

City of Salida Historic District Survey Plan
(draft survey plan)
March 2022

Thank you for soliciting public comment.

Surveys are useful when a property owner brings the HPC an application for review. But surveys have other applications as well. We use them at the museum to plan exhibits and answer questions from visitors and from those who make contact with us on the museum website. People researching their families find clues in the surveys because they name previous business owners. A new property owner can find valuable information if a survey has been done on their property. The surveys are a great source of information for researchers, historians, writers and artists who want accurate historical context. To the extent that properties are surveyed and the information is made available online, anyone can find and make use of this information. It's another reason for doing this plan and following up with grants to survey more properties and re-survey properties that have been altered.

General comments

The draft plan makes reference in a number of places to properties to be evaluated, but does not identify those properties by location. It seems that HPC would want to know specifically which properties the experts located.

With regard to maps, one of the commissioners made a suggestion that historic maps be assembled to show the evolution of the town over time. Salida museum has some printed copies of early maps and the library has a number of Sanborn fire insurance maps that cover the early years, and those can be found online at SalidaArchives.

Photos of properties are left unidentified on pages 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, etc. The plan says these images are of "Key Properties" and, if so, need identification and location captions. Again, leaving this information open-ended doesn't help HPC use the plan to focus where it will put its resources.

You might consider using a type font that makes a distinction between the uppercase letter "I" and the numeral "1." Salida has a 1st Street and an I Street.

Specific comments

p. 1

Would it be useful to explain the relationship between the HPC and Chaffee County Heritage Advisory Board? To what extent do responsibilities overlap and reinforce.

p. 4

You might add to the list of select properties outside the city limits the following:

- Cleora cemetery where some early pioneers are buried
- Former backshop shop in the railyard across the river from the Touber Building.

p. 25-36

These pages list and describe properties that are currently on the national and state registers, including one--Valley View School--which is outside city limits. It would seem logical to include the other nearby registered properties--Hutchinson Ranch, Poncha Springs schoolhouse, Maysville School and Pedro-Botz House in smelertown.

p. 41

Thank you for identifying the house at 210 Poncha Blvd. as belonging to J. A. Eddy. I did not know that.

p. 42

In connection with the Eddy Bros. addition, I would love to know how Nuño Park got its name. The other park in the addition, now called Thonoff Park, was originally named Halagueño Park on the 1887 Salida map and Halguno Park on the 1938 Salida map. Does this bear investigation?

p. 43

The pink granite such as was used in the Mormon Battalion Monument in Salt Lake City was dressed here, but I think it was likely quarried in the Texas Creek area in Fremont County, not the quarries near Salida.

p. 46

The old Salida Post Office (now Starpoint) at the corner of 2nd and E Streets is another direct benefit from the WPA. It was built in 1935 as Federal Works Project #183.



Salida Archives, Salida Regional Library, Salida Museum Negatives Collection

The 1938 WPA pool building (now Salida Hot Springs Aquatic Center) was not “replaced.” Rather it was rehabilitated with new roof and front façade after the roof suffered structural failure under the 50-inch snowfall in May 2001.

p. 46

Question the name “Homer Gatchell” in connection with Tenderfoot Mountain road, or Spiral Drive, as it is signed. The name in the local records is R. L. Hampson. The mountain across from the train station had always been an attraction for photographers and tourists and there were efforts through the years to get the money to build a road to the top. Finally, it became a labor of love for Ralph Leander “Lee” Hampson, a local grocer and chamber member. Accounts say he volunteered to start the work in 1922 and other volunteers joined in. It was completed the next year with additional help from the Salida Lions Club, inmates from the local prison and a crew with a steam shovel donated by the D&RG.

See: PASQUALE, Cynthia J. , et.al. *100 Years in the Heart of the Rockies*. Mountain Mail. 1980. P.83).

See: *One Man's Determination: Story behind building Spiral Drive Related*, The Mountain Mail, Nov. 18, 1965

See: *Granddaughter finds legacy on Spiral Drive*, The Mountain Mail, September 11, 2012

Tenderfoot Mountain also features the Haight Pavilion on top, a structure that was completed soon after the road was finished. It was donated by Isaac William "Will" Haight, a pioneer business man who wanted to give back to the city that helped him succeed. I. W. Haight also donated the lion sculptures in Alpine Park. They were erected in 1915.

You might also include Loyal Duke’s grave on the flank of Tenderfoot Mountain, but that’s another story. There are exhibits on all of this at Salida Museum.

p. 48

Salida in the 21st Century. 1st sentence. HPC was established in 2002 and design guidelines were adopted for the downtown district. I’m not sure if Sackett’s Addition had anything to do with the guidelines, unless I am misinformed.

p. 53

Not all the railroad buildings are gone and the mainline rails are still in place. Yes, much has been lost, such as the depot and steel truss bridge over the Arkansas, which makes it all the more important to preserve what is left. Salida was a division point on the D&RG with a huge yard, repair facilities, two roundhouses and facilities to transfer cargoes between narrow-gauge and standard-gauge freight cars. The following structures remain.

- The engine shop (backshop) still stands. As the commissioner said during the presentation of the plan March 24, the big engine shop dating to the 1920s is still there. It's had other uses since the railroad left. Apparently Calco is gone now. Someone said the door is open and it's being used as a homeless shelter. Now is the time to push for its preservation.
- The D&RG Hospital exists as the present day City and County Touber Building. The historic portion of this building at 448 EAST 1st St was locally landmarked by ordinance 2007-02, adopted march 22, 2007, as Denver and Rio Grande Railroad Hospital local Historic landmark. In 2005, the landmark was surveyed as Resource Number 5CF2032.
- Restoration of Caboose No. 0576 at the foot of F Street has been a continuing project of the City ever since 2014 when the caboose was moved from Centennial Park to the foot of F Street. It was locally landmarked by ordinance at the time it was moved. Since then the City has completed an historic structures assessment with grant money from the state historical fund. Actual restoration is due to begin this spring. The caboose is the only piece of original D&RG rolling stock publically owned in Salida. It is an early series, narrow gauge caboose that ran on the D&RG's narrow gauge system out of Salida. It deserves mention in this plan.
- The mainline tracks and some sidetracks remain in place--out of service, but not abandoned. In fact, the federal Surface Transportation Board is entertaining competing proposals to reactivate freight service on the Tennessee Pass Line, which runs from Dotsero through Salida to Pueblo.
- One of the commissioners mentioned the heavy wood loading docks that remain in place at the west end of the old RR yard. There was another loading facility at the downstream end of the yard. Still in place are the heavy cement foundations of the barrel transfer station at Barrel, Colorado. This was a one-of-a-kind mechanical facility into which narrow-gauge gondolas full of limestone from Monarch were pushed in and rolled over, one at a time, and emptied of their contents into standard gauge gondolas waiting on the track beneath. The barrel transfer operated for 32 years until 1956 when the Monarch spur line was converted to standard gauge.

p. 55

There is an incomplete sentence at the beginning of this page. Some wording seems lost in the transition from the preceding page.

p. 57

This map needs to be identified as to origin and needs to be reproduced at high enough resolution so that the map legend and labels are legible. The same is true for some of the other maps in the plan.

p. 59

Place a high priority for a Recon Survey of the downtown historic district. The Unique Theater, old Salida Opera House, for instance, needs to be re-surveyed since the back, theater portion was razed in 2007 and the front portion has since been converted to

condos, new storefronts and the front façade restored to its historic appearance. This property was locally landmarked in 2006.

p. 81

Please identify the 10 properties referenced as significant “recreational resources.” There are some seventeen named parks in the Salida park system and a number of named trails. Which of these are being identified as being significant and worthy of being surveyed? The presenters at the March 24 meeting gave as examples the Golf Course and Alpine Park. What were the other 8 properties?

Suggestions:

1. Centennial Park. The pool was a WPA project and there used to be a tourist train running in front of the pool pulled by a small-scale steam engine built by Amos Goddard. (The train was later moved and operated in Tiny Town, Colorado.) In 1953, the Porter tank engine that worked at the Koppers creosote plant in smelertown was donated to Salida Museum and put on display in the park. It is still there, though it got moved to the front of the museum a few years ago. The museum was started in 1954 by Harriet Alexander, Salida's first woman councilmember. Her collection was put on display in a room in the pool building. In 1972, it moved to the building now shared with the Chamber of Commerce. The park got its name in 1976 during the nation's Bicentennial and Colorado's Centennial. Its tourist and recreational attractions now include the pool, museum, Chamber visitor center, pickle ball courts and newly finished skateboard park.
2. Monarch Spur Park and Monarch Spur trail. The trail preserves a portion of the right-of-way of the D&RG's Gunnison extension, which became the first rail route west through the Rocky Mountains with connections to the west coast. The trail runs along the right-of-way from Sackett Av all the way through the City to beyond Walmart on Hwy 50.

March 31, 2022
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