

**HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS PARTNERSHIP (HNP) AND HISTORIC
PRESERVATION ALLIANCE (HPA)
Recommendations and Concerns
Draft Historic Resource Survey Plan
9 May 2025**

Key to Comments

A strikethrough is used to denote existing language that is to be deleted.

Bold type is used to denote HNP comments on the draft.

Parentheses are used to identify observations, not necessarily changes to the text

Types of Comments:

- Errata – generally simple grammatical or factual corrections
- Clarifications – instances where text is offered to improve understanding
- Recommendations – items felt important to improve utility to the public
- Concerns – Issues for further discussion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

**NEED A STRONG STATEMENT OF WHY SURVEYS ARE IMPORTANT TO THE
COMMUNITY**

This may be less important for a more sophisticated communities, but in Colorado Springs historic preservation remains a mystery to many. If this is to be addressed, every opportunity to educate the community should be embraced. Thus, the document should clearly state:

- WHAT is a Survey
- WHY they are important,
- WHY Plan, and
- HOW are Surveys used?

This would enhance its educational function. And make it clear why bother doing this.

The following may be of assistance in implementing this recommendation:

The underlying reason for undertaking a survey to identify a community's historic resources is the growing recognition, by citizens and governments at all levels, that such resources have value and should be retained as functional parts of modern life.

A historic survey plan benefits the average citizen by helping preserve and protect the unique character and sense of place within a community. It ensures that historic resources are documented, evaluated, and potentially protected from destructive development, ultimately contributing to a more vibrant and historically rich community.

A survey plan is the first step in identifying the resources. It focuses the community on priorities and sets the stage for eventual documentation and designation at the National, State, and/or local levels.

Here is why it matters:

- **Encourages Civic Identity and Investment**
People and businesses are more likely to invest in cities with a strong sense of place. A historic survey affirms a city's unique identity and fosters community pride and long-term commitment.
 - **Supports Economic Growth:**
Historic properties can be valuable assets, contributing to local economies through tourism, property tax revenue, and the potential for economic incentives like historic rehabilitation tax credits.
 - **Preserves Community Character:**
Historic surveys identify and document significant properties, helping to maintain the unique architectural styles, historical context, and cultural identity of a community.
 - **Informs Planning Decisions:**
Survey data informs planning decisions, including comprehensive plans, and zoning regulations, ensuring that development considers the potential impact on historic resources.
 - **Enhances Quality of Life:**
By preserving historic places, communities can create a sense of place, attract tourism, and foster a stronger connection to their past.
 - **Provides Educational Opportunities:**
Historic districts and preservation efforts can serve as educational tools, allowing residents and visitors to learn about their history and cultural heritage.
 - **Protecting Resources from Destruction:**
Surveys identify resources that may be at risk from development or neglect, allowing for proactive measures to be taken to protect them.
 - **Ensuring Future Heritage:**
Historic surveys help to ensure that the valuable cultural and architectural heritage of a community is preserved for future generations.
-
- **Enables access to Tax Credits:**
Surveys provide the narrative justification for areas and structures to obtain National, State and Local level preservation designation. In doing so, the above benefits are achieved; and, in addition, citizens have access to historic preservation tax credits reducing the cost of maintaining and living in historic structures. This makes housing more affordable and provides allowances for seniors to stay in place.

PROMOTE THE MILITARY, MINING AND TOURISM AS MAJOR THEMES.

The survey offers a host of new topics for investigation, but seems to slight dominant themes of Mining, the Military, and the Colorado Springs unique Tourism industry, originating in health. We recommend these be emphasized as well.

REFERENCE SPECIFIC NEIGHBORHOODS

On P 27, the second paragraph under Pre-World War II Residential Neighborhoods only refers to early affluent neighborhoods, with the exception of Conejos. Both Hillside and south downtown contained housing for the middle and working class. Thus, we recommend the below changes:

Close to downtown, these early neighborhoods include **Historic** Uptown, the Old North End, Shooks Run, Weber-Wahsatch **and Hillside. Neighborhoods to the south included Mill Street, as well as** the small working-class and largely Hispanic Conejos neighborhood **to the west** was also part of that historic core

ENHANCE HISTORIC MEDIANS REFERENCE.

On P59, there is a brief characterization of landscaped parkways, locally known as landscaped medians. It does not characterize the significant history and significance of these resources.

Landscaped medians are the current manifestation of the fledgling Fountain Colony's development of greenery, considered critical in attracting settlers. This was the first capital improvement of the Colorado Springs Company, where the El Paso Canal provided tree irrigation for the town's north-south avenues. Cascade, Nevada and Wahsatch were platted at 140' wide to accommodate the ditches and trees, a departure from the Union Colony's town pattern of only 100' wide streets. The landscaped medians, along with North (now Acacia) Park and South (Alamo) Park, were the community's first green spaces. Later, landscaped medians were constructed on Wood Ave., as well as the east-west Willamette Ave., and Kiowa St.; regularly, adjoining property owners were assessed fees for the improvements.)

REMOVE POLITICAL STATEMENTS.

Two statements appear to reflect personal or political opinions, not always proper in a municipal document. They appear on P 68:

“The current political climate on the national level is working to reduce the visibility, interests, and needs of minority groups in favor of a dominant racial and religious culture. That includes attempts to rewrite history and erase minority struggles, contributions, and successes.

And P 78

Numerous historic districts were established across the United States a few decades ago. However, the political climate has changed over the past twenty years and today it is exceedingly difficult in most communities to get sizable historic districts established due to strident opposition from some property owners who claim their rights will be infringed upon.

ADD CHAPTER ON SURVEY ROLL-OUT AND MARKETING

If this project is to be used, how can it be sold to the community and future volunteers There is an extensive outline on page 4 that appear to be the guidelines for the City and the Historic Preservation Board to craft a functioning Survey program. The outreach to attract participants should have a similar outline.

HNP'S ROLE IN THE PROJECT IS TO BE RECOGNIZED.

The participation of HNP is not referenced; this can occur in the Acknowledgements section and elsewhere. Minimally, HNP representatives are incorrectly listed as HPA representatives and that should be corrected. We can help with the clarification.

REFORMAT DOCUMENT

We feel the document would be improved by including the Field Windshield survey findings as a Chapter 2, instead of being an appendix, In the same vein, Ron's findings which are placed throughout the document might better be placed together, perhaps as another chapter. T

CONCERNS

Minimal apparent use of products from neighborhood photo gathering effort.

The use of neighborhood photographs forwarded as part of this project appears to be lightly treated in the document. What is their utility, both for the survey plan and in the future? In addition, we strongly encourage the neighborhoods who provided input and photos at least be highlighted, made reference to and their photos included, perhaps as an appendix. Lastly, there is an expectation by the neighborhoods that their communities/structures will be included in a priority list for future preservation work. How shall that be addressed?

MISSING SUBJECTS – REASONS FOR PRESERVATION, TAX CREDITS, RECENT WORK ON PARKSIDE

The nature of this recommendation is for educational purposes. As stated earlier, it is important to explain why do preservation and how it benefits the economy. We strongly encourage this be included in the report so City Administration can leverage the emphasis. In addition, we believe it wise to make reference to the expanded State Historic Preservation Tax Credit program, how that benefits individuals city-wide and how this Survey Plan can help put that in place. Lastly, current projects, like the Parkside HP-O should be referenced to provide a recent local example and explain preservation steps, the use of surveys and to promote the ideas in the document. By the time the Survey Plan goes to City Leaders, they will have seen the Parkside HP-O effort and reference to it will help them understand.

MISSING SURVEY PRODUCTS

What happened to the documented surveys that were done in the past? We recommend a focused effort be established to find the information and consolidate it. That will help reduce rework and duplicative spending.

WHAT IS THE LIKELIHOOD OF ESTABLISHING A FUNCTIONING SURVEY PROGRAM?

This is the crux of our concern, expressed by many reviewers. This has little bearing on the Survey draft but is critical in establishing expectations for future efforts.

- What does City Planning believe constitutes a functioning Survey program? Will the City define and establish a functioning Survey program? If not, why?
- If a functioning Survey program is assembled, what long-term municipal commitment is needed and how with City Administration ensure implementation of the Survey Plan?
- There is a need for a process framework and, in addition, a supporting information system. We recommend this involve the reacquisition of survey data where available (History Colorado, Starsmore Center, Penrose Library), and then archiving data on the City's website or other public resource to avoid future loss.
- How will we distinguish between the completed surveys that can be used for preservation action from the surveys that need to be redone? We ask this question due to a direct quote in the report: "many Resource Surveys have been completed over time, some are weaker than others and need to be redone; new ones need to be completed, while others could form the basis for moving on to intensive surveys and historic designation."
- The Denver Model presents a highly organized process enabling public involvement of neighborhood preservation. The Model does not work without a functioning Survey Program.

IN ADDITION TO A FUNCTIONING SURVEY PROGRAM, WHAT FUTURE ACTIONS ARE RECOMMENDED? KEY QUESTIONS INCLUDE:

- Details on the action steps for marketing and public rollout are missing and need to be included.
- How will this information be conveyed to the press/media?
- How will this be listed on the City's website and social media?
- Who oversees making sure these surveys take place properly with trained volunteers?
- Who will train the volunteers?
- How will the HPB take leadership and ownership of this?
- How will the City form formal effective and enthusiastic private sector partnerships to help accomplish this public/private sector undertaking?
- Who will post the results to the City's website and provide the data to the state of Colorado?

- We strongly encourage the document include an action step matrix to clearly lay out next steps, including what/who and timeline of when. This will help City leadership, and the public understand what is recommended as next steps, assuming resource availability.