is often that an application for landmark designation be made. Historic Preservation is regularly involved with updates to the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and its preservation and conservation policies.

ANALYSIS

Feedback from the internal coordination group indicated that coordination between city departments and the Historic Preservation program has improved markedly over the last few years. In particular, coordination through the discretionary review process takes place from the pre-application stage. However, there was also acknowledgment of a need for continued engagement with the community and continued communication among city staff. In particular, increased coordination with Housing, Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Open Space and Mountain Parks, and Facilities and Asset Management should occur. The internal group suggested better information and more internal training and coordination on the historic

ENFORCEMENT

preservation Design Review Process, the Landmarks Design Review Committee, and how Landmarks Alteration Certificate decisions work.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance outlines the enforcement policies and penalties for historic preservation violations, including work completed without a Landmark Alteration Certificate (LAC) and the unauthorized demolition of buildings over 50 years old. Demolition violations are rare; most violations involve work completed without an LAC. Many enforcement cases are initiated when neighborhood residents notify Historic Preservation staff of a potential violation. If warranted, a stop-work order is issued. Except in the cases of unauthorized demolition and relocation, property owners have thirty days to resolve the violation with Historic Preservation staff. The city may issue a summons if there is no attempt to resolve the situation or work on correcting the problem ceases. In the instance of an unlawful demolition or relocation of a historic building, the city issues both a notice of violation and a summons. The maximum penalty in Boulder for demolishing a historic building without the proper review and permit is a fine of not more than $5,000 per violation, incarceration for not more than ninety days, or both a fine and jail time.

ANALYSIS

Staff generally uses an educational rather than punitive approach to reduce violations and the need for enforcement. Staff makes every effort to provide as much relevant information as possible to historic building owners. Details about the Landmark Alteration Certificate and demolition review processes are posted on the city's website, provided over the phone and in person, and also appear in specialized brochures and publications. Staff also cooperates with other city employees to enhance

the enforcement program. While this approach is relatively effective, public feedback indicates frustration in neighbor-initiated enforcement reports and a desire for a process to ensure compliance with Landmark Alteration Certificates. Enforcement practices could be strengthened through the establishment of a historic preservation training program for inspectors.

SURVEY AND HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Historic and architectural surveys and historic contexts are the foundation for understanding and preserving a community's cultural and historic resources. Surveys inform a community about the historic resources it has and why they may be important. Since Boulder implemented a survey program in 1977, a total of 16 survey projects have been completed, resulting in the documentation of nearly all of the city's historic buildings built prior to the 1960s.

Historic context reports help narrate the stories of Boulder's historic places. These thematic reports have focused on social groups, such as early Swedish immigrants and Boulder's African American community, as well as the transformative impact of the railroad and automobile on the city, and the use of native stone construction in Boulder. The context reports identify specific properties associated with key historic events and patterns, important people, architectural styles or buildings types. From 1988 to 1999, the city utilized grants to develop a historic context program. This initiative created 14 documents on a wide variety of historic, architectural and cultural topics. These documents are available on the city's website and are used by staff in the research of properties proposed for demolition or landmark designation, and in the development of walking tours.

ANALYSIS

Boulder is recognized as having one of the most comprehensive historic building survey records in the state. Yet, it is important to realize that survey is never truly complete, with recent past resources and other under-represented resources requiring documentation, as well as previously documented buildings needing resurvey to reflect current conditions. To remain effective, responsive, and proactive, work is necessary to maintain current records of the aging building stock. Much of Boulder's survey information and contexts is 30 years old and out of date. Identifying areas in need of survey/resurvey should occur. Likewise, priority should be given to developing a citywide context to identify subsequent historic context topics.

HISTORIC CONTEXT REPORTS

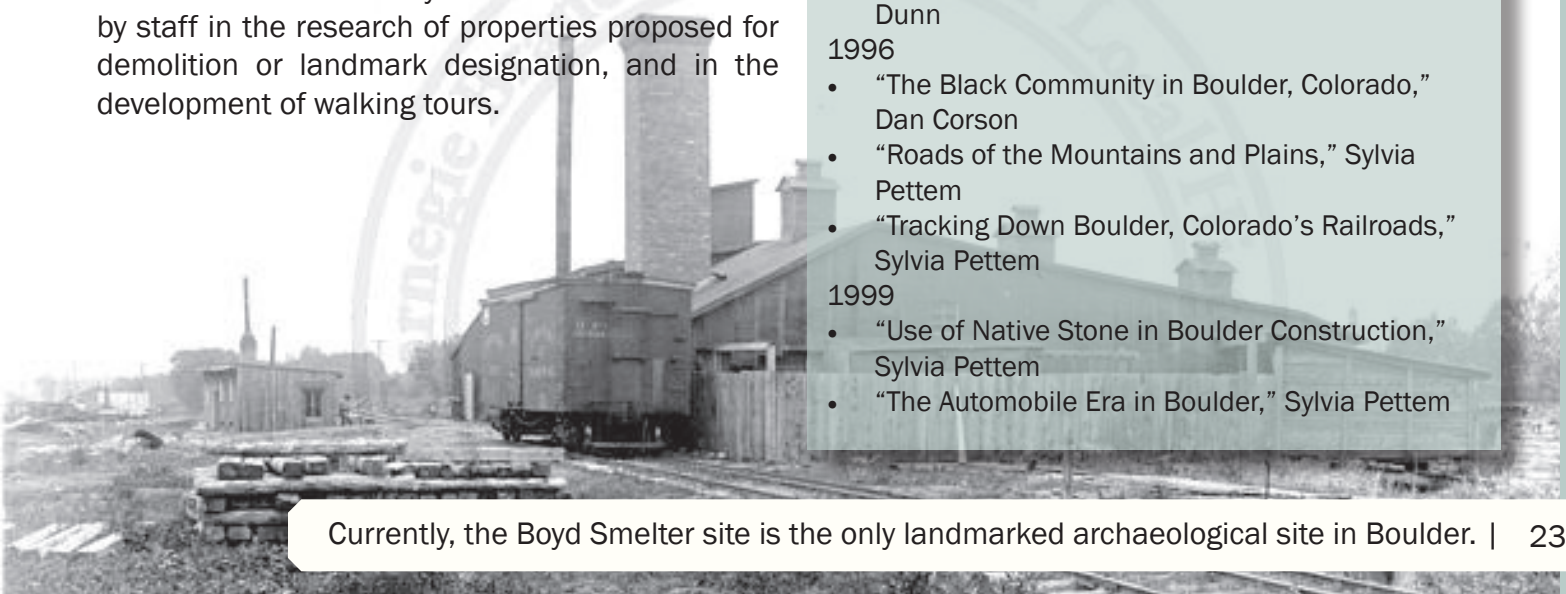
1990
- "Foreign Born Immigrants in Boulder, Colorado 1859-1884," Lysa Wegman-French

1992
- "The Grange Movement in Boulder County," Anne Dyni
- "The Development of Boulder's University Hill Neighborhood in Relation to Economic Factors," Merle Adams
- "History of the Boulder County Poor Farm and Hospital," Anne Dyni
- "Boulder County Burial Sites," Kay Lukoskie
- "Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr.: Maker of Parks, Planner of Cities," Beverly Carrigan
- "Boulder County, Colorado: Major Transportation Routes, Pre-1860 to 1920," Lara Juliusson

1993
- "Northern Lights: Boulder's Swedish Heritage," Cynthia Shaw McLaughlin
- "Downtown Churches: Sacred Places," Marilee Dunn

1996
- "The Black Community in Boulder, Colorado," Dan Corson
- "Roads of the Mountains and Plains," Sylvia Pettem
- "Tracking Down Boulder, Colorado's Railroads," Sylvia Pettem

1999
- "Use of Native Stone in Boulder Construction," Sylvia Pettem
- "The Automobile Era in Boulder," Sylvia Pettem



Currently, the Boyd Smelter site is the only landmarked archaeological site in Boulder.

HISTORIC AND PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

Currently, the city does not have established procedures for how to address archaeological resources encountered during construction or excavation. The city has 122 records for surveyed historic and prehistoric archaeological resources within city limits, and recent archaeological finds indicate that humans have resided in the area for at least 10,000 years. The Boyd Smelter currently is the only landmarked archaeological site in Boulder. The city does not have a staff archaeologist and the Landmarks Board is not required to appoint a member with archaeological expertise.

ANALYSIS

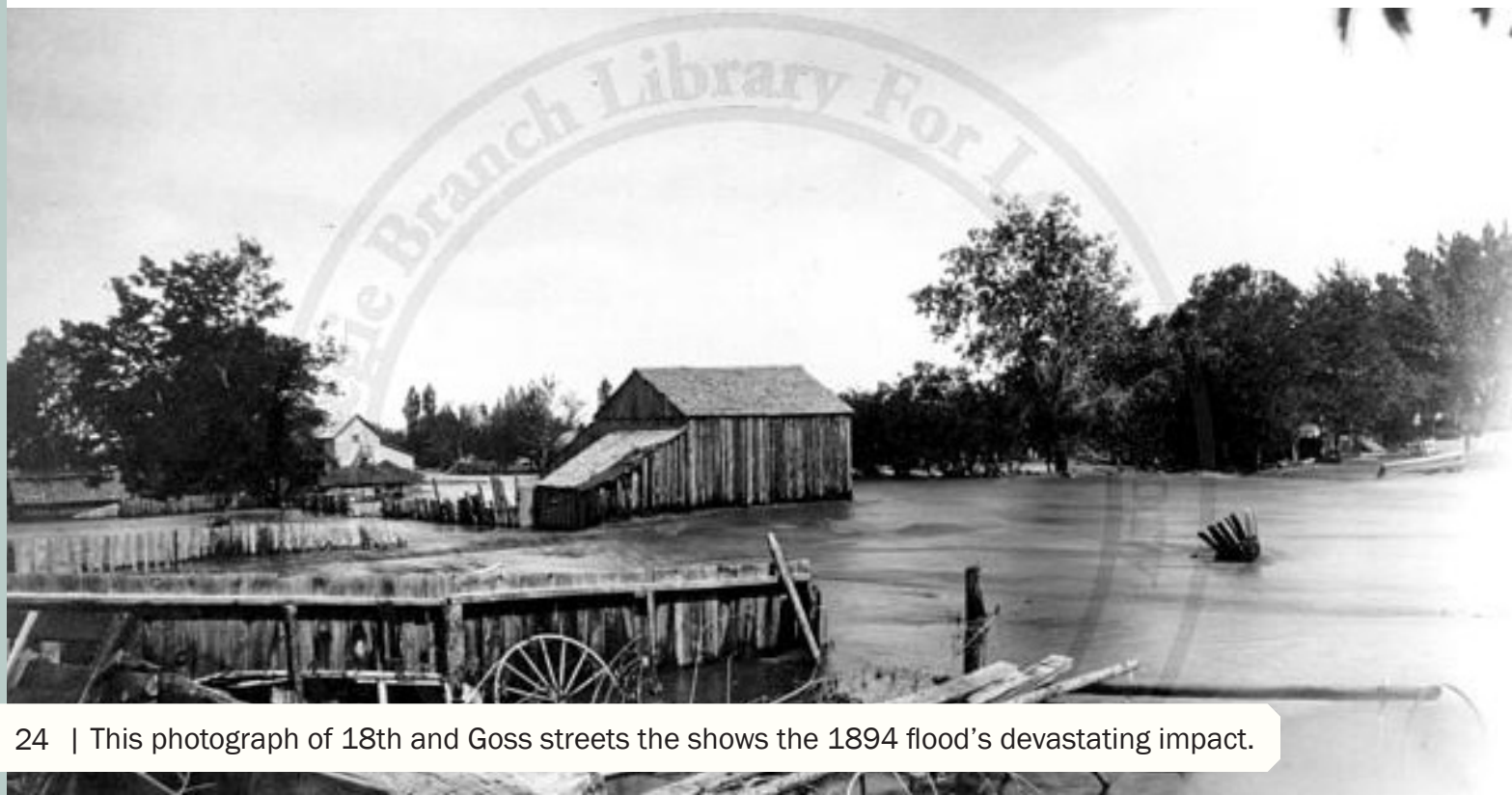
The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan calls for identifying, designating, and protecting archaeological resources such as open ditches, street and alleyscapes, railroad rights of way, and designed landscapes. Despite the identification of these archeological resources within city limits, the city does not have its own archaeological program, relying primarily on state and federal protections. Protocol should be developed for individual landmarking of archaeological sites and their protection. Consideration should also be given to providing archeology training to staff and the Landmarks Board and, over the long term, developing a full archaeology program.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Boulder has the highest risk for flash flooding in Colorado, and there is a high risk of wildfire in the area. Such disasters have the potential to cause catastrophic damage to the city's historic and cultural resources. The Historic Preservation program is involved in a county-led effort to prepare a disaster management plan. However, the city currently does not have a plan focused on historic preservation that addresses post-disaster mobilization to assure historic buildings are not lost to hasty and possibly needless demolition, and that property owners have the appropriate level of support and advice.

ANALYSIS

The city is fortunate to have thorough and relatively current survey forms that document many buildings constructed prior to 1960. The city also scanned all survey records to ensure this information is electronically backed up. Such records can be essential for restoring the appearance and character-defining features of individual landmarks, buildings within historic districts, and other important sites in a post-disaster period. Plans for the utilization of this information in the event of a disaster should be a prime component of a disaster plan. Additionally, a protocol for the review of historic buildings damaged or destroyed in a disaster should be established as part of a disaster plan.



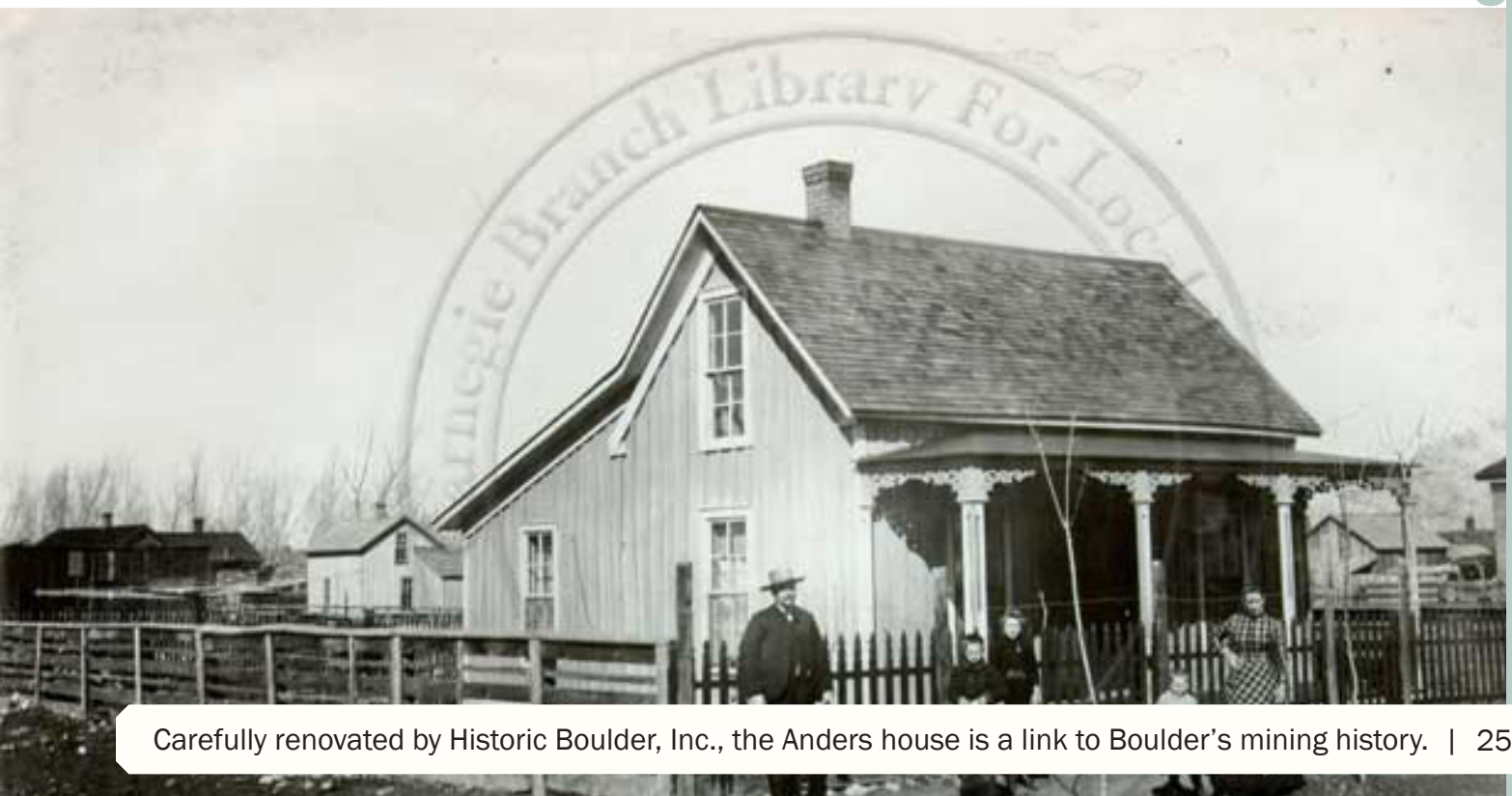
24 | This photograph of 18th and Goss streets the shows the 1894 flood's devastating impact.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Historic preservation efforts do not take place without strong community support and broad public engagement. In Boulder, engagement and outreach occur mostly through the designation, design review, and demolition processes. Other ongoing outreach activities include events for Historic Preservation Month, presentations to community groups, and informational packets sent to new owners of properties within Boulder's historic districts. The program utilizes its website, brochures, videos, and historic district signage to inform Boulder citizens about historic preservation. The relationship between the Historic Preservation program and Historic Boulder, Inc. cannot be overstated, but important partnering also occurs with the Boulder History Museum, Colorado Preservation, Inc., and History Colorado, particularly in community engagement efforts. Staff provides technical assistance to the public and regularly gives talks to neighborhood groups and organizations like the Boulder Area Realtors Association on local historic preservation issues. The Landmarks Board has recently re-established a public outreach subcommittee dedicated to exploring ways to better engage the community about historic preservation issues.

ANALYSIS

Customer service extends beyond program applicants to the much wider audience of the community that benefits from historic preservation and its character, economy, and other benefits. Public feedback indicates a need for more robust engagement and outreach efforts to tell the stories of Boulder's history while better explaining the benefits and responsibilities of historic preservation. Enhanced public engagement and collaboration should be a priority for the Historic Preservation program. Customer feedback should be used to objectively address issues or concerns and continually improve the program. Recognizing resource constraints, this should include revisions to the Historic Preservation website to make information more accessible, better promotion of the benefits of historic preservation and environmental sustainability, incentives, workshops to assist property owners, lecture series, and outreach efforts at events like the Farmers' Market.



Carefully renovated by Historic Boulder, Inc., the Anders house is a link to Boulder's mining history.

STRUCTURE OF MERIT PROGRAM

In 1987, the Landmarks Board established the Structure of Merit program to recognize properties possessing historic, architectural, or aesthetic merit. This recognition is an alternative to landmark designation. Buildings and sites listed on either the National Register of Historic Places or the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties are automatically added to the Structure of Merit program. This program is strictly honorary and not subject to design review. Currently, 64 properties are recognized as Structures of Merit.

ANALYSIS

The Landmarks Board work plan has mentioned potential candidates for new listings, yet no new entries have been added to the Structure of Merit program since 1997. This lapse is likely related to a general lack of community awareness. Recent Landmarks Board discussion indicates a high level of interest in reactivating this program and using it as a way to promote the stories associated with Boulder historic properties, to increase understanding of historic preservation, and to enhance owner pride. Reactivation of this program should include review of properties that might be eligible for recognition and more active promotion of this program as a public outreach tool.

More information about the Structure of Merit program is available on the city's website: www.boulderhistoricpreservation.net

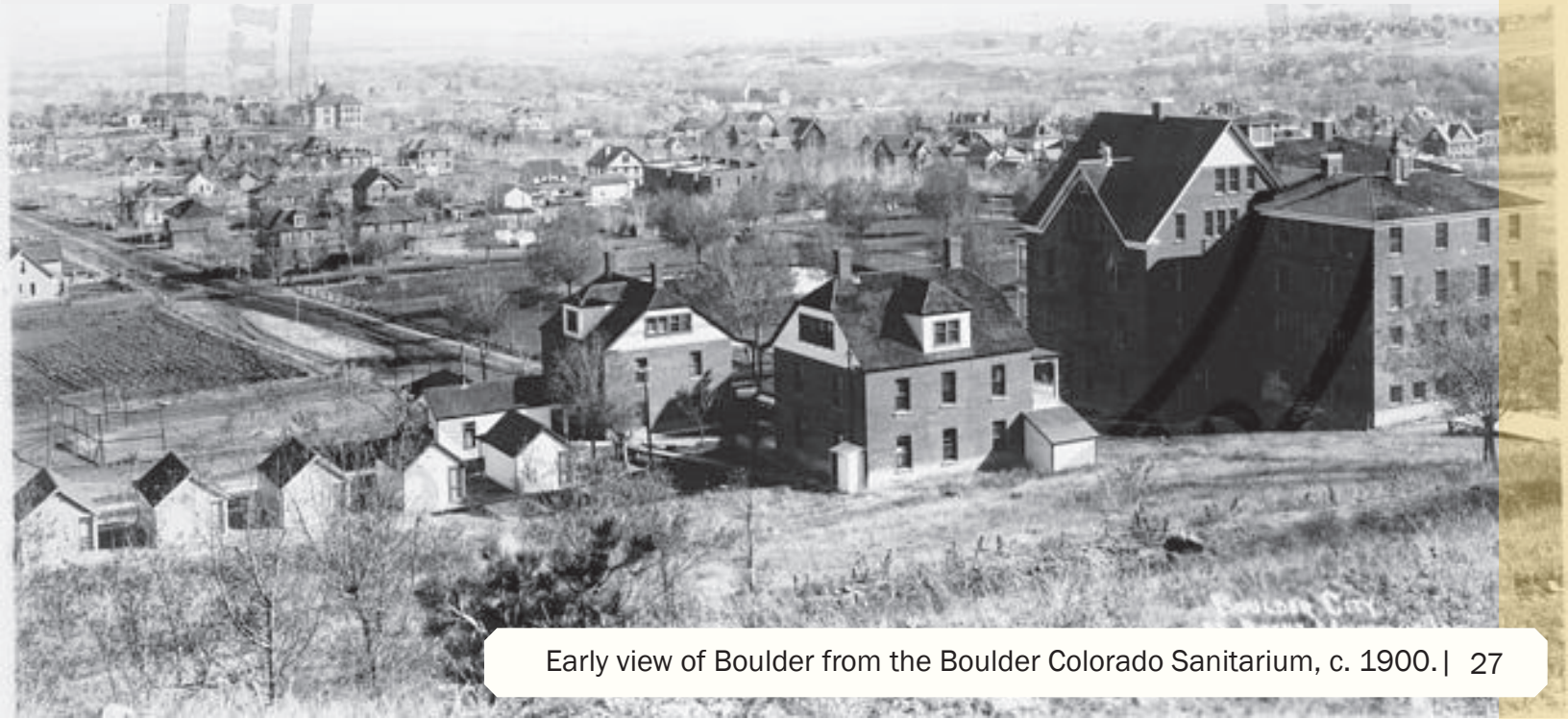
Structures of Merit

845 11th St.
983 14th St.
***907 7th St.**
977 9th St.
1915 ½ Goss Cir.
1935 ½ Goss Cir.
2102 Goss Cir.
2202 Goss Cir.
2250 Goss Cir.
1638 Grove St.
1728 Grove St.
1902 Grove St.
2141 Grove St.
***646 Pearl St.**
***2442 Pearl St.**
***1813 Pine St.**
1105 Spruce St.
1850 Table Mesa Dr.
1602-1620 Walnut St.
575 Arapahoe Ave.
3345 Broadway
***2019 Goss Cir.**
821 Lincoln Pl.
***1123 Spruce St.**
711 Walnut St.
2127-31-35 14th St.
2330-32 14th St.
1815-21 17th St.
2017-23 17th St.
2117-21 18th St.
***2010-14 19th St.**
2535-37 5th St.
2059-61 Bluff St.
2105-07 Bluff St.
315-17 Canyon Blvd.
***1911-1915 Pearl St.**
835-37 Walnut St.
2334-36 14th St.
2014 Pearl St.
1515 Spruce St.
1734 Spruce St.
1414 Pine St.
1424 Pine St.
1514 Pine St.
1836 Baseline Rd.
1420 Bluebell Ave.
***896 17th St.**
1515 Baseline Rd.
1440 Bellevue Ave.
1714-18 Broadway
420 Christmas Tree Dr.
***550 College Ave.**
450 College St.
780 Flagstaff Rd.
***1135 Jay St.**
630 Northstar Ct.
2385 Panorama Ave.
630 Pennsylvania Ave.
650 Pennsylvania Ave.
1025 Rosehill Dr.
719 Walnut St.

***Bold= Later landmarked**

 | The Aspen Leaf House, the Castle and NCAR are three buildings recognized as Structures of Merit.

A SENSE OF PURPOSE



Early view of Boulder from the Boulder Colorado Sanitarium, c. 1900.

A SENSE OF PURPOSE

The Historic Preservation Plan builds on past successes by identifying what roles historic preservation will play in shaping Boulder's urban form and character, in contributing to the city's goals of environmental, social and economic sustainability, and maintaining its high quality of life. The plan also aspires to bring vision to the diverse initiatives of the city's historic preservation activities in the twenty-first century. On a practical level it is intended to establish implementable work program priorities that will assist in streamlining the city's historic preservation processes.

The City of Boulder strives to be a leader in historic preservation by proactively identifying historic resources, creating a shared community vision for the preservation of sites and areas that are significant to Boulder's past, fostering a collaborative relationship among the Landmarks Board, staff and the community, ensuring clear and predictable review processes, continuing to promote the natural alignment between historic preservation and environmental sustainability, and encouraging the preservation of historic resources through incentives.

The public, stakeholder group, and Landmarks Board helped develop the goals and associated objectives. They establish the vision and more specific outcomes to guide the program and its intent to protect, enhance and perpetuate buildings and sites reminiscent of past eras. The program should balance proactive and reactive activities by improving current program operations, actively engaging the community and continuing to be on the forefront of integrating historic preservation and environmental sustainability.

THEMES

Three themes emerged through the development of the Goals and Objectives and are used to help organize the Recommendations.

Historic Resource Protection

Individual landmark and historic district designation, and the resulting design review process, are the primary means of protecting Boulder's historically, architecturally, and environmentally significant resources. Care should be taken to make the city's designation program representative of its overall development patterns, including properties representative of all classes and functions. To this end, a shared community vision should be established that will identify the types of resources and areas that are important to Boulder's history and establish strategies for their protection. The inherent sustainability of historic preservation should be promoted and city policies should be integrated to ensure cohesion between programs. Currently designated resources should be celebrated for their continued contribution to Boulder's unique sense of place.

Community Engagement and Collaboration

The program strives to foster collaborative relationships and actively engage the community in preservation efforts. Community support will be strengthened through the establishment of a shared community vision for historic preservation. The Landmarks Board and staff should work collaboratively with property owners, residents and organizations such as Historic Boulder, Inc. to advance historic preservation goals. Clear, accessible information should be provided about the design review, demolition review, and landmark designation processes to increase the transparency of the program. Engaging and accurate information on existing landmarked buildings and sites should be distributed to enhance community support for historic preservation. The Landmarks Board and staff should engage in an open dialogue with the community about historic preservation and be a resource for property owners in the stewardship of their historic places.

Program Operation

Through the establishment of a shared community vision, the program can be proactive in its operation, dedicating more resources to landmark designation, support of existing landmarks and education initiatives. It is important to continually improve the current program to ensure it is responsive to changing circumstances, emerging issues, and community needs and desires. Having clear and current design guidelines that are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards is a critical aspect of a successful design review program. Ways to make the demolition review process clearer and more predictable should be a priority for Boulder's Historic Preservation program. As the program continues to develop, and after the existing program is improved, additional initiatives should be established.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF BOULDER'S SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC, ARCHITECTURAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

- Create a shared community vision for the protection of resources and areas that are historically, architecturally and/or environmentally significant, and develop strategies for their protection consistent with local, state and federal historic preservation practices;
- Ensure the City of Boulder remains a leader in historic preservation through the careful stewardship of its own historic resources and encouragement of innovative and collaborative approaches to preservation;
- Ensure consistency of historic preservation goals with other city plans, policies and priorities and enhance internal coordination;
- Improve and increase community understanding of the inherent connection between historic preservation and environmental sustainability;
- Establish a clear process for the protection and management of historic resources in the event of natural disaster;
- Explore innovative and alternative strategies to recognize and protect important resources from the recent past.

ACTIVELY ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION EFFORTS

- Encourage collaboration and open dialogue among the community, Landmarks Board, other boards, City Council, city staff and historic preservation organizations to advance historic preservation goals and enhance community support;
- Interpret Boulder's historic, architectural, and environmental resources for residents and visitors;
- Celebrate, promote, and raise awareness about historic preservation successes in Boulder;
- Establish on-going outreach initiatives that engage the community and promote the benefits of historic preservation;
- Cultivate and maintain collaborative relationships with owners of properties that are individually landmarked and/or located within a historic district.

MAKE REVIEW PROCESSES CLEAR, PREDICTABLE, AND OBJECTIVE

- Provide excellent customer service;
- Provide training opportunities for board and staff to ensure objective and consistent decision-making;
- Provide clear, accurate and easily-accessible information to the public;
- Ensure regulations and design guidelines are current, relevant, and effective in balancing the protection of historic buildings with other community priorities and policies;
- Protect historic resources through effective, consistent and transparent review and enforcement policies and practices;
- Recognize and communicate that historic designation allows for change that is sensitive to the character of the building, landmark, or district.

CONTINUE LEADERSHIP IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Integrate historic preservation and environmental sustainability policies, such as the Greenpoints program and the Energy Code, to maintain shared community resources for future generations;
- Recognize innovative scholarship and projects that successfully balance historic preservation and environmental sustainability;
- Continue to address common energy efficiency issues as technology evolves, to address window rehabilitation and replacement, solar panel installation, and the use of alternative materials.

ENCOURAGE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

- Better publicize and promote existing incentives, such as eligibility for tax credits and relief from building and zoning codes;
- Explore creative and innovative initiatives to encourage historic preservation, improve public perception and defray the cost of rehabilitation and restoration projects;
- Improve public perception of Historic Preservation program through enhanced communication, meaningful collaboration, and involvement between the city and the community at large;
- Recognize and honor property owners for exemplary stewardship of historic buildings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations identify the actions needed to achieve the Goals and Objectives. It is not possible to accomplish all actions with current resources or in the near term. Therefore, a prioritized chart is provided at the end of the section. Some actions may require additional resources, such as specialized consultants or supplemental funding. Those best suited to funding from grants are marked with a diamond. Staff and the Landmarks Board should consider how best to prioritize these, developing a multi-year grants plan that specifies projects, request amounts, and best funding source based upon project objectives. The city should continue to apply to History Colorado's State Historical Fund and Certified Local Government programs, though other grant funding sources should be explored.

This plan should be used to help guide upcoming annual work plans for the program. For instance, at the annual board retreat, the Landmarks Board and staff should undertake a detailed discussion of progress, with staff preparing a report of plan-related accomplishments and the board recommending initiatives for the next year. The report and work plan should be posted on the city's website and presented at the May Landmarks Board meeting, during Historic Preservation Month.

The implementation of this plan will require strong partnerships among the city, Landmarks Board, community members, historic preservation organizations, real estate groups and neighborhood associations.

Bright Spot Grocery Store on University Hill, c.1926.

1. HISTORIC RESOURCE PROTECTION

The purpose of the Boulder's Historic Preservation program is to identify, evaluate, and protect Boulder's significant historic resources. To this end, it is important for the city's Historic Preservation program to reflect the diversity and development patterns of the city and establish a shared community vision for resource protection. The identification of significant sites and encouragement of their protection would enable the program to further engage the community in historic preservation and balance proactive and reactive activities.

1.1 Develop a Plan to Identify and Prioritize Historic Resources and Implement Strategies for their Protection

A critical component of this plan is the development a long-term vision for future historic resource protection. The goal of this vision would make the city's historic preservation activities more proactive by focusing on implementing the vision, which would be achieved through community engagement and the development of strategies to protect significant buildings and areas. It would also help make the preservation program more predictable for applicants by clarifying which buildings and areas are important to preserve.

This resource plan should include:

- An assessment of designated and potential historic and cultural resources in the community to identify which types of properties and areas are currently protected, and which are underrepresented;
- Development of an overall historic context for the city that describes the important eras, events, persons, architectural styles, etc. that are important to Boulder's history; to be used as a basis for prioritizing the resource types that are important to protect.

The program should continue to encourage the designation of significant resources and areas found eligible for listing. Key action steps include:

- Maintaining survey records to ensure information is current and accurate;
- Reassessment of the map of potential historic districts, since many of the identified areas have experienced significant change since the boundaries were established;

- Developing strategies to provide financial and/or technical support and incentives for owners of historic properties (see Recommendations 1.5 and 1.6);
- Continuing to mail letters to owners of eligible properties encouraging designation;
- Hosting informational sessions within potential historic districts; and
- Fostering a network of owners of landmark properties.

1.2 Develop Additional Historic Context Reports

The 14 existing documents, developed through the historic context project, should continue to be utilized and additional historic context reports should be developed and made available electronically. A broad historic context of the development of Boulder should be undertaken to help identify significant themes of the city's history. This broad context report should inform subsequent, thematic-based studies. Other possible topics for new historic contexts include Boulder's Hispanic community, its agricultural past, the community's significant relationship with the University of Colorado, the city's vernacular buildings, and the architectural commissions of Charles Haertling. These may be developed through partnership with a graduate program or by hiring consultants. The documents may be utilized to assess the eligibility of thematic districts. All historic context reports should be easily accessible and posted on the Historic Preservation website.

1.3 Explore Ways to Preserve Smaller Buildings that are Eligible for Landmark Designation

Many of Boulder's working-, and middle-class houses and those associated with Boulder's early history are modest in both size and architectural detailing. Nationwide, the average square footage of single family houses has grown in recent decades. The desire for larger houses makes smaller buildings to vulnerable additions that overwhelm the historic character of the building. To maintain the character of small, vernacular buildings in Boulder, the city should explore strategies to preserve significant examples of this building type. Possible action steps include forming a working group to focus on this issue, studying how other similar communities have dealt with threats to smaller buildings and vernacular architecture, promoting specialized design solutions (such as excavation to add more square footage) to make small buildings more suitable for contemporary use, and establishing a funding source to preserve small buildings.

1.4 Ensure Continued Integration of Local, State and Federal Policies

The Landmarks Board has adopted the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as the basis for guidance in the review Landmark Alteration Certificate review and the National Register Criteria for the Evaluation of Historic Properties for determining eligibility of landmark designation. Boulder's adopted design guidelines are consistent with these standards and evaluation for landmark designation is generally based upon the National Register's criteria. While developing a community vision has been identified as a critical component to ensure historic preservation remains relevant in Boulder, it is important that such a vision is consistent with national historic preservation standards, whether for historic designation, design review, demolition, or tax credit review. Likewise, the City of Boulder is committed to universal access to people with disabilities and life safety consideration through the building code. To this end, the Historic Preservation program should continue to explore innovative ways to make sure that all designated historic properties meet the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide a high level of life safety without compromising important historic character defining features.

The Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art is an example of a city-owned building that is locally landmarked.

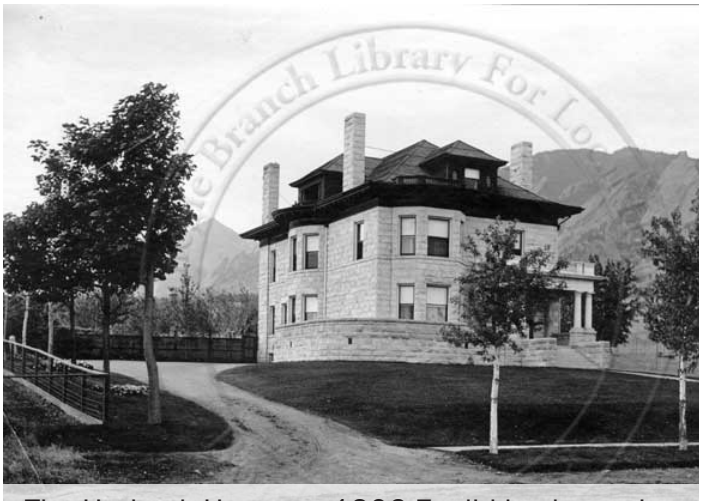
1.5 Publicize Existing Incentives

Public feedback indicates many owners of historic properties are not aware of the available historic preservation incentives for which they may be eligible. The city should publicize these existing incentives more broadly to increase usage and to benefit historic buildings. Suggested action steps include posting information prominently on the Historic Preservation website, and developing and distributing a specialized brochure about existing incentives.

1.6 Initiate New Incentives

Non-monetary incentives recognize building owners for their community contributions and reward stewardship. New honorary incentives might include recognizing responsible owners of historic buildings with City Council proclamations or providing owners with framed historic images of their property. Such items could be distributed at existing award ceremonies held during Historic Preservation Month in May, on the anniversary of designation, or at a special time of the year devoted to honoring owners of landmark properties and buildings within Boulder historic districts.

Financial incentives assist property owners to make appropriate alterations or changes to their historic buildings. Possible options for new historic preservation incentives in Boulder include low- or no-interest loans, increases to existing fee waivers, or specialized funding for both maintaining small and accessory buildings and making historic properties more energy efficient. Introducing new financial incentives will require a great deal of planning.



The Harbeck House at 1206 Euclid is also a city-owned landmark. Photo taken c. 1900.

Key steps in that planning process should include discussing desirable funding options with owners of historic properties, exploring how other communities manage and finance historic preservation incentives (i.e., in Louisville, proceeds from a specialized tax may be used to restore or rehabilitate resources within the downtown historic district); securing both initial and long-range funding sources; launching a small pilot incentive program; and adapting the pilot program (based upon results and public feedback) to assure it is both effective and self-supporting.

1.7 Designate Eligible City-Owned Buildings and Lead by Example

Boulder aspires to lead by example, modeling excellent stewardship for city-owned historic buildings. Additionally, city-owned buildings can be used to effectively illustrate successful integration of historic preservation and environmental sustainability. Many of the actions below aim to achieve goals included in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.

The city's willingness to actively participate in its own Historic Preservation program will instill a sense of unity with owners of landmark properties and buildings within historic districts. Key actions include continuing to maintain the Facilities Asset Management list of city-owned buildings 50 years or older, assuring the survey (or resurvey) of city-owned properties to determine eligibility for landmark designation, discussing the importance of designation at City Staff Working Group meetings, and designating eligible buildings.

Model stewardship of city buildings would illustrate how to successfully integrate historic preservation and environmental sustainability, and demonstrate the use of materials and techniques appropriate for older buildings. Key actions include continuing to designate eligible buildings, as appropriate; choosing city-owned buildings for energy upgrades; documenting technologies and materials and comparing pre- and post-project energy efficiency; and hosting open houses, either actual or virtual, to share results.

1.8 Increase Coordination between the City and County Regarding Landmark Designation

The BVCP fosters collaboration on wide range

of preservation issues not just in the city, but throughout Boulder County. Consistent with the BVCP, the city and county should coordinate to designate significant publicly-owned buildings outside of Boulder's municipal limits that reflect the region's significant history and architecture. For example, county-owned commissions attributed to prominent Boulder architect Charles Haertling should be designated. Key actions for achieving such coordinated designations might include developing a list of eligible county-owned resources, assuring the survey (or resurvey) of such properties, and discussing the importance of designation at meetings of the existing Boulder County Heritage Roundtable.

1.9 Explore Establishment of an Archaeological Program

The BVCP recommends development of an archaeology program for the city. Historic Preservation staff and Landmarks Board should consult with local archaeologists to determine how to integrate it into the existing Historic Preservation program. It seems most feasible to model a new archaeology program after provisions within the existing Historic Preservation ordinance, detailing procedures for identification, designation, and protection of both prehistoric and historic archaeological resources and specifying how the Landmark Alteration Certificate process will apply for archaeological remains. The composition of the Landmarks Board could also be changed to include a non-voting member with archaeological expertise. The second step should be to modify the ordinance as necessary and raise awareness of a new archaeology program.

1.10 Continue Dialogue About Postwar Architecture

Boulder, like many cities in the western United States, flourished in the postwar period. Organizations such as the National Center for Atmospheric Research, Ball Aerospace and the National Institute of Standards and Technology attracted thousands of people to Boulder, greatly impacting the built environment. Given the importance of this period's history and the high proportion of extant buildings constructed after 1945, addressing postwar resources is crucial if Boulder's Historic Preservation program is to reflect the community's overall development patterns.

Public feedback revealed a generally low-level of awareness of postwar resources. Yet, in many communities, a growing number of artists, empty nesters, and first-time homebuyers have found houses from this era affordable and adaptable. Actions for increased knowledge about postwar housing in Boulder include showcasing articles from national publications; preparing stories about Boulder's postwar development, houses, and current neighborhoods for editors of local and national media; and working with neighborhood associations to host tours of "recent past" properties.

1.11 Explore Creation of Conservation Districts

Given the sheer size of postwar neighborhoods and the city's recent efforts to promote smaller, more manageably sized historic districts, investigating the use of conservation areas to protect the scale, house size, and setback within postwar neighborhoods may be appropriate. Such efforts should be coordinated with the development of other community goals, such as walkable neighborhoods.

Postwar subdivision in North Boulder, c.1950s

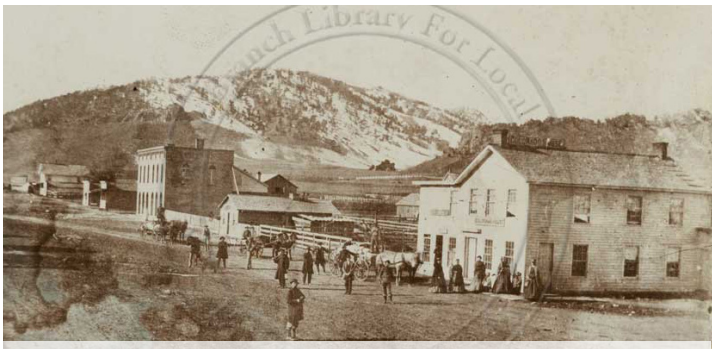
Action steps include studying how other communities have integrated conservation areas into existing historic preservation programs, developing a working group to discuss the desirability and implications of conservation areas, revising the ordinance to include suitable language for conservation area designation, and working with neighbors to designate eligible postwar neighborhoods or subdivisions as conservation areas. Pattern books, such as those developed in Arvada, may be an appropriate tool to illustrate design solutions that adapt common housing types to meet contemporary desires while maintaining a cohesive neighborhood scale.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

The plan suggests responsibility for actions to a wide variety of individuals and groups. Participation in the action steps provides an opportunity to continue the discussions among the community, Landmarks Board, City staff, and historic preservation organizations initiated as part of the public input process for the Historic Preservation Plan.

2.1 Strengthen Partnerships with Historic Preservation Organizations

The partnership between the city and Historic Boulder, Inc. has been beneficial in raising awareness of historic preservation, fostering community engagement, and designating significant resources. Key action steps include the nonprofit continuing to initiate and facilitate designations, coordinating with Historic Preservation staff and the Landmarks Board to identify significant resources and develop educational offerings, and advocating for historic preservation. In addition, the Landmarks Board and Historic Boulder Board should consider holding regular joint retreats to discuss other ways to offer mutual support for historic preservation initiatives in Boulder.



This 1866 photograph is the earliest known view of the 1200 block of Pearl Street.

2.2 Collaborate with Owners of Existing Landmarks and Properties in Designated Historic Districts; Establish Neighborhood Liaisons

Historic property ownership involves both benefits and responsibilities. This situation is not unique to Boulder, with historic buildings everywhere offering the opportunity for individuals to possess a tangible link to history but also requiring higher levels of investment for compatible materials and specialized trades people or design professionals. Given this situation, it is important both to support owners of historic buildings and provide incentives to offset the higher costs associated with alterations and maintenance.

Owners of existing landmark properties and buildings within Boulder's historic districts are important preservation partners, and support of these individuals is critical. Fostering an open dialogue about the benefits and responsibilities of landmark designation, collaborating on streamlining the design review process, and implementing improvements to the program to promote collaboration would be most useful. Events such as window rehabilitation workshops would provide hands-on opportunities for property owners to learn from professional trades people how to best maintain and repair historic windows. This initiative may be a strong candidate for grant funding.

2.3 Foster Greater Understanding of Historic Preservation

Public feedback indicated some individuals have developed ideas about how the Historic Preservation staff and Landmarks Board operate based upon second-hand accounts rather than personal experience. These anecdotes can negatively impact the program's reputation and efforts to distribute accurate information and foster a collaborative relationship among the Landmarks Board, staff and residents should be undertaken.

Action steps include recruiting volunteers willing to act as neighborhood liaisons; developing a neighborhood liaison training course featuring thorough background information about the designation, Landmark

Alteration Certificate, and demolition processes and available historic preservation incentives; meeting routinely with neighborhood liaisons and residents to engage in an open dialogue about common issues and concerns within historic districts; and distributing clear and accurate information about the Historic Preservation program.

2.4 Share Stories of Boulder's Historic Places

Historic preservation, at its most engaging, is about stories. These accounts help identify the past and value of the city's history. Key recommendations for sharing the stories of Boulder's historic places include erecting more interpretive signage throughout the city, presenting "then and now" slideshows, encouraging local media to focus on the stories of Boulder's historic sites, developing mobile apps (like Denver Story Trek) which provide access to personal recollections and allow for the collections of new site-specific memories, and utilizing more oral history accounts in nominations for landmark and historic district designation. Current and future historic context reports should be used as a basis for this information.

The city should launch a "Preservation Roadshow" initiative with a focus on outreach to the Boulder community to encompass a wide variety of offerings at historic sites and in historic neighborhoods throughout Boulder. Key action steps include sponsoring "open house" events with neighborhood associations within historic districts, offering how-to workshops for increasing energy efficiency in historic properties, creating brochures that illustrate examples of alterations adhering to design guidelines, staffing a booth at the Farmers' Market to promote historic preservation, and hosting tours highlighting projects that made effective use of historic preservation incentives. Planning for the "Preservation Roadshow" needs to consider logistics, funding, volunteer recruitment, promotion, curriculum, potential instructors, and effectiveness assessment

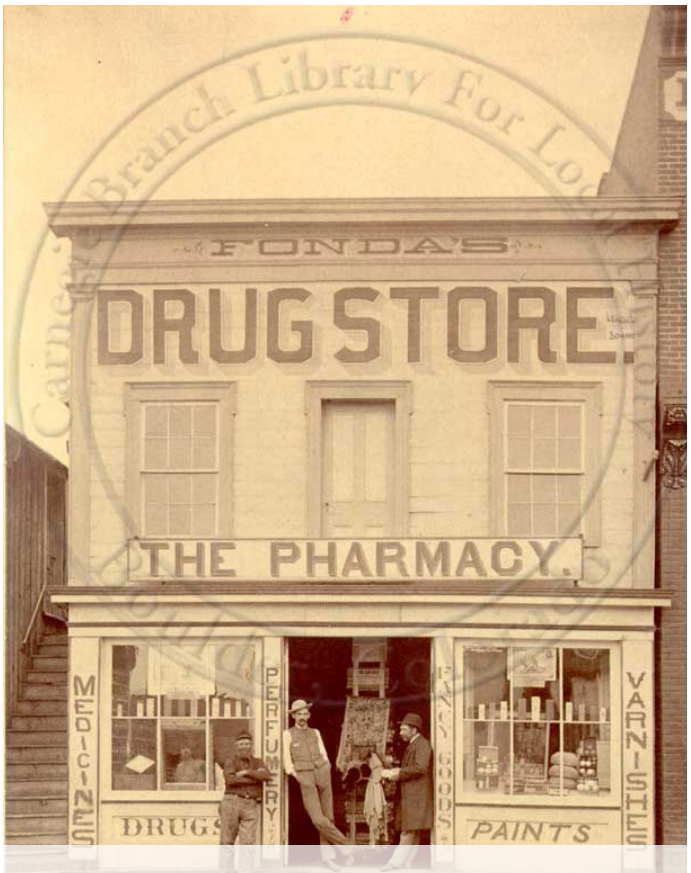
2.5 Revitalize the Structure of Merit Program

The Structure of Merit program is an effective way to promote historic preservation, increase the inventory of recognized buildings that can be highlighted in the local media, and expand public outreach and education efforts. Key actions in revitalizing this program include developing promotional materials to increase public awareness of its existence, compiling an updated list of eligible buildings and sites for listing, refining the process for selection, and launching a publicity campaign to increase awareness about the historic and architectural significance of both existing and new listings. The Landmarks Board should consider creating a Structure of Merit subcommittee to oversee the reinitiated program.

2.6 Improve the City's Historic Preservation Website

Clear, accurate, and easily-accessible information is crucial for the public to participate more fully in the city's Historic Preservation program.

The existing Historic Preservation program website is adequate, but should be improved in terms of content, format, and ease of navigation. The review processes should be clearly outlined to reduce confusion. Design guidelines for each of the historic districts should be prominently featured and easily accessible. Possible additions to the website



Fonda's Drugstore, 1218 Pearl Street, 1880.

include: an annual "State of Historic Preservation" report, citing relevant statistics, highlighting program successes, and soliciting public input on future initiatives; links to useful information available from preservation partners (National Park Service, National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, Historic Boulder, Inc. and others); and details about existing historic preservation incentives, including eligibility and requirements. The website should also include a single link offering access to all relevant sustainability and historic preservation information available online and a section devoted to tracking progress on this plan. Finally, the website should be used as a tool to engage the community and provide information on currently designated resources for community members and visitors alike. Materials focused toward kids and teens would help encourage families to tour designated historic districts and learn about Boulder's history through the built environment. Key actions include adding new content and establishing a schedule for assessment and routine updates.

2.7 Distribute Historic District Design Guidelines

Public feedback indicated a need for greater publicity regarding the existence and importance of the city's historic district design guidelines, particularly to realtors and potential homebuyers. Key actions for distributing the design guidelines include updating and maintaining links of district-specific design guidelines on the city's website, developing and maintaining a list of individuals (architects, contractors, realtors, owners of landmarked properties and buildings in historic districts) who should be familiar with them, emailing links to the guidelines, and informing these same individuals when the guidelines are revised or changed.

2.8 Publicize Current Scholarship

Historic buildings are inherently "green" through the retention of existing materials, which additionally enhances the community's sense of place and represents responsible stewardship for increasingly finite resources. It is important to Boulder's cultural and environmental legacy to preserve historic resources.

There are many misconceptions regarding historic window rehabilitation vs. window replacement and energy efficiency. The City of Boulder's Historic Preservation and Environmental Sustainability Integration Project (2006) and the Center for Resource Conservation's Effects of Energy Efficiency Treatments on Historic Windows (2011), both accessible through the city's historic preservation website, offer scientific evidence about which window treatments are most effective, a major issue for owners of historic properties. These studies should be more widely publicized, and similar studies to evaluate metal casement window treatments should be undertaken. The city should also pursue opportunities to conduct similar studies regarding the use of solar power, wind power, other energy efficiency advances, and new materials in historic buildings. Key actions include posting the windows study and providing links to other research projects on the Historic Preservation website, delivering educational sessions based upon the window study results, and applying for grants to complete additional studies.

2.9 Recognize Projects that Successfully Integrate Historic Preservation and Sustainability

Honoring projects that combine historic preservation and environmental sustainability is a way to bring greater exposure to such efforts and offer examples for other property owners to emulate. Key actions include bestowing a new award (possibly given as part of the Historic Preservation Month ceremony) to property owners, architects, contractors, and other professionals involved with a successful project; developing a specialized plaque initiative to mark building projects that have balanced historic preservation and energy efficiency; and creating a mobile app to highlight these same projects.

2.10 Engage the Community in Historic Preservation Activities

Boulder's mature Historic Preservation program has enjoyed numerous successes over its history. It is crucial to the program to celebrate, promote, and raise awareness about historic preservation successes in Boulder.

An informed public is more likely to engage in the Historic Preservation program. Key action steps for providing more information about historic preservation in Boulder include making an annual presentation

to City Council highlighting preservation activities and successes, improving the Historic Preservation website, holding more community events and educational sessions, and providing stories about historic preservation to the local media.

2.11 Honor Property Owners for Careful Stewardship of Historic Properties

The owners of landmark properties and buildings within historic districts have the honor and responsibility of safeguarding historic structures. It is crucial to recognize the important role these owners play for historic preservation in the city by honoring them for exemplary stewardship of historic buildings. Key actions include recognizing successfully completed projects, perhaps with a ribbon cutting, yard sign, or congratulatory letter.

3. PROGRAM OPERATION IMPROVEMENTS

Historic Preservation staff and the Landmarks Board strive to make objective and consistent decisions regarding designation, design review, and demolition permits. Specialized training and continuing education can enhance skill levels and offer increased knowledge about the range of techniques currently employed in the historic preservation field.

3.1 Enhance Training Opportunities for Staff and the Landmarks Board

Training for Landmarks Board members is important to ensure continuity, consistency, and capacity. New board members need a detailed orientation and all members require ongoing opportunities that provide core knowledge, institutional background, and practical skills regarding operations and relevant historic preservation issues. Historic Preservation staff training should also emphasize time management, stress reduction, networking, and problem solving. Key action steps include improving current in-house training, encouraging Board members and staff to take advantage of available CLG-sponsored workshops, and seeking appropriate training based upon staff and Board assessment of needs and competence.

3.2 Analyze Existing Historic District Design Guidelines

Design guidelines offer advice on how to allow changes to historic properties and areas while still protecting sense of place. The Landmarks Board needs current and relevant guidelines to provide effective protection of Boulder's landmarks and historic districts.

Guidelines must be complete, current and clear to facilitate consistent design review decisions. Public feedback also indicated a need for more examples of how design guidelines should be implemented and increasing the understanding of the relationship between Boulder's guidelines and the Secretary of Interior's Standards, which provide a philosophic framework for all of the city's guidelines. Key actions include instituting a schedule for review and revision of existing documents, maintaining a list of new topics to be addressed during scheduled updates, creating a standard template to make content and format of guidelines consistent, crafting a handbook with case studies illustrating the appropriate application of frequently-referenced design guideline provisions to assist both the Landmarks Board and property owners, and promoting the Secretary's Standards.

View of Pine Street in the Mapleton Hill Historic District.

3.3 Develop Design Guidelines for New Historic Districts in Collaboration with Property Owners

Design guidelines for new historic districts should continue to be developed collaboratively, with participation from both Historic Preservation staff and district residents. Key actions include identifying the character-defining features of the historic district and the appropriate design approaches for retaining them, recruiting members for the design guideline committee, preparing guidelines, and offering opportunities for community input.

3.4 Establish Follow-Up Processes for Landmark Alteration Certificates

Review of Landmark Alteration Certificates (LAC) represents a large portion of the Historic Preservation staff and Landmarks Board workload. To ensure compliance, the city should follow-up with property owners to assure projects are completed in accordance with LAC approval. Other communities require certified contractors to work on historic properties and levy fines for non-compliance on property owners and design professionals. Public input indicated some support for similar enforcement in Boulder.

Key actions for improving overall compliance include providing additional enforcement training to city inspectors (focusing on appropriate preservation treatments, applicable design guidelines, and issues associated with the design review process in Boulder) and coordinating with contractors and building professionals to discuss ways to increase understanding of the responsibilities of working on landmark properties or buildings within historic districts.

3.5 Explore Ways to Make Design Review More Consistent and Predictable

Effective, consistent, and transparent design review processes, enforcement policies, and historic preservation practices are necessary to make the city's program predictable and user friendly. Issues of consistency occasionally arise due to the rotating nature of the Landmarks Design Review Committee and the unique conditions of each site.

Design review is one of the most important and time-consuming duties for the Historic Preservation staff and Landmarks Board. An efficient design review process is necessary to allow the program to engage in more outreach activities. The staff and board should discuss options for increasing the administrative (staff) review of minor alterations to lessen time spent on less significant projects. To ensure consistency throughout a project's review, staff should continue the practice of taking detailed notes at each meeting as a record for subsequent meetings. LDRC members should ensure that their decisions are based upon adopted design guidelines and established national historic preservation practices. Since historic properties are nearly always unique, decisions may differ from project to project. However, staff and board members should be aware of past rulings to ensure that ongoing decisions are made with as much relevant information as possible. For instance, a study undertaken of approved fences in the Mapleton Hill Historic District has been very useful in making decisions. Such a study showing appropriate and inappropriate additions to historic buildings and examples of new construction in historic districts would assist the public, staff, and the Landmarks Board in the future.

3.6 Analyze Effectiveness of the Existing Demolition Ordinance

Since 1994, the demolition ordinance has resulted in the preservation of historic resources in Boulder. There is an opportunity to analyze the overall effectiveness of this provision and consider further efforts to better protect eligible buildings 50 years or older. Key action steps include continuing to gather statistics on demolition reviews (i.e., numbers of applications, approvals, and locations) to better understand overall development patterns; analyzing past difficult demolition reviews and developing options to address key issues; clarifying the demolition process for Boulder residents to increase understanding that it applies to all non-designated buildings 50 years or older; developing a framework for demolition review decision-making based upon identification of significant and threatened resource types; and considering revisions to the ordinance language to define demolition in a way which allows the Landmarks Board more flexibility in demolition reviews. The proactive identification of significant historic resources (1.1) through ongoing survey and historic context development will also assist in making

the demolition review process more consistent and predictable.

3.7 Revise Applications and Forms

Recent public input indicated that many individuals and members of the Landmarks Board believe existing historic preservation applications should be simplified to reduce confusion. Key actions for streamlining forms include simplifying formats, clarifying directions, and making greater use of checklists and flowcharts to enhance understanding of review processes.

3.8 Develop a Disaster Response Plan for the Historic Preservation Program

The City of Boulder is at high risk for both wildfire and flash floods. For that reason, it is crucial to consider how best to deal with historic resources in the wake of these or other types of natural and human-made disasters.

The city should have a disaster plan specifically for historic resources. The plan should include pre-disaster mitigation steps, identify post-disaster mitigation efforts, such as accurate survey forms and feature a process for recruiting historic preservation professionals from outside the city who can assist in the post-disaster period, appropriate collaboration procedures with other city departments, and the possibility of fast-track design review. Referring to existing disaster plans for similar communities or municipalities also facing the threat of fires and floods is recommended. Key action steps include writing a grant application to cover the cost associated with development of a disaster plan for Boulder's historic resources.

3.9 Coordinate Existing Environmental Sustainability and Historic Preservation Programs

The inherent alignment between historic preservation and environmental sustainability should be better expressed in the city's policies and practices between historic preservation and environmental sustainability.

Various city departments, local boards, and other groups are active in shaping policies for both historic preservation and environmental sustainability. The Greenpoints program and city energy codes represent the two areas of greatest overlap. Key action steps to ensure integration between the city's sustainability and historic preservation goals include promoting the reuse of historic buildings city-wide, reviewing the Greenpoints program and energy code to ensure adequate recognition of the impact of retaining an existing building, discussing increased integration of future policies at city working group meetings, and publishing and distributing scholarship on the topics from beyond Boulder.

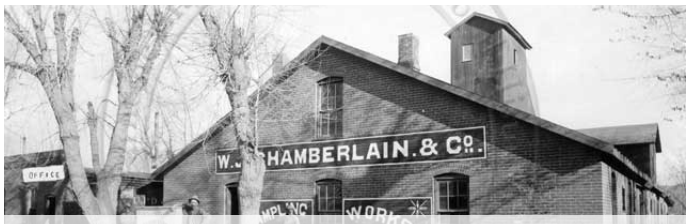
3.10 Continue to Address Energy Efficiency Concerns as Technology Evolves

Key actions include continuing to encourage window rehabilitation to benefit historic character and conserve scarce natural resources, utilizing lessons learned from demonstration projects at city-owned historic buildings and other projects citywide, investigating new technologies and posting findings of such studies to the Historic Preservation website.

3.11 Pursue Collaborative Approaches to Integrate Historic Preservation with Other City Operations

Lack of consistency among city policies is particularly frustrating to applicants and can be counterproductive to historic preservation. Enhanced internal coordination is crucial for making historic preservation practices user friendly.

Internal coordination should continue with discussions focusing on how best to integrate city policies related to historic preservation and environmental sustainability, universal accessibility, and building code regulations. Key action steps include scheduling regular meetings to improve communication and brainstorm methods for enhancing internal coordination to benefit historic preservation goals and objectives and developing a series of checklists of historic preservation-related policies and goals for other city departments to consult when considering any policy or ordinance revisions.



Chamberlain & Co Sampling Works building, 800 Pearl St., c.1890

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Continued coordination within the city and through community partnerships is important to the successful implementation of this plan. Staff will coordinate changes and updates to the plan with the development of or updates to other relevant city and county plans, such as the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.

Staff will prepare an annual report summarizing the progress to date of the plan recommendations. This report will be posted on the website and reviewed by the Landmarks Board at their annual retreat. The board will identify key action items to be undertaken in the next year. This recommendation will be included in an annual letter to City Council as input to the work program. The work program will be determined annually through direction from City Council and will reflect availability of current resources.

AMENDING THE PLAN

The city will amend the plan following the same process used to approve it, with review and recommendation by the Landmarks Board for acceptance by the City Council. Non-substantive changes and changes to correct factual information can be made at any time by staff.

PRIORITIZATION CHART

Public input influenced the suggested recommendations and timeframes for implementation of the Historic Preservation Plan. Participants in the public meetings agreed the city should strengthen and improve its existing program before expanding into new initiatives. The chart is meant to be used as a guide to prioritize preservation activities and inform the annual work plan. “Near-Term” refers to items of the highest priority that should be undertaken in the next five years, and “Long-Term” refers to items that should be addressed in the 5-15 year range. “On-Going” recommendations are those that are currently implemented and should be continued and strengthened. Recognizing that some of the “Near-Term” recommendations may take more than a year to complete and may require additional resources, the plan should be assessed each year to measure the implementation progress.

Many of the recommendations will require additional resources. If the city is able to broaden its resources, through grants or additional funding, it could address priority objectives more quickly.

1. HISTORIC RESOURCE PROTECTION			
Objectives	**Recommendations**	**Time Frame**	**Responsible Parties**
Create a shared community vision for the protection of resources and areas that are historically, architecturally and/or environmentally significant and representative of Boulder's past, and develop strategies for their protection, consistent with local, state and federal historic preservation practices	.1 Develop a plan to identify and prioritize historic resource protection and implement strategies for their protection (◊)	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, consultants
	.2 Develop additional historic context reports (◊)	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, consultants
	.3 Explore ways to protect smaller buildings that are eligible for landmark designation	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, design professionals, building owners
	.4 Ensure continued integration of local, state and federal policies	On-Going/Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
Encourage historic preservation and defray the cost of rehabilitation and restoration projects	.5 Publicize existing incentives	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, Historic Boulder, Inc.
	.6 Initiate new incentives	Long	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
Ensure the City of Boulder remains a leader in historic preservation through the careful stewardship of its own historic resources and encouragement of innovative and collaborative approaches to historic preservation	.7 Designate eligible city-owned buildings and lead by example	On-Going/ Long	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, other city staff
	.8 Increase landmark designation coordination between city and county	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, other city staff, county staff, Preservation Roundtable members
	.9 Explore establishment of an archaeological program (◊)	Long	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, local archaeologists
Explore alternative strategies to recognize and protect important resources from the recent past	.10 Continue dialogue about postwar architecture	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, neighborhood associations
	.11 Explore creation of conservation districts	Long	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, Planning Board, City Council, neighborhood associations, property owners

(◊) Symbol indicates recommendations that would likely require additional resources.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION			
Objectives	**Recommendations**	**Time Frame**	**Responsible Parties**
Encourage open dialogue among the community, Landmarks Board, City staff, and Historic Preservation organizations to advance historic preservation goals and enhance community support	.1 Strengthen partnerships with historic preservation organizations	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, Historic Boulder, Inc., community members
	.2 Collaborate with owners of existing landmarks and properties in designated historic districts; Establish neighborhood liaisons	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, representatives of historic districts
Improve public perception of historic preservation program through enhanced communication, meaningful collaboration, and involvement between the City and the community-at-large.	.3 Foster greater understanding of historic preservation	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, Historic Boulder, Inc.
Interpret Boulder's historic, architectural, and environmental resources to positively raise the profile of historic preservation and create an enhanced sense of place	.4 Share stories of Boulder's historic places (◊)	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, consultants
	.5 Revitalize the Structures of Merit program	On-Going/ Near	Landmarks Board
Provide clear, accurate, and easily-accessible information to the public	.6 Improve the city's Historic Preservation website	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
	.7 Distribute historic district design guidelines	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
Improve and increase community understanding of the inherent connection between historic preservation and environmental sustainability	.8 Publicize current scholarship	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
	.9 Recognize projects that successfully integrate historic preservation and sustainability	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
Celebrate, promote, and raise awareness about historic preservation successes in Boulder	.10 Engage the community in historic preservation activities	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff; Landmarks Board; Historic Boulder, Inc.
	.11 Honor property owners for careful stewardship of historic properties	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, City Council

(◊) Symbol indicates recommendations that would likely require additional resources.

3. PROGRAM OPERATION			
Objectives	**Recommendations**	**Time Frame**	**Responsible Parties**
Provide training opportunities to ensure fair, objective, and consistent decision-making	.1 Enhance training opportunities for staff and the Landmarks Board	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, neighborhood liaisons, specialized trainers/consultants
Ensure regulations and design guidelines are current, relevant, and provide effective protection of historic buildings	.2 Analyze existing historic district design guidelines	On-Going/ Long	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, property owners in historic districts
	.3 Develop design guidelines for new historic districts in collaboration with property owners (◊)	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, property owners in historic districts
Pursue effective, consistent and transparent design review processes, enforcement policies, and historic preservation practices	.4 Establish follow-up processes for Landmark Alteration Certificates	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, neighborhood liaisons
	.5 Explore ways to make design review more consistent and predictable	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
	.6 Analyze effectiveness of the existing demolition ordinance	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
	.7 Revise applications and forms	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
Establish a clear process for the protection and management of historic resources in the event of natural disaster	.8 Develop a disaster response plan for the historic preservation program (◊)	Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board, consultants
Integrate historic preservation and environmental sustainability policies to maintain shared community resources for future generations	.9 Coordinate existing sustainability and historic preservation programs	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
	.10 Continue to address common energy efficiency concerns as technology evolves	On-Going/ Long	Historic Preservation staff, Landmarks Board
Align historic preservation goals with other city plans and policies and enhance internal coordination	.11 Pursue collaborative approaches to integrate historic preservation with other city operations	On-Going/ Near	Historic Preservation staff, other city staff

(◊) Symbol indicates recommendations that would likely require additional resources.