



# **Historic Preservation Master Plan**

## **Erie, Colorado**

**July 2017** Revised March 2020

Cover: Looking west toward the Rocky Mountains, in the foreground Erie's Old Town lies below heavy tree cover and the high ground of Weld County. To the discerning eye, there's a dramatic north-south break in the terrain hiding Coal Creek and marking the boundary of two eco-regions: the Front Range Fans and the High Plains. Photo by Peter C. Benton, Heritage Strategies, LLC.

# Historic Preservation Master Plan for the Town of Erie, Colorado

July 2017



Prepared by

HERITAGE *strategies*

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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### Photos

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **Executive Summary ..... v**

Priorities ix

### **Chapter 1 • Overview ..... 1**

#### 1.1 Introduction 1

Population Growth on the Front Range 2

The Value of Historic Preservation in Colorado 2

#### 1.2 The Planning Process 7

#### 1.3 The Foundation of this Plan 9

### **Chapter 2 • Erie's Historic Character ..... 11**

#### 2.1 Introduction 11

#### 2.2 Erie's Setting 11

#### 2.3 Mining, Railroading, and Farming 12

Regional Economy 13

#### 2.4 Periods of Development 14

Natural and Indigenous Landscape 14

Agricultural Landscape: Settlement to Present 14

Mining Landscape: 1870–1978 16

Rural Residential Expansion: 1950–1990 17

Building a Successful Front Range Community:  
1990 to Present 17

### **Chapter 3 • Historic Preservation Context ..... 19**

#### 3.1 Introduction 19

#### 3.2 Town of Erie Historic Preservation Programs 19

The Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board 19

Town of Erie Collaboration with Federal and  
State Historic Preservation Programs 21

Historic Preservation Advisory Board Operations 23

#### 3.3 County Support for Historic Preservation 23

Boulder County 23

Weld County 24

#### 3.4 State Support for Preservation: History Colorado 25

Historic Resource Surveys 25

National and State Registers 26

State Historical Fund 26

Funding for CLG Operations and Programs 27

Preservation Tax Credits 27



(TABLE OF CONTENTS, cont'd)

Review and Compliance	28
Archaeology	29
3.5 Other Erie Agencies	29
Community Development Department	29
Comprehensive Plan	30
Unified Development Code	31
Parks and Recreation Department	32
PROST Master Plan	33
Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan	34
Coal Creek Park Conceptual Design Plan	35
Urban Renewal Authority	35
Historic Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan	35
Town Clerk's Office	36
Economic Development	36
3.6 Existing and Potential Local Partners in Preservation Activities	37
High Plains Library District	37
Erie Historical Society	38
Economic Development	38
Other Organizations	38



**Chapter 4 • Historic Preservation Approach .....43**

4.1 Introduction	43
4.2 An Approach for Historic Preservation in Erie	44
Understand Buildings and Landscapes	44
Educate Owners and Community Leaders	45
Take Steps to Enhance Erie's Resources and Identity	46
4.3 Vision and Goals	46
4.4 Principles for Historic Preservation in Erie	47



**Chapter 5 • Erie's Historic Preservation Program .....49**

5.1 Introduction	49
5.2 Roles of the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board	49
5.3 Recognize Historic Resources Important to the Town of Erie (and Undertake Related Special Projects)	53
EHPAB Roles in Survey and Documentation	53
EHPAB Roles in Designation of Historic Resources	54
5.4 Enable Private Property Owners to Maintain Historic Structures	55



## (TABLE OF CONTENTS, cont'd)

5.5 Communication with Erie's Board of Trustees, Interface with Town Planning Processes	56
5.6 Maintain Efficient, Effective Operations	56
5.7 Conduct Outreach to Other Governmental Agencies	57
<b>Chapter 6 • Town of Erie Stewardship.....</b>	<b>59</b>
6.1 Introduction	59
6.2 Landscape Conservation	60
6.3 Town Planning and Development	60
6.4 Town Stewardship of Public-Trust Historic Properties and the Public Domain	60
Lincoln School	60
Mount Pleasant Cemetery	61
Al and Mary Schofield Farm	61
Old Town Hall ("City Hall")	62
The Erie Linear (Railroad) Park	62
Coal Creek Park	63
Other Properties	63
Public Domain	63
<b>Chapter 7 • Taking Advantage of Erie's Historic Landscape .....</b>	<b>65</b>
7.1 Introduction	65
7.2 Historic Landscape Contexts	67
7.3 Surveying Landscape Resources and Sites	68
Coordinating Surveys with Existing Land Planning in Erie and the Erie Planning Area	71
7.4 Preservation of Significant Landscape Resources	72
<b>Chapter 8 • Preserving Historic Resources in Old Town Erie .....</b>	<b>75</b>
8.1 Introduction	75
8.2 Research and Recognition	77
Surveying Old Town Erie	77
Designating Historic Resources in Old Town Erie	77
8.3 Local Action to Protect Old Town Erie's Character and Historic Resources	81
Designating Local Landmarks	82
Public Recognition	80
Incentives	80
Protection in State and Federal Environmental Review	80



(TABLE OF CONTENTS, cont'd)

Strengthening the Unified Development Code in Old Town Erie	82
Existing Conditions for Protecting the Character of Old Town Erie	82
Protecting the Character of Old Town Erie through Regulation of Density and Dimensions of Development	83
Protecting the Character of Old Town Erie through Design Review	84
Potential for Local Historic District Designation	86
8.4 Supporting Downtown Growth and Change	87
8.5 Comprehensive Planning to Support Old Town Erie	89



**Chapter 9 • Public Outreach and Engagement..... 91**

9.1 Introduction	91
9.2 Public Outreach	93
9.3 Special Interpretive Projects	93
9.4 Consider How to Preserve Erie-related Archives and Collections	95



**REFERENCES ..... 98**

**APPENDIXES**

A: All Strategies, by Chapter and Topic	99
B: Request for Certified Local Government Status Form.....	107
C: Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.....	109
D: Erie's Comprehensive Plan RE: Historic Preservation	113
E: Preservation Treatments.....	117
F: Surveyed Historic Resources in Erie and Vicinity Maintained by History Colorado in the Compass Database	119
G: Colorado's Historic Preservation Tax Credit for Residential and Commercial Properties	124
H: Excerpts from the Unified Development Code as It Affects Old Town Erie	129
I: Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District Example, Boulder County, Colorado.....	131



## (TABLE OF CONTENTS, cont'd)

**TABLES**

1.1: Front Range Projected Growth (2017).....	2
Info-graphic: Historic Preservation's Economic Impacts.....	4-5
2-1: Historical Population of Erie, CO .....	16
3-1: Roles of Local Agencies, Staff, and Partners in Encouraging Historic Preservation in Erie.....	28
3-2: Town of Erie Plans .....	30
5-1: Relationships among EHPAB Roles, Plan Goals, and Erie's Ordinance Language.....	50

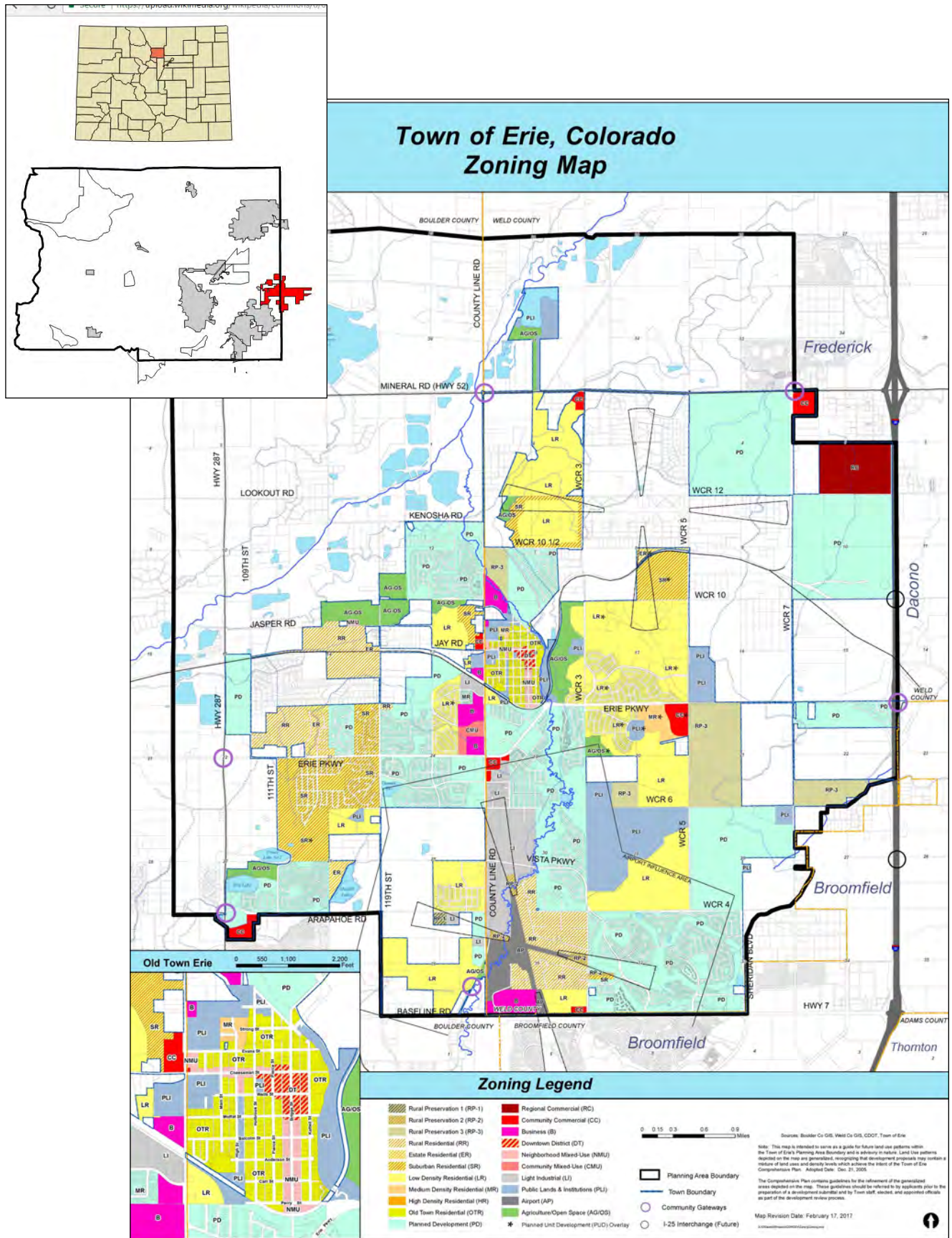
**MAPS***In the Executive Summary:*

Town of Erie, Colorado, Zoning Map .....	vii
Identified and Potential Historic Resources in Old Town Erie (Survey Is Needed for Complete Identification).....	xv
Historic Resources in the Erie Planning Area (Survey Is Needed for Complete Identification).....	xvi

*In the Master Plan:*

7-1: Erie's Planning Area and Neighboring Community Context .....	66
7-2: Town of Erie 2017 Recreation Trail Map .....	69
7-3: Historic Resources in the Erie Planning Area (Survey Needed).....	70
7-4: Former Mine Locations in the Erie Region .....	72
8-1: Town of Erie Zoning Map for Old Town Erie .....	78
8-2: Identified and Potential Historic Resources in Old Town Erie (Survey Needed).....	79





Source: Town of Erie website, <http://www.erieco.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/334>; location map courtesy Wikipedia/Creative Commons, by Arkyan, found at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erie,\\_Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erie,_Colorado). An enlargement of the Old Town Erie inset can be found on p. 78 (Map 8-1).

# Executive Summary

## Erie's Historic Preservation Master Plan



### INTRODUCTION

For nearly 150 years, a variety of people have come together in Erie, Colorado, to build a successful community. Today, their stories connect residents and visitors to layers of the past and offer insights for Erie's future. As a carefully planned community, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Erie can become a model for successfully blending the new with the old.

The Town of Erie and its planning area include a substantially preserved historic coal town plus patterns in the surrounding landscape where it is possible to recall stories of Colorado's earliest development in mining, farming, and railroading.

Erie is significant as the geographic center of Colorado's Northern Coal Field (now Boulder-Weld Coal Field). Railroads were a key element of the landscape tying Erie economically to a region of the Front Range between Greeley, Boulder, and Denver. From its founding in 1874 through World War II (although mining did not completely end until the late 1970s), Erie's primary economic base was coal mining. The coal went to Denver, to miners high in the Rockies, and to the Union Pacific Railroad. Full-time farming was a part of the local economy as well. Farming also provided secondary employment and subsistence to the miners, as Weld and Boulder Counties joined the nation's richest agricultural counties.

Today, Erie retains much of its historic character, particularly in its downtown core and surrounding residential neighborhoods. There are many appealing stories collected about Erie's heritage, and the survival of many early buildings and the town's layered historical environment are noteworthy. Just walk or drive Erie's streets – see the rhythm of the buildings, the layout of the town, the variety of homes built by miners and small-business owners themselves, and catch glimpses of remaining railroad rights of way in town and beyond, where the mining actually took place. Erie is a place with a powerful identity.

### Vision

Following is a vision statement for the Town of Erie that has guided the development of this plan:

In the coming years, the Town of Erie will become **widely recognized** for its historic role in coal mining and Colorado's development, the quality of its resources that express that history, and its programs to achieve experience of local history and enthusiastic historic preservation. Historic character will help to **distinguish Erie's identity** among the Front Range's many growing communities and **add to residents' quality of life**. The preservation of historic buildings and landscapes will **contribute measurably to the Town's programs** for economic development, recreation and open space, and community events and education.



## Goals

Goals that will enable the Town of Erie to achieve the vision include the following:

- Goal 1 – Community Identity and Quality of Life:** Make Erie’s historic buildings and landscapes a recognized part of the community’s identity. Ensure that Erie’s historic character is a valued community asset that contributes visibly to the town’s economy, community programs, and quality of life.
- Goal 2 – Research:** Deepen understanding and appreciation of Erie’s heritage and its related historic resources through an ongoing program of research and investigation.
- Goal 3 – Private Preservation:** Identify and preserve historic resources and enable property owners to enhance their properties in ways that respect historic character and layers of change reflecting the town’s evolution.
- Goal 4 – Public Domain:** Continue to support Town of Erie ownership of historic properties and ensure high-quality long-term stewardship and interpretation.
- Goal 5 – Downtown Erie:** Continue to strengthen Erie’s historic commercial and community center.
- Goal 6 – Old Town Erie’s Neighborhoods:** Make historic preservation a key strategy for supporting the livability and vitality of Old Town neighborhoods.
- Goal 7 – Community Engagement:** Engage residents and visitors in many ways with respect to Erie’s story through the experience of its buildings and landscapes.

The immediate surrounding landscape, though much changed through modern development, still provides context. Combined with the majestic view of the Rocky Mountains to the west, Erie’s landscape offers many visual cues that this is a town grounded in a unique region. Moreover, Erie’s most recent period of growth may also be significant for the high-quality planning that has guided that growth.

This Historic Preservation Master Plan lays out ideas and strategies for the Town of Erie and partners, guided by Erie’s Historic Preservation Advisory Board (EHPAB) and led by the Board of Trustees, to enhance Erie’s character and its niche within the Front Range as a desirable and traditional small town, through historic preservation. It is written for community leaders, stakeholders, residents, property owners, and potential property owners and developers.

This plan is intended as a guide for a long-term program for creative, community-driven historic preservation and community enhancement for the Town of Erie. It applies to the entire Town of Erie and its agencies,

x

and to both the area of Erie referred to as “Old Town” and newer areas beyond.

Colorado has been so successful in historic preservation that it has reached a point that property owners and visitors simply expect that the best of Colorado’s historic resources will be preserved. Preservation’s value to Coloradans is undisputed. It has stimulated heritage tourism in Colorado’s important tourism industry, and preservation is as valuable as such industries as new construction and oil and gas development, in terms of both economic impacts and job generation. The state’s heavy investment in preservation has been repaid handsomely. Erie has an excellent opportunity to benefit from the favorable conditions for preservation in Colorado.

## Organization and Summary of the Historic Preservation Master Plan

The following paragraphs summarize the concepts presented in each chapter of the Historic Preservation Master Plan.

### Chapter 1 – Overview

Chapter 1 provides background and reviews the planning process. Erie’s recent history of growth and development, its economic base for future prosperity, and the role that historic character plays in quality of life for Erie’s residents are fundamental to this plan.

### Chapter 2 – Erie’s Historic Character

Chapter 2 reviews Erie’s history, historic resources, and historic character and patterns.

### Chapter 3 – Historic Preservation Context

Chapter 3 provides a detailed discussion of existing conditions for historic preservation in the Town of Erie, describing key programs and agencies. It lays important groundwork for understanding “strategy chapters” that follow (Chapters 5 through 9). The chapter covers the roles of Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board (the town’s lead agency for historic preservation), History Colorado, other key Erie town agencies, and potential organizational partners.

### Chapter 4 – Historic Preservation Approach

Chapter 4 explains the three-fold approach of the Historic Preservation Master Plan:

- Understand buildings and landscapes;
- Educate owners and community leaders; and
- Take steps to enhance Erie’s resources and identity.



**Top Priority Activities (EHPAB in the lead)**

5.3.1/8.2.1 Undertake surveys of existing properties within Old Town Erie to identify those that are potentially eligible as local landmarks and/or for listing in the National and Colorado Registers, either individually or as part of potential historic districts. (NR and CO designations afford public recognition and tax benefits but no local regulation.) (EHPAB)

5.3.3/7.3.1 Undertake surveys of historic resources related to agriculture, coal mining, and railroading in areas outside Old Town, within Erie's municipal boundary and planning area. (EHPAB/ Parks and Recreation Department)

5.3.4/8.2.3 Continue to encourage property owners to pursue voluntary recognition of individual structures as local landmarks and/or through the Colorado and National Registers. (EHPAB/ property owners)

5.4.3/9.2.2 Offer workshops to property owners and property owners' advisors (real estate agents, contractors, accountants, etc.) to educate them about methods for maintaining Old Town Erie properties and on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. (EHPAB/ History Colorado/ Colorado Preservation, Inc.)

5.4.4 Maintain a well-designed, well-communicated procedure for review of proposed demolitions, moves, and alterations to locally recognized historic resources. (EHPAB with Board of Trustees)

5.6.1 Adopt an annual work program based on this historic preservation master plan. (EHPAB with Board of Trustees)

5.6.3 Upgrade technical support for EHPAB activities, especially web interface and GIS capability. (EHPAB with Town Administrator, Town Clerk, Board of Trustees)

7.2.1 Prepare a detailed historic context for coal mining for the landscape within the Erie planning area. (EHPAB)

7.2.2 Prepare a detailed historic context for railroading in Erie and its planning area. (EHPAB)

8.2.3/9.2.5 Publicize findings from the survey(s). (EHPAB)

**Top Priority Activities (EHPAB involved but not in the lead)**

5.4.2/8.2.6 Recommend local incentives for owners of designated local Historic Landmarks, such as property tax breaks, reduced building fees for approved rehab projects, or grants, as appropriate. (Board of Trustees/ EHPAB, Community Development Department)

6.4.4 Pursue National Register listing for Mount Pleasant Cemetery. (Town Clerk/EHPAB, History Colorado)

7.4.3 Produce a "User's Guide for Historic Preservation in the Town of Erie Planning Area under the Unified Development Code" that shows how the protection and incorporation of historic resources into the land development process is expected to work. (Community Development Department/ EHPAB)

7.4.7 Undertake an interpretive plan to help plan for and enhance Erie's open space and trail system. (Parks and Recreation Department/ EHPAB)

8.3.1 Produce a "User's Guide for Historic Preservation in Old Town Erie under the Unified Development Code" that shows how the protection and incorporation of historic resources into procedures for development and redevelopment in the three Old Town zones is expected to work. (Community Development Department/ EHPAB)

8.4.1 Articulate a strategy and principles for guiding more intense growth in the Downtown (DT) and Neighborhood Mixed Use-Old Town (NMU-Old Town) areas, and adjacent blocks of the Old Town Residential (OTR) district while retaining important qualities and features contributing to the character of Old Town Erie's core. (Board of Trustees and Planning Commission/EHPAB, Community Development Department)

**Top Priority Activities (EHPAB not involved)**

8.3.2 In Old Town Erie's OTR zone, encourage UDC rules that will encourage redevelopment or the development of vacant parcels to reflect the current distinctive pattern of historical development as described in Section 8.3. (Board of Trustees and Planning Commission/ Community Development Department)

8.3.4 Enlist neighborhoods in the process of re-examining rules for development in the OTR district under Strategies 8.3.2 and 8.3.3, with the possibility of adopting neighborhood conservation overlay districts where sufficient interest exists. (Board of Trustees and Planning Commission/ Community Development Department)



*The commercial district in Old Town Erie is still centered on this single block, anchored by the handsome two-story IOOF Hall. According to the survey conducted by Front Range Research Associates in 2009-10, “the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) added a pivotal commercial building to the town in 1889 when it erected the two-story brick building at the northwest corner of Briggs and Moffat streets (500 Briggs Street, History Colorado Compass Inventory #5WL.6188). The second story held the group’s lodge hall, while the first story housed the Lockwood Trading Company. Over the years the first story housed various general stores, mercantiles, and grocery stores.”*

Chapter 4 also presents the vision statement and goals stated above, and concludes with a series of principles:

- Emphasize community character, and find the stories that bring buildings in their entirety to life;
- Plan for the landscape as a whole;
- Encourage private sector investment;
- Emphasize public outreach and encourage participation by property owners in both story-telling and advancing best practices for preservation stewardship;
- Celebrate Erie’s history in as many ways as possible;
- Always seek to connect Erie’s history to historic resources;
- Energize grassroots action;
- Use as many tools as possible, and integrate historic preservation into all town programs; and
- Follow best practices for historic preservation.

## Chapter 5 – Erie’s Historic Preservation Program

Chapter 5 focuses on strengthening Erie’s historic preservation program through the role of the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board and on traditional programs, tools, and methodologies. Its strategies are grouped in five broad topics:

- Recognize historic resources important to the Town of Erie (and undertake related special projects, such as a recent review by EHPAB volunteers of Old Town properties that has revealed that approximately 200 properties are worthy of further evaluation – see map on p. xv);
- Enable private property owners to maintain historic structures;
- Maintain effective communication with Erie’s Board of Trustees and interface with town planning processes;
- Maintain efficient, effective operations; and
- Conduct outreach to other governmental agencies.





*Lincoln School (completed in 1906) was conceived and built just 30 years after Erie's founding. Today, it is the Town Hall and the only property in Erie listed in the National Register of Historic Places (History Colorado Compass inventory #5WL.216).*

## Chapter 6 – Town of Erie Stewardship

As a property owner of multiple significant historic properties, and steward of the public domain, the Town of Erie has a great deal of influence over the course of historic preservation across the community, operating both in the public trust and as a model.

## Chapter 7 – Taking Advantage of Erie's Historic Landscape

The town's policies and actions are critical to the preservation of Old Town Erie and landscape resources found beyond Old Town, subjects of Chapters 7 and 8. Chapter 7 offers a vision of using historic landscape resources to enrich Erie's open space and trail system. Steps include research and putting procedures in place to encourage more preservation of landscape resources.

## Chapter 8 – Preserving Historic Resources in Old Town Erie

The historic part of Erie, known as "Old Town Erie" or simply "Old Town," has been the primary focus of Erie's historic preservation initiatives to date. Preserving Old Town Erie's community character is a stated goal of both the Erie Comprehensive Plan and

the Unified Development Code. Chapter 8 observes that the changes and projects that Erie wishes to make in order to support further growth in Old Town, especially in the downtown, should be paired with a renewed look at ways to retain as many of the features as possible that make Old Town distinctive. It reviews historic resources that have already been surveyed and other programs already undertaken to encourage preservation, picking up from preceding explanations of historic preservation efforts in Erie in Chapter 5.

Erie has begun or is able to take additional steps to encourage the preservation and appropriate treatment of historic resources and historic community character in Old Town through various means. Critical background to Chapter 8 is found in Chapter 3, explaining the programs, plans, and policies involved. Other chapters cover research, recognition, and incentives that reinforce strategies in this chapter. Chapter 8 itself focuses on strategies relating to:

- Aligning the Unified Development Code's statements of desired results with form and design of development in Old Town permitted under the UDC as it affects historic preservation; and
- Reinforcing existing planning for Old Town Erie, especially for the downtown – the Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan and the Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan.



*The Al and Mary Schofield Farm was landmarked by the Board of Trustees in February 2017, thus qualifying the publicly-owned property for State Historical Fund grants. The Parks and Recreation Department, which manages it, is undertaking a development concept plan for the property.*



*Among the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board's highest priorities is to study properties in Old Town to identify those potentially eligible as local landmarks and/or for listing in the National and Colorado Registers, either individually or as part of potential historic districts. (Colorado and National Register designations afford public recognition and tax benefits but no local regulation.) There are many homes such as this miner's cottage that have not yet been studied.*

## Chapter 9 – Public Outreach and Engagement

Public outreach may appear in the last chapter, but it should be seen as an effort completely parallel to the work inspired by this preservation master plan.

A strategy for public outreach and engagement, as laid out in Chapter 9, is an essential part of historic preservation in Erie. Public outreach and engagement require communications and marketing, cultivation of the constituency for preservation in Erie, and conveyance of technical knowledge (e.g., what are preservation tax credits? how does an owner get a property landmarked by Erie, or listed in the National Register or Colorado Register?). They also involve connecting Erie's history to the places in Erie where it is possible to experience stories, to bring history alive and help residents and visitors see Erie anew.

Erie's Historic Preservation Advisory Board, Board of Trustees, and town staff will need help to accomplish the aims of this plan. This point is especially true when it comes to engaging the public in the various ways described here. The EHPAB has certain responsibilities – telling the public about progress on this plan and various tasks within it, such as the top-priority survey of Old Town Erie, for example; or offering technical assistance and training. Luckily, there are other organizations, as described in Chapter 3, who can help carry the load for other tasks discussed in Chapter 9.

### Priorities

Chapters 5 through 9 are "strategy chapters," listing series of strategies associated with each general topic

of discussion. Text that accompanies the numbered strategies may sometimes be important for clarification or amplification; the strategies themselves are purposefully short. No strategy in this plan is mandatory. Some may be implemented, and some may not. Some may be changed, adapted, or refined. Most build upon existing plans and programs and are not intended to require extraordinary expenditures of resources. Strategies selected for implementation may be phased in as time and financial resources become available.

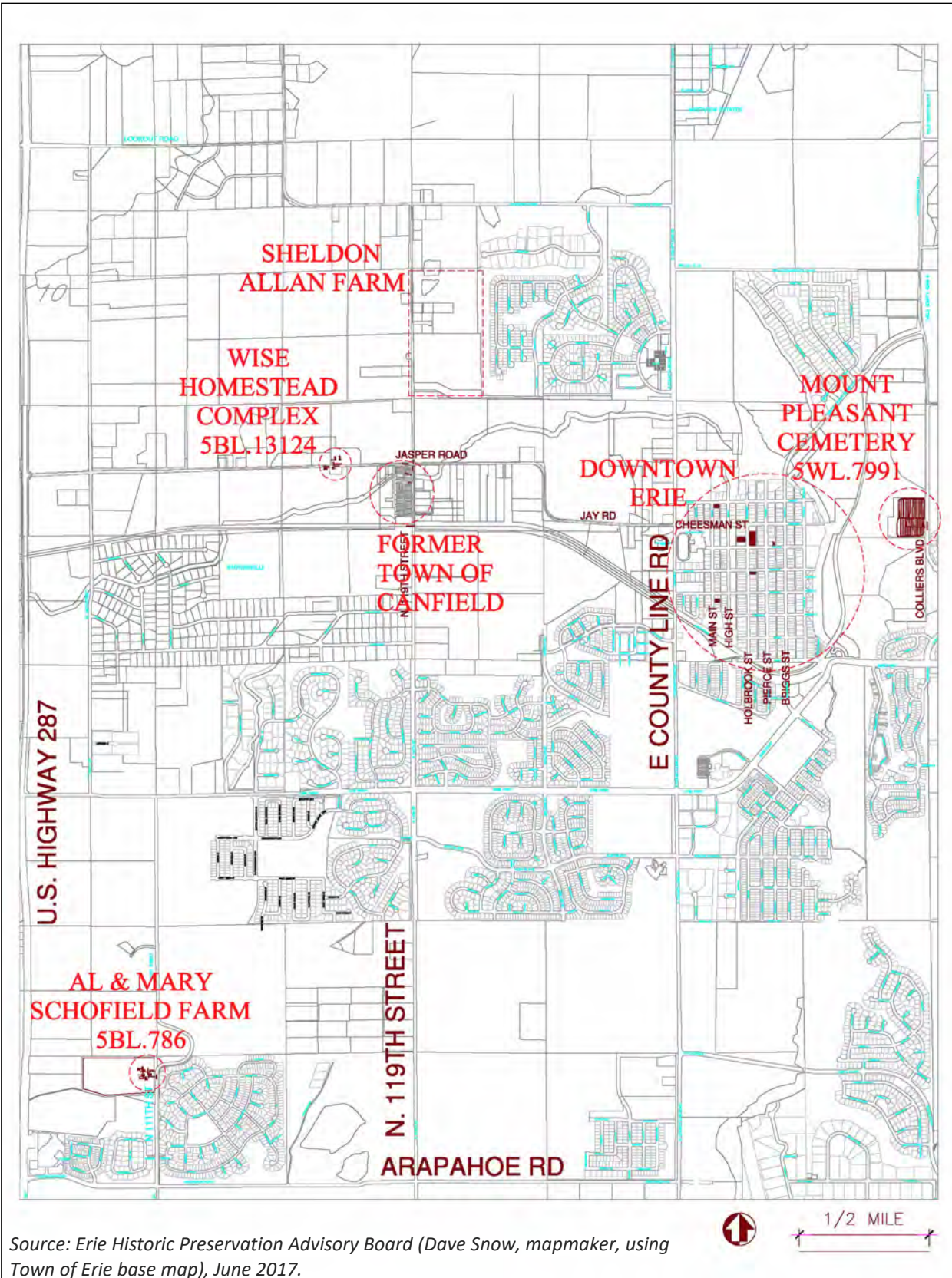
A principal benefit of this plan has been to build upon Erie's current foundation of planning and preservation through community dialogue and learning about the possibilities of historic preservation's contribution to Erie's community-building mission. This plan is a record of what is possible, and where future dialogue and action are needed if Erie's character and wealth of historic resources are to be preserved and enhanced. While community action is expected and encouraged in this plan, this plan's approach also expects (and respects) the participation of property owners, whose knowledge, investment, and individual action will be fundamental to the long-term survival of Erie's historic structures. Highest-priority strategies are summarized in sidebars found on page 3. All strategies are provided in Appendix A (after Chapter 9), which provides notes concerning leaders and partners (and cross-references to the strategies' original locations in the text, where discussion may provide useful context).







**Historic Resources in the Erie Planning Area (Survey Is Needed for Complete Identification)**



# Chapter 1: Overview



in earnest in the 1990s, and today the population is approximately 25,000 – twenty times the population of 1990.

## 1.1 Introduction

The Town of Erie has an excellent opportunity to become a model in Colorado for how to grow a modern, mid-sized town on the Front Range by 2050 while embracing its past. Once, Erie was a tiny mining town situated within a cultural landscape threaded by farms, streams, irrigation features, the evidence of vanished mine locations, and some of Colorado's earliest railroad corridors. Though founded in 1874 and at the center of the Northern Coal Field that fueled Colorado's early growth, the town did not reach a population of more than 1,000 until 1940. That landscape has changed with growth that began

Because that growth was accompanied by far-sighted planning that encouraged clustering of new residences and the preservation of natural resources, today it is still possible to “read” that earlier layer of the historic landscape. More than forty miles of trails provide recreational access to this landscape, supported by long-term funding voted (twice) by town residents.


The Old Town itself has remained largely unaffected by the demands of this growth, conservatively managed by property owners who have made modest changes over the years to meet their needs, adding to layers of history since the town's founding nearly 150 years ago. One of the greatest changes in recent years was the paving of Old Town's streets, in 2000. Recent public and private investment in Old Town's tiny downtown (now roughly three blocks long) has encouraged the perception of this area as



*(Above) St. Scholastica Catholic Church and hall at 575 Wells Street. The church was named for the sister of St. Benedict, founder of the Benedictine Order, and was dedicated in 1899. At left is a photograph of the dedication party (records of the Town of Erie, courtesy Town Clerk's Office).*



**Table 1-1 Front Range Projected Growth (2017)**

<p><b>The Front Range is the smallest, but one of the fastest-growing megaregions in the country:</b></p> <p><b>Principal Cities:</b> Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Colorado Springs, Denver</p> <p><b>Population 2010:</b> 5,467,633</p> <p><b>Percent U.S. Population:</b> 2%</p> <p><b>Population 2025:</b> 6,924,457</p> <p><b>Population 2050:</b> 10,222,370</p> <p><b>Projected Growth (2010 - 2050):</b> 87.0% (4,754,737)</p> <p><b>2005 GDP:</b> \$229,202,000,000</p> <p><b>Percent of U.S. GDP:</b> 2%</p>	
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SOURCE: America 2050 website: [http://www.america2050.org/front\\_range.html](http://www.america2050.org/front_range.html)

historic. Increasingly the town's entire population is drawn there for events, dining and entertainment, and recreation. New residents are buying Old Town's generally small homes and treasuring them along with long-time owners, enjoying them as unique alternatives to the more expensive, modern homes that make up the bulk of Erie's offerings to people on the move to the Front Range.

Erie's "business" today is accommodating that growth while working to maintain and increase the already-high quality of life that has proven so attractive to its many new residents. The unique qualities of Old Town – both the residential neighborhoods and the commercial area (plus Old Town's Coal Creek Park, centerpiece of the town's system of parks and trails) – are, and can be further reinforced as, a primary selling point to distinguish Erie as a location for both homeowners and developers.

### **Population Growth on the Front Range**

Projected growth for the entire Front Range (including Albuquerque and Santa Fe as well as Denver and Colorado Springs) from 2010 to 2050 is a remarkable 87 percent (Table 1-1). Colorado's population is expected to nearly double by 2050. In 2008, approximately 5 million people resided in the state. By 2050, Colorado's population is projected to be between 8.7 and 10.3 million people. The majority will be in the Front Range.

The annual *Colorado Business Economic Outlook* for 2017, produced by the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado Boulder, provides additional detail about projected population growth for the immediate region (emphasis added):

The largest population growth by county continues to be along the Front Range. Between 2015 and 2020 the state is forecast to increase by almost 500,000. Eighty-six percent of this growth, or 420,000, is forecast for the Front Range, and of that, 270,000 is forecast for the Denver Metro area. **The fastest growth is forecast for the north Front Range, at an annual average 2.6%, or 85,000.** The 2040 forecast for the state remains at 7.8 million, with 6.5 million along the Front Range, or 83% of the total population.<sup>1</sup>

Because of this population growth, as Erie seeks long-term sustainability and stable funding, it will be able to do so from a position of strength: it is a desirable location now, and will be so long into the future. This enables the town to require those who wish to engage in development here – homeowners and commercial developers alike – to meet high standards without fear of turning away investors.

### **The Value of Historic Preservation in Colorado**

Further reinforcing Erie's efforts in historic preservation is a remarkable state-level system for



saving Colorado's cultural and historic resources. Colorado has been so successful that it has reached a point that Colorado's statewide ethic of historic preservation leads many property owners and visitors simply to expect that the best of Colorado's historic resources will be preserved.

Earlier this year, the statewide nonprofit advocacy organization for historic preservation, Colorado Preservation, Inc., published its study of the benefits of historic preservation, *Preservation for a Changing Colorado*.<sup>2</sup> The fourth such report to be published over the past fifteen years with support from History Colorado's State Historical Fund, it is the nation's longest-running documentation of the benefits conferred by historic preservation activities on a state and its communities. For Erie's historic preservation master plan, it is well worth extracting some of the most salient points from the 68-page document, which is filled with success stories.

The report states that

Great preservation work is happening every day all across Colorado, in communities from small to large, from east to west, and from old to new. Federal, state, and local preservation programs provide a range of benefits to residents of the state, including increased spending in local economies due to rehabilitation grants and tax credits, assisting in the revitalization of communities' downtowns through initiatives such as the Main Street program, and supporting the state's growing heritage tourism industry, promoting our state's historic resources to visitors and residents alike. Historic preservation also plays an important role in helping local communities adapt to a number of trends that look set to bring significant changes to Colorado...:

**Changing Demographics:** Our state's population is becoming more diverse, and preservation is helping to meet the needs of Colorado's growing senior and millennial populations, multigenerational households, immigrant populations, and renter households.

**Changing Economy:** Larger economic trends also are changing the ways in which Coloradans work, and preservation is providing new spaces for creative communities and co-working.

**Effective Placemaking:** Preservation is playing a key role in helping communities of all sizes to create and sustain meaningful places.

**Changing Climate:** Officials are rethinking concepts like resiliency, and how historic

resources can be protected in planning for hazards (intro, pdf-pp. 6-7).

The report further anticipates the approach taken in this historic preservation master plan for the Town of Erie:

While the traditional focus on restoring and adapting old buildings is always fundamental to a preservationist's work, today's projects increasingly involve cultural landscapes beyond the buildings themselves, as well as older resources that may not be formally designated as historic. Effective preservation means coordinating within a wide range of rapidly changing fields, such as land use planning, affordable housing, science, and technology. Like these fields, preservation continues to adapt and move forward (p. 5).

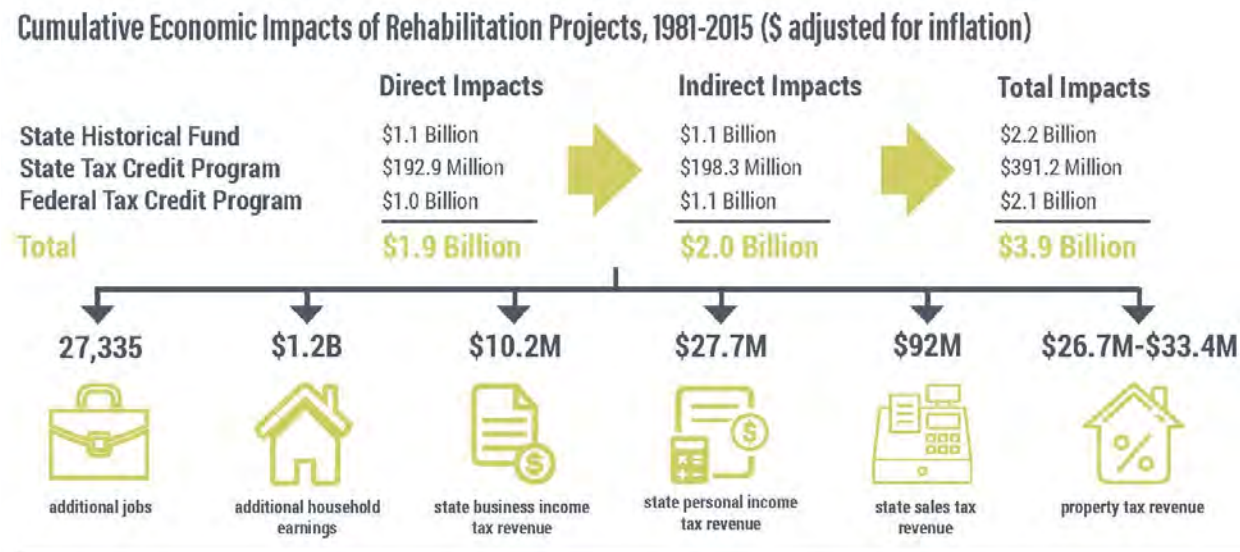
Finally, and most important, calling preservation a "crucial economic development tool," the report categorizes and summarizes historic preservation's economic benefits (more in-depth discussion is found in the report, and this chapter reproduces the report's two-page infographic presentation):

The 50th anniversary of the [National] Historic Preservation Act provides an opportunity for Coloradans to step back and appreciate the substantial, wide-ranging contributions that historic preservation has made in our state. Of particular interest are the economic benefits generated through the federal, state, and local programs that support historic preservation. Broadly, these programs fall into three categories:

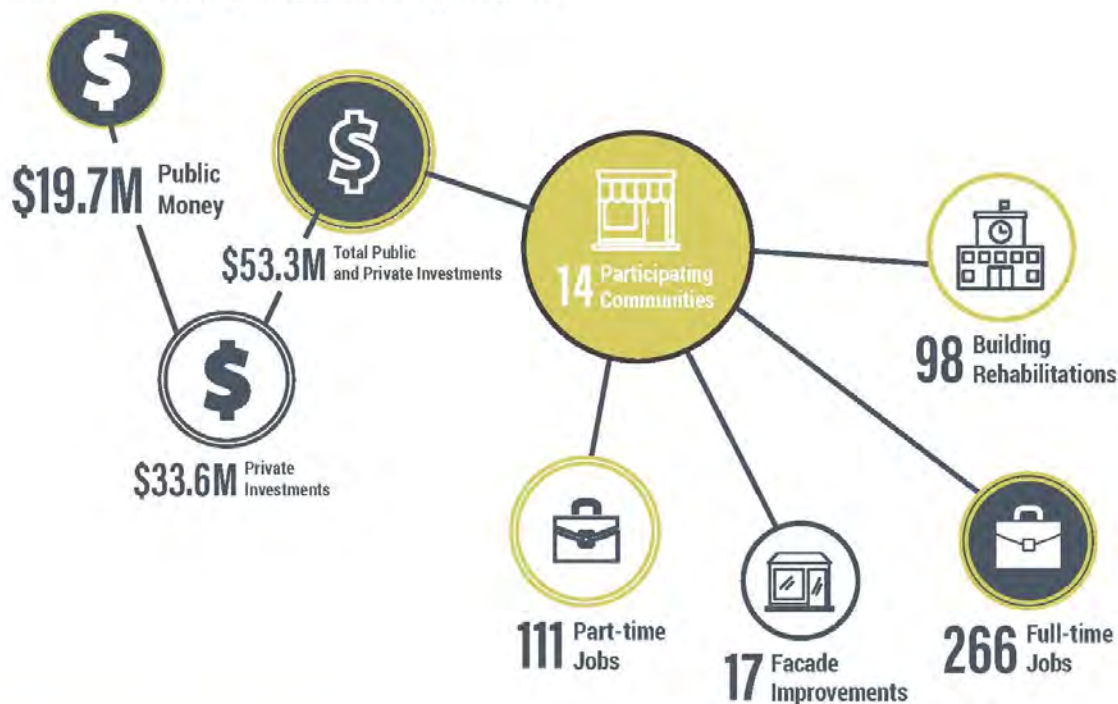
- **Preserving Place:** Programs that support improvements made to individual historic places;
- **Preserving Our Communities:** Programs that support the revitalization and preservation of historic neighborhoods and commercial areas; and
- **Celebrating Colorado:** Programs that focus on highlighting the unique and historic aspects of our state, complementing Colorado's wider tourism promotion objectives (p. 10).

The economic contributions of the programs in these three areas are significant and form a powerful argument for why historic preservation is a worthy endeavor for Coloradans and their local governments. For example:

**Table 1-2 Historic Preservation's Economic Impacts**



**Colorado Main Street Program Economic Impacts, 2014**



### The Benefits of Historic Preservation

Great preservation work is happening every day all across Colorado, in communities from small to large, from east to west, and from old to new. Federal, state, and local preservation programs provide a range of benefits to residents of the state, including increased spending in local economies due to rehabilitation grants and tax credits, assisting in the revitalization of communities' downtowns through initiatives

such as the Main Street program, and supporting the state's growing heritage tourism industry, promoting our state's historic resources to visitors and residents alike. Historic preservation also plays an important role in helping local communities adapt to a number of trends that look set to bring significant changes to Colorado, such as an aging population, increasing millennial workforce, changing

Credit, this page and facing page: *Preservation for a Changing Colorado: The Benefits of Historic Preservation*, 2017 Edition, pp. 6-7. The full report is available at <https://www.preservationbenefitscolorado.com/>. Supported by



**Every \$1 million spent on historic preservation in Colorado leads to \$1.03 million in additional spending, 14 new jobs, and \$636,700 in increased household incomes across the state.**

### Planning for a Changing Colorado



#### Changing Demographics

Our state's population is becoming more diverse, and preservation is helping to meet the needs of Colorado's growing senior and millennial populations, multigenerational households, immigrant populations, and renter households.



#### Changing Economy

Larger economic trends also are changing the ways in which Coloradans work, and preservation is providing new spaces for creative communities and co-working.



#### Effective Placemaking

Preservation is playing a key role in helping communities of all sizes to create and sustain meaningful places.



#### Changing Climate

Officials are rethinking concepts like resiliency, and how historic resources can be protected in planning for hazards.

### Heritage Tourist Spending in Colorado, 2015



### Overnight Tourists, 2015



### Growth in Heritage Tourism, 2014-2015



### Scenic and Historic Byways Economic Impact, 2009-2014 (\$ not adjusted for inflation)

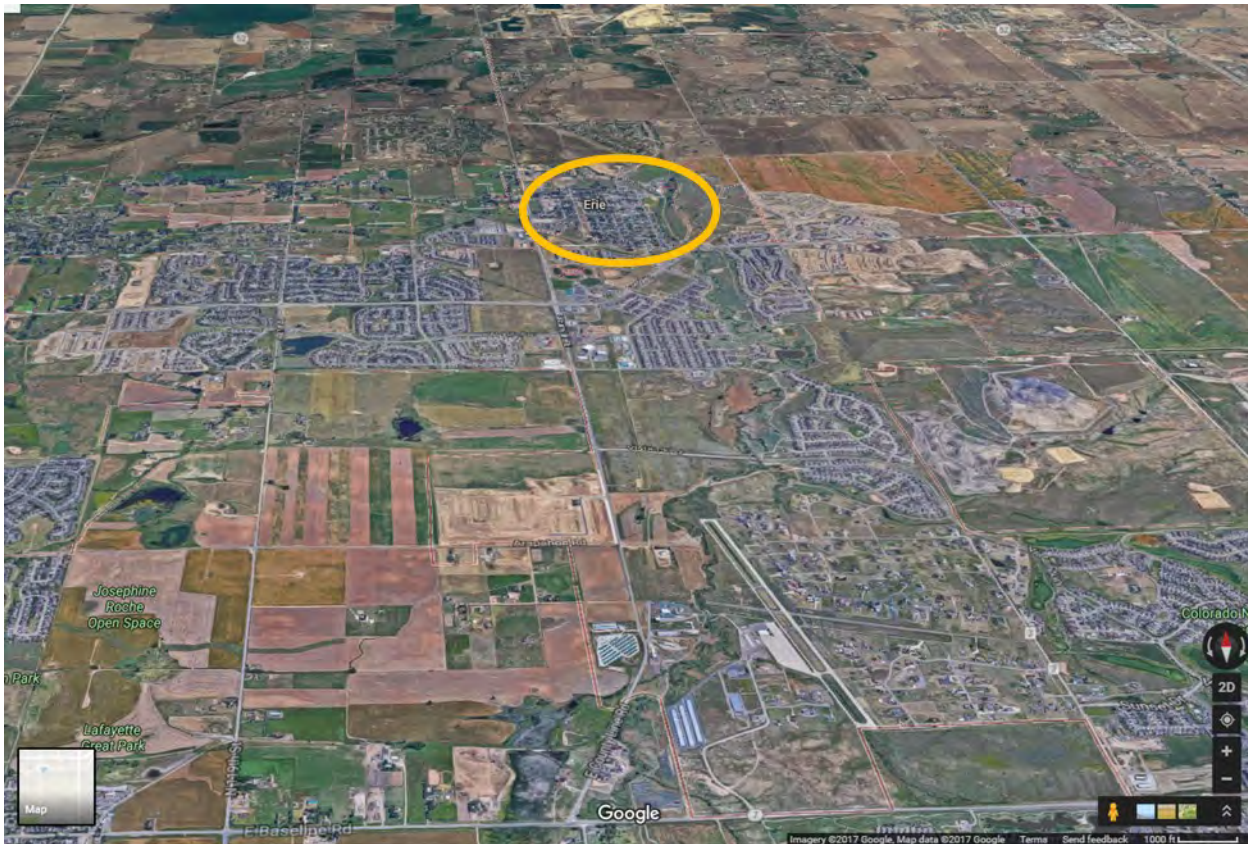


workspaces and local economies, and a changing climate. In all, historic preservation has had tremendous impacts on the state since the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act 50 years ago, and is poised to continue to play an important role in Colorado over the next 50 years.

[preservationbenefitscolorado.com](http://preservationbenefitscolorado.com)



a grant from the State Historical Fund and used with permission from Colorado Preservation, Inc., and History Colorado.



- Approximately 14 new jobs are generated for every \$1 million spent on the preservation of historic buildings.
- Since 1981, historic preservation projects in Colorado have created over 27,000 jobs and generated a total of nearly \$3.9 billion in direct and indirect economic impacts and adding \$2.2 billion to Colorado's GDP.
- Designation of local historic districts stabilizes and strengthens neighborhoods and commercial areas, typically enhancing property values as a result.
- Preservation programs foster learning, creativity, community pride, and identity, making historic cities and towns desirable places to live and work.
- Historic preservation is increasingly a key driver behind the state's powerful tourism industry, promoting unique historic destinations in every corner of our state (p. 10).

Investigation for this report revealed powerful economic parity for historic preservation compared to two other well-known Colorado industries, new construction and the oil and gas industry:

Every \$1 million spent on historic preservation or rehabilitation projects in Colorado in 2015 leads to \$1.03 million in indirect expenditures, 14 new jobs, and \$636,700 in increased household incomes. These impacts compare favorably to new construction, which leads to slightly more indirect spending and jobs. Specifically, spending \$1 million on new residential and non-residential construction in Colorado leads to \$1.15 million and \$1.16 million in indirect expenditures, respectively. This additional spending in these industries also leads to 14 and 18 additional jobs, respectively, similar to the impacts associated with spending on historic preservation. The same is true when comparing preservation to specific industries in the state. For instance, \$1 million in direct spending attributable to oil and gas drilling in 2015 led to just \$856 thousand in indirect spending, and creates only 9 new jobs (p. 18).

*(Above) Town of Erie, Google Maps 3-D View: the gold oval identifies the location of Old Town. Much of the development seen here is related to the Town of Erie. Note the clustered pattern of the more modern development that preserves natural resources. Visit <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Erie,+CO> to see Erie's municipal boundaries.*





## 1.2 The Planning Process

Preparation of this Historic Preservation Master Plan was undertaken with Certified Local Government grant funding provided by the National Park Service and the State Historical Fund. Erie has been a beneficiary of two earlier SHF grants to undertake historic preservation surveys. Additional funding and staff support was provided by the Town of Erie. The project was organized and managed by the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board, assisted by the Town Clerk.

This plan was produced under the typical three-part planning process: (1) research existing conditions and

needs, (2) analyze those conditions and needs and reflect on possibilities for action, and (3) generate a final plan that reflects analysis, decisions, and priorities.

In the first phase, in November of 2016, Heritage Strategies, LLC, principal Elizabeth Watson met with members of the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board, toured the area, and was introduced to representatives of the High Plains Regional Library and the Erie Chamber of Commerce. Tours included a visit to the Schofield Farm, the Wise Homestead Complex, and the 1960s ranch home of Jerry and Cherry Landen, which has one of the earliest irrigation ditches in the region. Ms. Watson also met with representatives of the State Historical Fund, which provided a grant in support of this plan, and made an introductory presentation to the Board of Trustees.

Also during this phase, Heritage Strategies studied a great deal of background information about Erie's planning programs and the history and resources of the area. Furthermore, Heritage Strategies interviewed members of the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board and the board's appointed Trustee-liaison, to review needs, issues, and resources. The interviews included these three questions: Why is a historic preservation plan important for Erie? What should it accomplish? Having finished a major survey, what are the next

*(Above) Closeup of Old Town Erie, Google Maps 3-D View: the gridded streets and mature trees of the 1874 town contrast with the patterns of more recent development nearby. Erie's mid-century modern elementary school is at upper left, west of County Line Road angling south to north. Opposite, at upper far right, is Mount Pleasant Cemetery, eligible for listing in the National Register. The historic railroad corridor loops around the south and east, one day to return to operation as part of Denver's Regional Transportation District (RTD). Town planning and natural and human patterns in the landscape have contrived to create what is, in effect, almost a greenbelt surrounding Old Town. Visit <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Erie,+CO> to explore further.*

*Briggs Street, looking south,  
taken after World War I.  
(Records of the Town of Erie,  
courtesy Town Clerk's Office.)*



priorities the EHPAB should be turning its attention to?

In the second phase, Heritage Strategies produced a detailed outline for this plan, including a draft vision and goals to guide the overall approach, and continued to explore possibilities, including touring Erie once again. A visit in January of 2017 included both Ms. Watson and Heritage Strategies principal Peter Benton. Their public presentation to the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board focused on the evolution of Erie's cultural landscape and comprised a "Public Workshop to Identify Needs and Opportunities." During both of the first two visits, Heritage Strategies took photos that appear throughout this plan.

An early action that grew out of public comment in the January meeting that marked the start of the second phase was the Board of Trustees' later action to name the Al and Mary Schofield Farm as an Erie Historic Landmark. The Board of Trustees has also asked the Department of Parks and Recreation (the managing agency for the farm) to undertake a Development Concept Plan for the property.

At the end of the second phase, Heritage Strategies conveyed a rough draft of the "strategy chapters" of

this plan (now numbered 5-9) and a chapter covering existing conditions and approach (now chapters 3 and 4) for EHPAB and Board of Trustees review and discussion.

In the beginning of the third and final phase, the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board hosted a series of workshops on April 8 and 10, attended by Elizabeth Watson. Saturday workshops included a walking tour in Old Town, led by Town Clerk Nancy Parker and EHPAB member and history professor Mark Mavrogianes; a discussion of Old Town neighborhood preservation strategies; and a discussion of strategies for preserving Erie's memories and mementoes. A total of approximately fifteen Erie residents participated. A workshop scheduled for the early evening of April 10 to discuss the commercial portion of Old Town was attended only by several EHPAB members and was adjourned soon after it was convened. EHPAB members later initiated one-on-one conversations with business owners. Ms. Watson also made a presentation at a regular Board of Trustees meeting on April 11 on recommendations for strategies in the "strategy chapters" and answered BOT questions.

This final plan was presented to the Board of Trustees at its regular meeting on July 11.



**ERIE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD  
INVITES YOU**

**PRESERVATION PLANNING FOR A CHANGING ERIE**

Agriculture, Coal Mining and Railroading

**April 8 (Saturday)**

■ **8:30 am-10:00 am WALKING TOUR OF OLD TOWN ERIE**  
(Meet in north parking lot of Lincoln School/Town Hall/645 Holbrook)

See the architecture, style, history and age of some of Old Town's most iconic homes of all sizes.

■ **10:30 am-Noon PRESERVING OUR UNIQUE OLD TOWN**  
(Community Room Town Hall) Coffee and Donuts

Property valuation of historic homes, available resources to enhance property values. Landmark to qualify for financial benefits, Preservation Tax credits, grants for rehabilitation and the best ways to rehabilitate, Landmark Plaques, COA's, Historic landscaping. Discussion and maps of the surveys of 36 historic buildings. Current and future surveys. Hear of ways to help protect historic neighborhoods.

■ **12:30 pm-2:30 pm WHO GETS GRANDMA'S YELLOW PIE PLATE?**  
(Community Room, Town Hall) Pizza and Drinks

Share memories and mementoes...show us what you got? Hear and share stories. What's been hidden in the attic, basement or garage? How can we preserve Erie's history? Does Erie need an ERIE MUSEUM????? QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**April 10 (Monday)**

■ **6:30pm-8pm HISTORIC DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT**  
(Community Room, Lincoln School, Town Hall)

How can preservation benefit business? Preservation Tax Credits (Federal and State) for commercial properties, grants, building treatment and rehabilitation, Heritage Tourism.

Program supported by the Town of Erie, Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board and History Colorado. For more Information: contact Nancy Parker Town Clerk, Phone: 303-926-2731 nparker@erieco.gov 645 Holbrook Street P.O.





### 1.3 The Foundation of this Plan

The foundation for this Historic Preservation Master Plan rests upon Erie's recent history of growth and development, its economic base for future prosperity, and the role that historic character plays in quality of life for Erie's residents. Erie's position as a desirable alternative to Boulder, Denver, and other communities closer to Denver is the underpinning of

its current economy and prospects for future growth and prosperity. This plan includes strategies developed to strengthen Erie's economic future. Erie's quality of life and ability to attract residents and businesses guide those strategies. Moreover, as Erie's reputation emerges as a place to enjoy recreation, dining, events and entertainment, and Old Town's historic atmosphere, greater visitation is likely to follow as well. Communities with healthy

economies rely to a surprising degree on visitors to support those businesses offering amenities to their residents – and tourism often is regarded as an indicator of quality of life for business owners deciding to move their businesses to a potential new location.

Erie's historic character is an important asset that contributes to local quality of life, as already recognized in Erie's planning and policies. This preservation master plan embraces the town's current plans and policies, especially the Comprehensive Plan (2015), the Unified Development Code (2017), the Downtown Development Framework Plan (2016), the Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan (2013), and the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) Master Plan Update (2016). This master plan offers strategies for making the most of Erie's historic assets in the realization of these plans. Thoughtful, far-reaching planning and implementation strategies that reinforce and enhance community character over time are important to Erie's economic success.

In particular, the Comprehensive Plan serves as the Town's official policy guide for growth and development as well as the legal framework for its zoning and subdivision regulations. The Comprehensive Plan is the foundation of Erie's plan for future growth. This Historic Preservation Master Plan embraces the Comprehensive Plan and builds on its concepts and strategies, as described further in Chapters 3, 7, and 8.

Specialized preservation tools that are described in Chapter 5 are robust, practical, varied, and useful in their own right. But they go further when they are reinforced by other planning tools and investments that are carefully aligned to achieve preservation and strengthen community character and identity. Therefore, a key principle followed by this plan is to seek to integrate historic preservation into all town planning and actions.

## 1.4 Conclusion

Historic preservation is practiced most effectively when it is integral to community planning. And so, this plan offers many recommendations for incorporation into Erie's well-established planning process, on a large number of topics.

This chapter has provided, along with reference to the planning process and planning foundation, a brief introduction to the story and key aspects of Erie's position in a growing state with a strong preservation ethic. In the chapters that follow, readers will learn

about Erie's historic character and resources (Chapter 2) and the existing programmatic and planning context for historic preservation in Erie (Chapter 3). They will be presented with the vision, goals, and principles for historic preservation that guided the preparation of this master plan (Chapter 4). And finally, they will find detailed ideas and recommendations on Erie's historic preservation program (Chapter 5); the Town of Erie's role as a steward of publicly owned historic resources (Chapter 6); a vision for capitalizing on historic elements of the landscape as part of Erie's parks, open space, and trails system as the town continues to grow (Chapter 7); ways to align a concern for Old Town's character expressed in the Comprehensive Plan (both commercial zones and residential neighborhoods) with useful historic preservation practices to help retain that character (Chapter 8); and communicating information and stories about Erie's history and historic resources with town residents and visitors (Chapter 9). The Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board is grateful for your time and attention. Read on!

## End Notes for Chapter 1:

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.colorado.edu/business/sites/default/files/attached-files/2017\\_beof\\_book\\_final\\_reduced.pdf](http://www.colorado.edu/business/sites/default/files/attached-files/2017_beof_book_final_reduced.pdf), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.preservationbenefitscolorado.com/>



# Chapter 2: Erie's Historic Character



## 2.1 Introduction

The Town of Erie and its planning area include a substantially preserved historic coal town plus patterns in the surrounding landscape where it is possible to recall stories of Colorado's earliest development in mining, farming, and railroading.

Erie was founded in 1874 in Colorado's Front Range, just thirteen years after Colorado became a United States territory. For nearly 150 years, a variety of people have come together here to build a successful community. Today, their stories connect Erie and Colorado residents to layers of the past and offer insights for Erie's future.

## 2.2 Erie's Setting

The "Old Town" area of Erie is situated within a larger modern municipal area, which in turn is surrounded by the Erie Planning Area identified in the Erie Comprehensive Plan. The planning area encompasses 48 square miles, between State Highway 52 on the north, I-25 to the east, State Highway 7 on the south, and US 287 to the west. It is about twelve miles east of Boulder and twenty miles north of Denver.

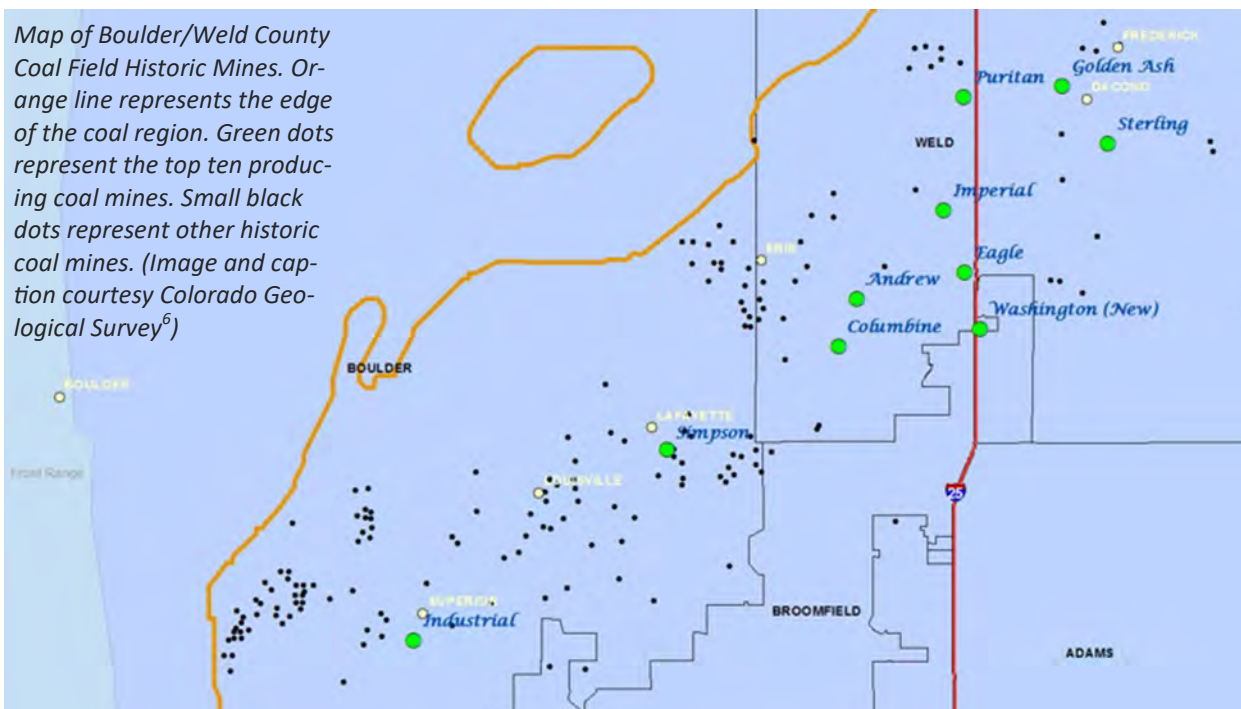
Erie was originally built in Weld County, whose western boundary follows County Line Road, the westernmost edge of Old Town's gridded streets.

Today, the modern town has spread across both Weld and Boulder Counties, both of which were founded in 1861 as two of Colorado's first 17 counties. A small rise west of a north-south stretch of Coal Creek determined the location for settlement, although part of the town was built on floodplain – meaning that periodic flooding is a feature of Erie's long history.

Coal Creek and the high, scenic ridge on which Mt. Pleasant Cemetery is situated mark an ecological dividing line between the Front Range Fans ecoregion and the High Plains ecoregion. Each has a distinct character that can be seen in the landscape today – even a visitor driving from I-25's exit west to the entrance to Old Town at Briggs Street is bound to notice the difference, despite the dramatic modern development in that corridor that also draws the eye. As a consequence, even today Boulder and Weld Counties have differing approaches to their treatment of the landscape based upon different farming and different intensities of development.

*(Above) Mt. Pleasant Cemetery overlooks Old Town Erie and the Rocky Mountains. The cemetery, determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, also marks the edge of the two ecoregions occupied by Erie and its municipal planning area, the Front Range Fans ecoregion and the High Plains.*

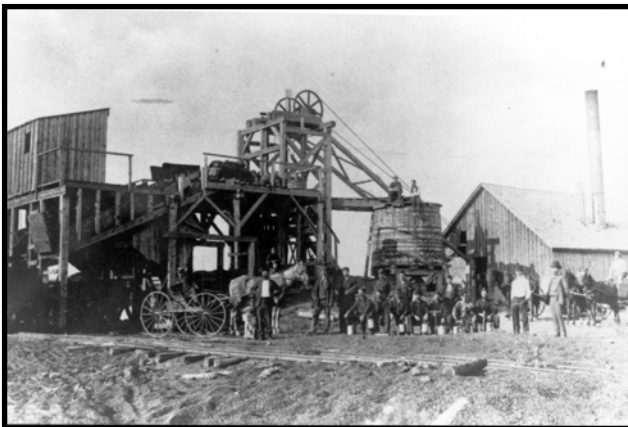
Map of Boulder/Weld County Coal Field Historic Mines. Orange line represents the edge of the coal region. Green dots represent the top ten producing coal mines. Small black dots represent other historic coal mines. (Image and caption courtesy Colorado Geological Survey<sup>6</sup>)



## 2.3 Mining, Railroading, and Farming

Erie was built in a semi-arid region of prairie and foothills that first attracted homesteaders seeking land for farming and ranching. The greatest attraction for settlement of the town itself in 1874 was its

position within Colorado's Northern Coal Field (now known as the Boulder-Weld Coal Field). Rich coal deposits were so close to the surface that ranchers simply scooped the coal from the banks of Coal Creek to sell to local homesteaders, hardrock miners high in the Rockies (where wood for heating had soon become scarce), and booming Denver.



### Mining

The Colorado Geological Survey tells the region's mining story this way:

Coal was first produced near Boulder in 1859 when Joseph Marshall excavated coal from an outcrop on his property and sold it to homesteaders for heating fuel. The first coal production records date back to 1864 when 500 tons were mined. Early coal mines in the 1870s and 1880 led to the establishment of the towns of Erie, Louisville, Lafayette, and Superior. Railroads were built to haul the coal to markets in Denver. This coal was used for home heating. The mining towns of Central Town and Blackhawk used the local wood forests for building construction and fuel in the long winters. Soon wood became scarce, and coal was then used for fuel.<sup>1</sup>

*Little of the mining structures that once were scattered across the region remains above-ground – a rare structure still stands near the Erie-Dacono exit on I-25. (Early photo of the Garfield Mine is from records of the Town of Erie, courtesy Town Clerk's Office).*





*The remaining rail corridor in Erie with rails still existing is now owned by the Denver area's Regional Transportation District (RTD). The Union Pacific Railroad introduced "galloping goose" motor cars in 1909 (below), allowing comfortable travel between Denver, Brighton, Erie, and Boulder at less expense to the railroad than using heavy steam engines to haul passengers. Service was discontinued in 1925. (Early photo is from records of the Town of Erie, courtesy Town Clerk's Office.).*

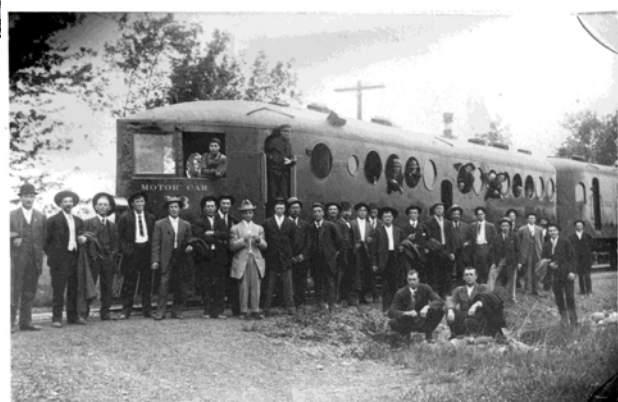
### **Railroading**

With the opening of the Union Pacific Railroad across the entire United States once the golden spike uniting east and west was driven in Utah in 1869, that coalfield became a critical source of fuel for railroading throughout the region. A line to Denver from Wyoming soon followed, in 1870. As Erie's Comprehensive Plan notes, "in 1871...the Union Pacific Railroad extended a spur westward from Brighton on its main line between Denver and Cheyenne. Coal from the Erie deposits was needed to fuel their huge steam locomotives. The Boulder Valley Railroad, as it was called then, opened up the northern coal fields for development. Soon coal from Erie mines was being shipped by rail to markets in Denver and as far east as Kansas Town." (p. 1-2) Erie had become a stop on the railroad and one of the region's principal mining communities.

### **Farming**

A third and final element of the region's landscape, farming, evolved over roughly the same period. The agricultural context study for Boulder County explains how farmers solved their problem of water scarcity, ultimately creating one a rich farming area in North America:

Some parts of the county were fortunate to have relatively reliable water sources, through the two Boulder creeks as well as the St. Vrain, Left Hand, and the Little Thompson. The first agricultural settlements were naturally confined to land near these creeks. After all the watered land was taken up in claims, however, it was clear to newly-arrived farmers that the rainfall



in semi-arid Colorado was not adequate for most agricultural activities, particularly in the spring when most crops were started. Taking cues from irrigation systems they learned about while at the California gold strikes, farmers developed a network of irrigating canals in order to provide them with water necessary for their crops and livestock. Smith and Pell dug one of the first irrigation ditches around Boulder in 1859. Following their lead, other ditches were dug throughout the plains to catch the spring runoff from the mountain snows in the Boulder and St. Vrain valleys. In 1860, the Howard and Anderson ditches were dug. By 1862, the Farmers Ditch was seven miles long and had an irrigation capacity of 1,500 acres. Numerous other ditch companies were quickly organized in order to provide water for farmers.<sup>2</sup>

### **Regional Economy**

Demand for coal, water, and farm products in Erie's immediate area linked it to a larger, less visible "economic landscape." This region included mining



*The Al and Mary Schofield Farm, owned by the Town of Erie and a town-designated Historic Landmark, includes many historic farm structures, including a barn surviving from the nineteenth century (left) and a dairy barn and silo constructed early in the twentieth century (right).*

communities high in the Rockies, laboring to exploit the hardrock metals of Colorado's rich "Mineral Belt," and the booming commercial town of Denver. This early economy helped to power Colorado's growth and success. Thus, Erie is among the early communities that could lay claim to the title of "cradle of Colorado."

Today, the landscape surrounding Erie is dramatically changing with current rapid and extensive development. Evidence of the area's geologic riches remains, however, in the form of gas and oil well operations scattered among the town's modern subdivisions.

## 2.4 Periods of Development

### **Natural and Indigenous Landscape**

Before settlers moved to Colorado, indigenous hunter-gatherer peoples occupied this area – but they left little evidence of their presence. There are just a few known archaeological sites in the Town of Erie (information on location is not available to the public to protect these sites).

Erie occupies an interesting location at the base of the foothills and the edge of the high plains high in



the St. Vrain River watershed, with Coal Creek and its tributaries watering Erie's western landscape (thought to be more hospitable for indigenous peoples who might have sheltered there and only hunted the high plains). Paleontological and archaeological finds along Erie's general longitude, however, are found well north and south of Erie.

Archaeological context statements are available for anyone interested in this topic – see <http://www.historycolorado.org/archaeologists/historic-prehistoric-contexts>. The Boulder County Comprehensive Plan shows areas and travel routes of archaeological sensitivity north, south, and west of Erie's planning area (see map p. 33).

### **Agricultural Landscape: Early Settlement to Present**

According to History Colorado's historic agricultural context for Weld County, it

is one of the most agriculturally productive counties within the state of Colorado. Its importance as an agricultural region dates to the 1860s when astute cattlemen took advantage of the open rangelands for their stock. The farmers of the 1870s utilized the soil of Weld County and a boom resulted. As their numbers increased, farmers looked to the areas away from the irrigation systems as an available source of land. Despite the Panic of 1893, farming and stock raising continued in Weld County followed by a new boom in the early twentieth century. In part, this twentieth-century dryland boom was the result of the rapid acceptance of sugar beets as a cash crop.

*Irrigation ditches represent historical layers in the agricultural landscape surrounding Erie, as well as remaining important to agriculture today.*





*The Wise Homestead Complex, a designated Erie Historic Landmark and listed in the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties, includes a ranch home built circa 1870.*

Factors fueling the new boom included improved dryland farming techniques and World War I, which created unprecedented markets for agricultural commodities. Unfortunately, the years between World War I and World War II were poor for agriculture nationwide and Weld County was not immune. World War II fueled new markets and since that time, despite periodic downturns, agriculture has remained a mainstay in the county.<sup>3</sup>

Boulder County's story is similar, but with more water, a more sheltered landscape, and richer soils, it evolved differently. The county's agricultural context statement covers three major historic periods of agricultural development:

*The Early Settlement/Pioneer Agriculture: 1859-1896* period in Boulder County saw many major agricultural developments occurring in a relatively compressed time period. In just a few decades, Boulder County went from an Indian hunting ground covered with prairie grasses to bustling mountain mining camps supported by successful farms on the plains. Settlers arrived shortly after the discovery of gold, broke sod, established farms and ranches, organized and built irrigation systems, founded farming communities, and organized communal agricultural societies and county fairs – all in less than thirty years. The next period of agricultural development in Boulder County, *Growth in Agriculture: 1897-1919*, saw increasing specialization combined with the introduction of crops better suited for the climate. This was also a period of growing national and international markets for Boulder County agricultural products and increased mechanization in farming. The *Retrenching and*

*New Directions in Agriculture: 1920-1967* period extended from the end of the first World War through the mid-1960s. Significant changes in farming continued during this period, brought about in part by severe climatic factors and increasing residential growth in the county. In addition to further specialization and mechanization, new government programs developed for agriculture and soil conservation were introduced. Farms grew in size, but decreased in numbers. This last historic period of agriculture ended when several initiatives, first developed to limit growth in Boulder County, led to open space protection and purchases. In 1967, the Boulder County Commissioners appointed the first Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee (POSAC) and the Town of Boulder started their Open Space program. Both of these programs would eventually serve to protect agricultural properties through the purchase and lease of farm and ranch lands throughout the county. Although these programs may not have initially been conceived to protect agricultural land, the end result was the preservation of thousands of acres of farms through easements and outright purchases through the programs initiated in 1967.<sup>4</sup>

As Boulder's context statement further explains, however,

over the past several decades numerous historic agricultural properties have been lost or are under threat due to increasing property values and development pressures. In addition to increased development pressures, the way in which Boulder County is farmed is changing. Due in part to open space acquisitions of



*Erie's most significant mining landscape is Old Town itself.*

**Table 2-1 Historical Population of Erie, CO**

Census	Pop.	%+
1880	358	—
1890	662	84.90%
1900	697	5.30%
1910	596	−14.5%
1920	697	16.90%
1930	930	33.40%
1940	1,019	9.60%
1950	937	−8.0%
1960	875	−6.6%
1970	1,090	24.60%
1980	1,254	15.00%
1990	1,258	0.30%
2000	6,291	400.10%
2010	18,135	188.30%
<b>Est. 2015</b>	21,420	18.10%
<b>2017</b>	25,000*	

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erie,\\_Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erie,_Colorado), accessed 4/26/2017; \*added from Erie's "Quick Facts" web page, <http://www.erieco.gov/240/Quick-Facts>.

agricultural properties, the once prevalent farm family living and working on their land has been replaced in many cases by an agricultural lease agreement to an offsite tenant. This relatively new arrangement has eliminated the need for some of the historic agricultural buildings once necessary for the resident family farmer.<sup>5</sup>

### **Mining Landscape: 1870–1978**

According to the Colorado Geological Survey, the Boulder-Weld Coal Field

covers a large area northwest to north-northeast of Denver. Colorado's first coal mine began there in 1859 near Marshall, a small town near Boulder, as a wagon mine. From 1864 (when State mining records began) to the closing of the last operational mine in 1978, there were 223 coal mines in the district. The total amount of coal mined from the coal field was approximately 111,360,372 short-tons, which is the largest amount of coal mined from Front Range coal fields. Coal was mined in a north-easterly direction, beginning mostly around Marshall and headed toward Frederick, mining successively deeper as it went....

Over the course of the years that the Boulder-Weld coal field was active, several large labor conflicts broke out which became known as the "Erie Wars." The most infamous of these labor conflicts began in the Northern coal field in 1913, and ended in 1914 after culminating in the Ludlow Massacre in the Southern coal field near Trinidad. Many families were killed by fire in a coal mine camp of striking miners. Shortly after the Ludlow Massacre, troops from the Colorado militia were called in to settle things down, and over the next few years conflicts



*Erie's Parkland Estates Airpark represents a particular style of residential subdivision established during the mid-twentieth century, found in a few communities around the nation.*

resulted in hundreds dead. United States Army troops took control of the violence and along with other help from people like Boulder County sheriff Stanford Buster, things quieted down through the rest of 1914. The last of the major labor conflicts was in 1927, which resulted in the shooting deaths of six miners and an estimated 60 or more wounded at the Columbine Mine near Lafayette.<sup>7</sup>

The greatest legacy remaining from Erie's coal mining landscape is Old Town Erie itself. Lafayette, southwest of Erie and also in Boulder County, maintains a mining museum and offers a brochure interpreting the landscape<sup>9</sup> that makes a similar point (and provides interested readers with more information about that town's heritage and a model for a brochure that might be produced for Erie). Homes were built by miners themselves, and were modest, generally frame. More substantial homes from Erie's early years also exist, evidence of the early prosperity of settlers who established commerce and services.

### ***Rural Residential Expansion: 1950–1990***

Erie's position along the Front Range meant that it was within relatively easy reach of Denver and Boulder. As early as 1944, Colorado began planning a modern inter-town route along the Front Range, well before the national movement toward an interstate highway system begun in the Eisenhower era. I-25 was completed from Wyoming to New Mexico in 1969.<sup>9</sup>

Road access and continuing economic development across the region meant that Erie maintained, somewhat, its attraction as a rural residential address even after the coal mines closed in 1978. A few structures built in and around Old Town Erie during this time mark forty years of stasis in terms of

community growth. Homes within Old Town from this period include "split level" homes, one of the types built during the period now recognized as "mid-century modern," and even a geodesic dome, built at roughly the same scale as earlier housing in the little town. Outside town, more-expensive ex-urban style country residences flourished in a few locations on large lots. The Erie Airpark subdivision, a rare type reflecting an era of optimism for the pursuit of personal aviation, also mid-century, was annexed into Erie in 1979.

In 1990, Erie's population had remained between approximately 900 to 1,250 residents for 60 years.

### ***Building a Successful Front Range Community: 1990 to Present***

A historical context for Erie's most recent period of development has yet to be written. The first comprehensive plan was completed in 1996. Roads were completely paved in 2000. Historian and Erie resident James B. Stull has written that

In the 1990s, over ten housing developments were constructed in Erie, bringing in thousands of new residents.... As recently as 1999 [however], visitors to the town of Erie were surprised to see unpaved, red dirt streets. People said Erie looked like something out of the past – a town forgotten. It was not the Erie of old with wooden boardwalks and hitching posts for horses. The sidewalks were in, and cars were parked along the streets. However, many of the old miners' cabins and commercial buildings still gave the town a look of the Wild West.<sup>10</sup>

Response to the community's planning and infrastructure – and to the demand for housing that





*As a carefully planned community where new development is designed to provide access to open space, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Erie can become a model for successfully blending the new with the old.*

began to rise across this part of the Front Range at this time – meant that by 2000, population had quintupled, to nearly 6,300 from just 1,258 ten years earlier (see Table 2-1). Population has since more than quadrupled from 2000, to approximately 25,000 in 2017.

Today, Erie is a large and wealthy community offering a well-planned option among communities elsewhere in Boulder and Weld Counties and desirable school systems in two of the most rapidly growing counties in Colorado. It is well-positioned to absorb still more of the suburban-style subdivision growth it has experienced in the past two decades.

At its heart, more or less defined by the “natural” boundaries of Coal Creek to the east, Sullivan Ditch to the north, County Line Road to the west, and the rail line to the south (someday to be revived by Denver’s RTD), lies Erie’s tiny Old Town, with its roughly 200 homes on tiny lots (most made up of multiple original-sized lot) and a historic commercial center thought to be originally only one block in size. Old Town’s distinctive historical environment today is still capable of being “read” as one of Colorado’s earliest settlements. (See maps on pp. 78-79)

## 2.5 Conclusion

Additional reading about Erie’s history is provided in several local histories, plus historical overviews provided in the two surveys of buildings in Old Town Erie by Front Range Research Associates, Inc., done in 2010 and 2016 (available from the Town Clerk or at the library).

Together, both “old Erie” and “new Erie” today have the opportunity to showcase how a tiny Colorado mining town can both adapt its heritage and take

advantage of new economic opportunities as it grows with a distinctive Historic Old Town adjacent to a compact and walkable Town Center. As a carefully planned community, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Erie can become a model for successfully blending the new with the old.

## End Notes for Chapter 2:

<sup>1</sup> <http://coloradogeologicalsurvey.org/mineral-resources/historic-mining-districts/boulder-county/boulder-weld-coal-field/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://assets.bouldercounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/agricultural-heritage-wolfenbarger.pdf>, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Mehls, Carol Drake, and Steven F. Mehls, *Weld County, Colorado, Historic Agricultural Context*, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society, 1988 (revised 2006), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Wolfenbarger, *Boulder County’s Agricultural Heritage*, prepared for the Boulder County Parks & Open Space Department and Boulder County Land Use Department, 2006, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> <http://coloradogeologicalsurvey.org/mineral-resources/historic-mining-districts/boulder-county/boulder-weld-coal-field/>

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.colorado.edu/geography/foote/geog4043/assign/coalheritage/MiningHeritageLafayetteBrochure.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate\\_25\\_in\\_Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_25_in_Colorado)

<sup>10</sup> Stull, *A Brief History of Erie, Colorado: Out of the Coal Dust*, History Press, 2015, pp. 144-45.



# Chapter 3: Historic Preservation Context



## 3.1 Introduction

The Town of Erie's historic preservation program is embedded in a federal-state-local system tuned to the needs and roles of each level and designed to encourage collaboration. This chapter reviews Erie's historic preservation program and partners, including town programs that affect Erie's ability to achieve historic preservation – especially the Community Development Department, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Town Clerk's Office. This chapter also covers the History Colorado programs that support Erie's work in historic preservation.

## 3.2 Town of Erie Historic Preservation Programs

Historic preservation in the Town of Erie is led by the all-volunteer Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board (EHPAB), which reports to the town's elected Board of Trustees (BOT). Other town organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental, also have roles to play in assisting Erie and its property owners in achieving a level of historic preservation that will fully serve the public and private interests involved. The EHPAB, however, is the only town institution specifically charged by the Board of Trustees to focus on historic preservation.

### **The Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board (EHPAB)**

The EHPAB was established by a local ordinance passed by the Board of Trustees on November 23, 2010 (Ord. 28-2010). The purpose of the EHPAB is laid out in the ordinance's first major section (emphasis added):

- To designate, preserve, protect, enhance and perpetuate those sites, structures, and objects which reflect outstanding elements of the town's cultural, artistic, social, ethnic, economic, political, architectural, historic, technological, institutional, or other heritage; and to create a method to **draw a reasonable balance between private property rights and the public interest in preserving Erie's unique historic character** by creating an advisory board to review and recommend approval or denial of any proposed demolition of, moving of, or alteration to properties of historic value.
- Foster **civic pride** in the beauty and accomplishments of the past.
- Stabilize or improve **aesthetic and economic vitality and values** of such sites, neighborhoods, structures, and objects.

*(Above) The downtown section of Old Town Erie has received modern streetscaping – a treatment that fits both the area's needs and its historic character – and an appealing public art installation, "Spirit."*

### Recent EHPAB Achievements

- **Two surveys** covering 36 individual properties (23 in 2009-10 and 13 in 2016) that have been documented by historic preservation professionals according to state standards for “selective-intensive” documentation. The documentation is of sufficient quality that it could be made available through the web as-is. (Findings from these surveys are described in Chapter 5.) An accompanying **Historic Resource Map** was created by EHPAB member Dave Snow.
- **Five Historic Landmarks established** in 2016 and one thus far in 2017 (Al and Mary Schofield Farm), bringing the total to nine designated since 2015 (see sidebar, opposite page).
- A **new plaque program** for Town-registered landmarks, with eight bronze plaques designed, ordered, and in the process of installation.
- **Certificate of Appropriateness** activities:
  - ♦ Pearl Winslow Properties, porch railing, approved by EHPAB and BOT 7/5/2016
  - ♦ Lincoln School, entrance accessibility work not approved by EHPAB, but approved by BOT 7/11/2016
  - ♦ Potential COA Lincoln School, preliminary review comments requested for 2 story wing addition to the north (no vote) 8/4/2016
  - ♦ Pearl Winslow Property, structural work approved EHPAB and BOT 4/25/2017
  - ♦ Part I Residential State Tax Credit for one property, approved by EHPAB 4/24/2017
- Three **Landmark Maintenance Assessments** performed (Wise Homestead, Lincoln School, and Old Town Hall).
- **Documents and forms** established or digitized/enhanced: EHPAB Handbook; Historic Landmark Property Nomination and Alterations Packet; and Certificate of Appropriateness Form.
- Submitted edits re Erie's **web site** for clarity.
- **Preservation training and outreach:**
  - ♦ Created a PowerPoint training resource on The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - ♦ Helped sponsor High Plains Library's Fall History Series (Erie branch).
  - ♦ Walking/cycling tour brochure in progress (portable device app will be next)
  - ♦ EHPAB booth at Erie Town Fair.
  - ♦ Represented Erie at the Jefferson County Historical Commission's Preservation Symposium.

- Protect and enhance the town's **attraction to tourists and visitors**, increase the **quality of life** for the citizens and enhance future **economic development**.
- Promote the **use of outstanding historical or architectural sites, structures, and objects** for the education, stimulation and welfare of the people of the town.
- Promote good urban design.
- Promote and encourage **continued private ownership and utilization** of such sites, structures, or objects.
- Integrate historic preservation with the town comprehensive development plan.

The duties and responsibilities of the historic preservation advisory board are as follows (emphasis added):

- **Recommend criteria for approval by the board of trustees** by which the advisory board shall conduct their review of historic properties and review proposals to alter, demolish, or move designated properties. The advisory board shall **identify those properties or districts which meet the applicable criteria to be placed on the local register, and shall make a recommendation to the board of trustees** that such properties or districts be placed on the local register. (Ord. 28-2010, 11-23-2010)
- **Conduct surveys** for the purpose of creating a **preservation plan** of historic properties. Such inventory is for the purpose of informing citizens who own such properties that the advisory board anticipates these properties may meet the criteria for designation. (Ord. 15-2011, 8-23-2011)
- Review and make a recommendation to the board of trustees on any application for altering, moving or demolishing any historic properties. (Ord. 28-2010, 11-23-2010)
- **Advise and assist owners of historic properties** on physical and financial aspects of preservation, renovation, rehabilitation, and reuse.
- When appropriate, encourage and assist owners of historic properties to apply for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and allow adequate public participation in the advisory board's part in the National Register nomination process. If the advisory board lacks at least one member who is a professional in the discipline of architecture, history, architectural history, or archaeology, the board shall seek additional

expertise in the appropriate discipline when considering national register nominations. (Ord. 15-2011, 8-23-2011)

- Develop and assist in **public education programs** including, but not limited to, walking tours, brochures, a marker program for historic properties, lectures, and conferences.
- Advise the board of trustees on matters related to preserving the historic character of the town.
- Assist in **pursuing financial assistance** for preservation related programs.
- **Bring forward such rules, regulations and procedures** relating to designation, nomination, preservation, relocation, demolition, exemptions, economic exemptions, economic incentives, appeal of decisions, or other processes relating to the duties of the historic preservation advisory board.
- **Make a recommendation to the board of trustees for the removal of properties from the register** for reasons the historic preservation advisory board deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, forces of nature. (Ord. 28-2010, 11-23-2010; amd. Ord. 15-2011, 8-23-2011)

Members of the EHPAB are appointed to four-year terms and may be reappointed. A Trustee meets with the EHPAB as a nonvoting BOT liaison.

The advisory board's relationship to the Board of Trustees is envisioned as follows:

- The historic preservation advisory board shall advise and recommend to the board of trustees exclusively on those **matters pertinent to the historic preservation advisory board's duties and subject area**, as set forth herein.
- The historic preservation advisory board shall **biannually prepare a written report** which shall be presented orally to the board of trustees at a board of trustees meeting, with the first report and presentation occurring after the first of the year and the second prior to the start of the town's budget consideration for the following year.
- **Staff will be available** to attend historic preservation advisory board meetings quarterly at the request of the historic preservation advisory board's chairperson.
- **A member of the board of trustees shall be appointed as the board of trustees' liaison** to the historic preservation advisory board. The liaison will attend regular board meetings and be

### Sites Recently Landmarked under Erie's Historic Preservation Ordinance

#### Landmark Resolutions in 2015:

- Pearl Winslow Property 9/13/2015 (5WL.7989)
- Williams-Bixler-McDonald House 3/24/2015 (5WL.6195)

#### Landmark Resolutions in 2016:

- Mount Pleasant Cemetery 9/13/2016 (Town of Erie; 5WL.7991)
- Erie Methodist Episcopal Church 6/26/2016 (5WL.6196)
- Lincoln School (Erie Government Town Hall) 10/5/2016 (Town of Erie; 5WL.216)
- Wooley-Padfield-Swallow House 10/5/2016 (5WL.7985)
- Wise Homestead 9/27/2011 (individual nominations for ranch house and outbuildings); 10/5/2016 (amended to Complex) (5BL.13124)

#### Landmark Resolutions in 2017 (to date):

- Al and Mary Schofield Farm 2/14/2017 (Town of Erie; 5BL.786)

*SOURCE: Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board, 4/6/2017; please see Map 7-3. Numbers in parentheses correspond to site numbers assigned in the Compass database maintained by History Colorado.*

the conduit of bidirectional information to and from the board of trustees. The liaison is not a member of the historic preservation advisory board nor is the liaison entitled to a vote (Ord. 28-2010, 11-23-2010).

The bulk of the ordinance is taken up with procedures and criteria for the landmarking of historic properties and review of changes to those properties (through a mechanism known as a "certificate of appropriateness"). These topics are addressed in Chapter 5.

### Town of Erie Collaboration with Federal and State Historic Preservation Programs

On October 24, 2011, the Town of Erie qualified as a Certified Local Government (CLG) under a federal-state program to enlist local governments in programs under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (the CLG program was one such amendment, in 1980). Today, Erie is one of 57 CLGs in Colorado and one of 1,963 across the United States. Fewer than half of communities across Colorado with preservation ordinances have qualified for this status.



Erie's program is part of an integrated local, state, and federal system for historic preservation. The preservation and adaptive, sustainable reuse of historic buildings and landscapes is conducted primarily at the local level through the actions of private individuals, businesses, and community organizations, including local governmental entities. State and federal preservation programs provide support and incentives for local actions.

A local government with CLG status gains access to benefits of the federal historic preservation program and agrees to follow federal and state requirements. Simply put, direct benefits include funding and technical assistance. Colorado receives an annual appropriation from the federal Historic Preservation Fund (via the National Park Service) and is required by law to grant at least 10 percent of that funding exclusively to CLGs.

History Colorado describes the benefits of participation in the CLG program as follows:

- Local preservation **leadership**. CLGs:
  - ♦ Lead preservation efforts in their communities by identifying, evaluating, and protecting local historic resources.
  - ♦ Receive technical advisory services from the SHPO.
  - ♦ Maintain a formal role in the National Register of Historic Places process.
- Exclusive **funding** opportunities:
  - ♦ CLGs may apply annually for **no-match grants** from a designated CLG-only fund.
  - ♦ Local landmarks designated by CLGs are eligible for Colorado's state historic preservation income tax credit and grants from the History Colorado State Historical Fund.
- Opportunities for **enhanced responsibility** (optional). CLGs may:
  - ♦ Participate in the review of federal projects.
  - ♦ Review state tax credit projects for residential properties.

To achieve this status, the Town of Erie's historic preservation program had to meet four broad federal standards as well as specific Colorado CLG requirements:

1. Capable of enforcing appropriate state and local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties.

2. Having established by local ordinance an adequate and qualified historic preservation commission.
3. Capable of maintaining a system for survey and inventory of historic properties.
4. Providing for adequate public participation in local historic preservation programs (including the process of recommending properties for nomination to the National Register).

In addition, as discussed in the section below pertaining to History Colorado and its function as the State Historic Preservation Office, CLG status confers on the Town of Erie the option of undertaking specific responsibilities as designated by the State Historic Preservation Office.

The most challenging of these requirements, on a continuing basis, is maintaining an "adequate and qualified historic preservation commission." The specific details are that

- "Each CLG Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) should have a minimum of five members [Erie's is seven]. The HPC's geographic area of authority must be within the boundaries of the local government's jurisdiction. All HPC members must demonstrate an interest, competence, or knowledge in historic preservation."
- "The HPC should comprise both professional and lay members, and at least 40 percent [three out of seven] of its members should be professionals from the fields of history, architecture, landscape architecture, architectural history, prehistoric or historic archaeology, planning, American studies, American civilization, cultural geography, cultural anthropology, or related disciplines such as building trades, real estate, or law.<sup>1</sup> Information regarding the credentials of HPC members should be kept on file and available to the public."

CLGs regularly report on their work, allowing History Colorado and the NPS to assemble data on the benefits of the work supported by their funding. Reports ask for measures of local progress relating to:

- Inventory of historic properties
- Local historic districts and landmarks
- Local tax incentives
- Brick and mortar grants and/or loans
- Local design reviews and historic preservation compliance
- Local property acquisition



*The historic mining village of Canfield remains an unincorporated portion of Boulder County in Erie's planning area west of Old Town.*

At least once every four years, History Colorado evaluates each CLG. Information on the monitoring and criteria involved can be found in Appendix B. More about the operation of a CLG is available in History Colorado's *Colorado Certified Local Government Handbook* (April 2016; [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/1416.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/1416.pdf))

### **Historic Preservation Advisory Board Operations**

**Staffing:** Until recently, the EHPAB has been assisted solely by the Town Clerk's office. With the advent of this historic preservation plan, the Community Development Department's Planning Division has begun sending a staff representative to EHPAB meetings.

**Mapping/Documentation:** Erie's Comprehensive Plan does not include a map of historic resources, nor does the web-based GIS display mapped historic resources (<http://maps.erieco.gov/mapsandapps/>). The EHPAB possesses the capability within its own volunteer expertise to map surveyed resources and perform other mapping tasks, and has done so (through a computer-aided design (CAD) program, which is a drawing program, not a geographic information system for visual display that is linked to databases) in order to maintain a modest capability for tracking their actions, planning additional surveys, etc. The result, however, is that the information is not accessible to town departments – especially the Planning Division – or to the public.

**Web-based Information:** The Town of Erie has an attractive, user-friendly official website

(<https://www.erieco.gov/>). Searchers for information on historic preservation can either enter that term in the prominently displayed search box, or navigate to "boards and commissions" and thence to "Historic Preservation Advisory Board." The web page for the EHPAB is concise, with links to additional pages in a menu at left (Erie History, Erie Historical Society, Historical Photos, Historic Landmark Designation Packet, and Timeline). The Erie History, Historical Photos, and Timeline are all original content. A link, "View Most Recent Agendas & Approved Minutes," leads the user directly to the "agenda center" and information about the next meeting, although not to recent minutes. EHPAB minutes and agendas for the two years more or less preceding 2016 are available through links on the EHPAB's main web page. The link to the Erie Historical Society, a private nonprofit organization, sends the user off the town's official site.

Strategies for operations are addressed in Chapter 5.

## **3.3 County Support for Historic Preservation**

### **Boulder County**

Most of the Town of Erie's planning area is located in Boulder County, although the Old Town itself is entirely in Weld County (east of County Line Road, a prominent local route running north-south and skirting the western edge of Old Town between Evans and Balcolm Streets). There are 86 resources listed in the National Register in Boulder County, most in Boulder, Lafayette, Longmont, and Louisville.

The County is a critical partner to work with the Town of Erie on protecting open space resources in Erie's

## Vision from Colorado's Statewide Historic Preservation Plan

The statewide plan's vision statement reads as follows:

By raising awareness and consciousness about preservation's relevance to all citizens, partners seek over the life of this plan to **relate to emotional, visceral connections to place**. Preservation has, at times, been perceived by some as reactive or burdensome. These misconceptions can be countered through leadership and credibility as well as **proactive promotion of preservation as one of our state's most powerful economic development tools, community builders, and means of social enrichment**. Developed in consultation, this plan is intended to act as a guide to the entire statewide network of preservationists to outline shared goals and strategies to enact at the local level. Above all, this plan recognizes and celebrates the diversity of Colorado's historic resources and heritage.<sup>12</sup>

planning area, including cultural, archaeological, and historic resources. Boulder County's website notes that its "Comprehensive Plan philosophy is that growth should be channeled to municipalities; agricultural lands should be protected; and preservation of our environmental and natural resources should be a high priority in making land use decisions."<sup>2</sup>

Erie's Comprehensive Plan notes the importance of working with adjoining jurisdictions; Policy 1.4 in Chapter 5 (Growth Management) notes that "the Town will continue to coordinate with adjoining communities and service providers on issues such as location of growth and development, provision of public facilities and services, conservation of natural resources, and to discourage sprawling rural residential development outside of defined growth areas." (p. 5-1)

Erie's Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.4 notes that "areas outside of the Town Boundary not planned for urban development should be maintained as very low density living areas, open space, agricultural activities and other uses compatible with the intent of the Comprehensive Plan. The Town will continue to work with Boulder and Weld Counties to coordinate efforts to manage rural development located outside the Town Boundary and within the planning area, so that it does not impede future urban growth in areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan as having future potential for urban development."

The Town has identified a planning area to implement its plans for growth, annexation, and open space protection (see map on p. 66), which notes, "The Planning Area Boundary identifies the area in which Erie wishes to influence land use decisions, and asks other jurisdictions to recognize Erie's right to do so." This implements Comprehensive Plan Growth Management Goal #2, which states that the Town should "Identify areas for future expansion of the Town that can be serviced and are compatible with the Town and its systems. This area could include a combination of urban and rural development, open space, and other uses as appropriate." (p. 5-2)

Erie and Boulder County have acquired open space lands and easements as partners. In 2012, Erie negotiated an intergovernmental agreement with Boulder County for construction management services for the Coal Creek/Rock Creek Trail Project in Erie.<sup>3</sup>

Like Erie, Boulder County is a Certified Local Government with a historic preservation program, which has been in place since 1993 and is staffed by the county's planning office.<sup>4</sup> The county's 2015 Comprehensive Plan includes a chapter on "cultural resources" which spells out the conduct expected of the county's historic preservation program.<sup>5</sup>

Boulder's preservation program most recently cooperated with the town by providing information on the county's landmarking of the Al and Mary Schofield Farm (see Chapter 6). The county's program has surveyed approximately 684 historic resources in the county<sup>6</sup> and has a quite recent and thorough context statement on the agricultural resources of the county<sup>7</sup> (see discussion in Chapters 5 and 6).

Boulder County's Historic Preservation Advisory Board serves functions similar to those of the EHPAB and also operates a Historic Landmark Rehabilitation Grant Program that provides funding for rehabilitation of locally designated landmarks or contributing structures in local landmark districts designated by the county.<sup>8</sup>

## Weld County

Weld County does not have a historic preservation program; only Greeley has a program, certified in 1999 as a CLG. There are 40 resources listed in the National Register in Weld County, most in Greeley. There is an excellent context statement on the county's agricultural resources available from History Colorado.<sup>9</sup>



### 3.4 State Support for Historic Preservation: History Colorado

History Colorado, specifically its Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP; <http://www.historycolorado.org/oahp>), is a major asset to Colorado communities working to protect their historic resources. The program is known nationwide as one of the most effective State Historic Preservation Offices (as these offices are known under the National Historic Preservation Act).

The state's historic preservation work is guided by a statewide historic preservation plan, a requirement of the National Park Service, which provides an annual grant for historic preservation to states from the federal Historic Preservation Fund under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (the fund was established in 1976).

The statewide plan is produced or updated every five years. The current version of that plan is entitled *The Power of Heritage and Place: A 2020 Action Plan to Advance Preservation in Colorado*.<sup>10</sup> The plan's introduction states that it "seeks to motivate and empower people to value heritage and historic places by enhancing opportunities to demonstrate the myriad benefits of sharing and preserving the stories therein embodied."

The 2016 update describes threats and challenges that the plan seeks to enable historic preservation leaders across the state to meet:

One of the most striking challenges to preservation efforts in Colorado continues to be the **conflict between the urban and suburban sprawl of Front Range communities** and the demolition by neglect and vacancy in rural counties, the market towns of which face uncertain economies. Meanwhile, a threat prevalent in both contexts is often **misinformation regarding what preservation is** and its perceived impediment to other political and economic interests. Private property interests in particular have increasingly advanced vocal opposition to preservation efforts based on conclusions that are often erroneous – such as that National Register designation imposes private property restrictions – and sometimes divisive, as in the case of proposed historic districts. An ongoing challenge will be to **connect to the shared appreciation of the past and its relevance to daily life amongst the general public**.<sup>11</sup>

The statewide plan's action agenda consists of the following goals (which in turn have helped to shape this historic preservation master plan for the Town of Erie):

- **Goal A: Preserving the Places that Matter:** The ongoing identification, documentation, evaluation, protection, and interpretation of Colorado's irreplaceable historic and cultural resources.
- **Goal B: Strengthening and Connecting the Colorado Preservation Network:** The building of the capacity of preservation partners and networks statewide to nurture local leaders and leverage assets.
- **Goal C: Shaping the Preservation Message:** The promotion and messaging of historic preservation's mission and vision to all citizens.
- **Goal D: Publicizing the Benefits of Preservation:** The documenting and sharing of the benefits of historic preservation.
- **Goal E: Weaving Preservation throughout Education:** The education of students and citizens of all ages about their shared heritage.
- **Goal F: Advancing Preservation Practices:** The provision of historic preservation technical outreach to assist in defining, describing, and preserving Colorado's historic and cultural resources.

History Colorado has a number of programs relevant to Erie's historic preservation activities, briefly described in the sections below.<sup>13</sup> OAHP staff welcome requests for information, technical assistance, and training on any of these topics and routinely provide technical assistance to Colorado's 57 CLGs.

#### Historic Resource Surveys

Surveys are often spurred by agencies or municipalities proposing federal, state, or local projects or undertaken by local governments and organizations to support preservation goals and activities such as design review, historic designation, or heritage tourism. History Colorado staff is available to assist with the planning and documentation of these surveys (such as Erie's 2009-10 and 2016 surveys and future surveys recommended in the chapters that follow).

Important activities related to undertaking surveys are (1) context statements, which are research documents undertaken ahead of, or in conjunction with, surveys that enable surveyors to understand

### A Fast Look at How Preservation Tax Credits Work

The amount of credit that can be obtained for a rehabilitation project is calculated as a percentage of the overall rehabilitation costs associated with the project:

- A 10% federal tax credit for the rehabilitation of older, non-historic commercial properties
- A 20% federal tax credit for the rehabilitation of certified historic buildings used for income-producing purposes
- A 20% state tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic, owner-occupied residences
- A 20% -30% state tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic buildings used for income-producing purposes
- Tax Credits Projects that meet the standards and requirements for History Colorado.
- Taxpayers seeking tax credits first obtain advance approval of rehab plans (working with History Colorado and often the local historic preservation advisory board)

### Preservation Tax Credits Quick Facts

- To date, more than a thousand Colorado buildings have been successfully restored and rehabilitated with the help of the State Historic Preservation Tax Credit.
- Statewide, more than \$800 million has been invested into tax credit-related projects since 1990, saving applicants more than \$150 million.
- Nationwide, nearly \$6 billion was invested in tax credit-related projects in 2013 alone. This led to the creation of more than 77,000 new jobs.
- Since 1978, investment in federal tax credit-related projects has created more than 2 million new jobs, \$35 billion in additional tax revenue, 450,000 new housing units, and \$245 billion in economic activity.

Source: <http://www.historycolorado.org/oahp/preservation-tax-credits>

the resources they discover in the field and their local, state, and perhaps national significance<sup>14</sup>; and (2) survey plans, so that surveys are carried out as efficiently as possible. History Colorado is encouraging more surveys under the current statewide plan. Even if eligible sites found during surveys are not listed in the National and State Registers (see next section), they can be assessed for protection during project planning if federal or state actions or funding are involved (see section on review and compliance, below).

Survey information has been collected in Colorado over the last fifty years and represents extensive field, laboratory, and archival research by a wide variety of government agencies, municipalities, educational institutions, preservation organizations, and the general public. The OAHF operates a cultural resource database with much of the data accessible to qualified cultural resource professionals and researchers, for a fee (and free trial period), via Compass, the name given to Colorado's on-line database of cultural resources. Access to Compass is free to CLGs; Erie should take full advantage of this access to build the town's inventory records.

### National and State Registers

In some ways considered the flagship "brand name" for OAHF (and other SHPOs around the nation), the National Register for Historic Places and the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties list Colorado's most historically and architecturally significant buildings, structures, sites, districts, and thematically linked resources. Surveys as described above provide the basis for identifying properties with potential for listing. All properties listed on the National Register are automatically listed on the State Register, and the State Register further contains sites significant to Colorado that may not qualify for National Register listing.

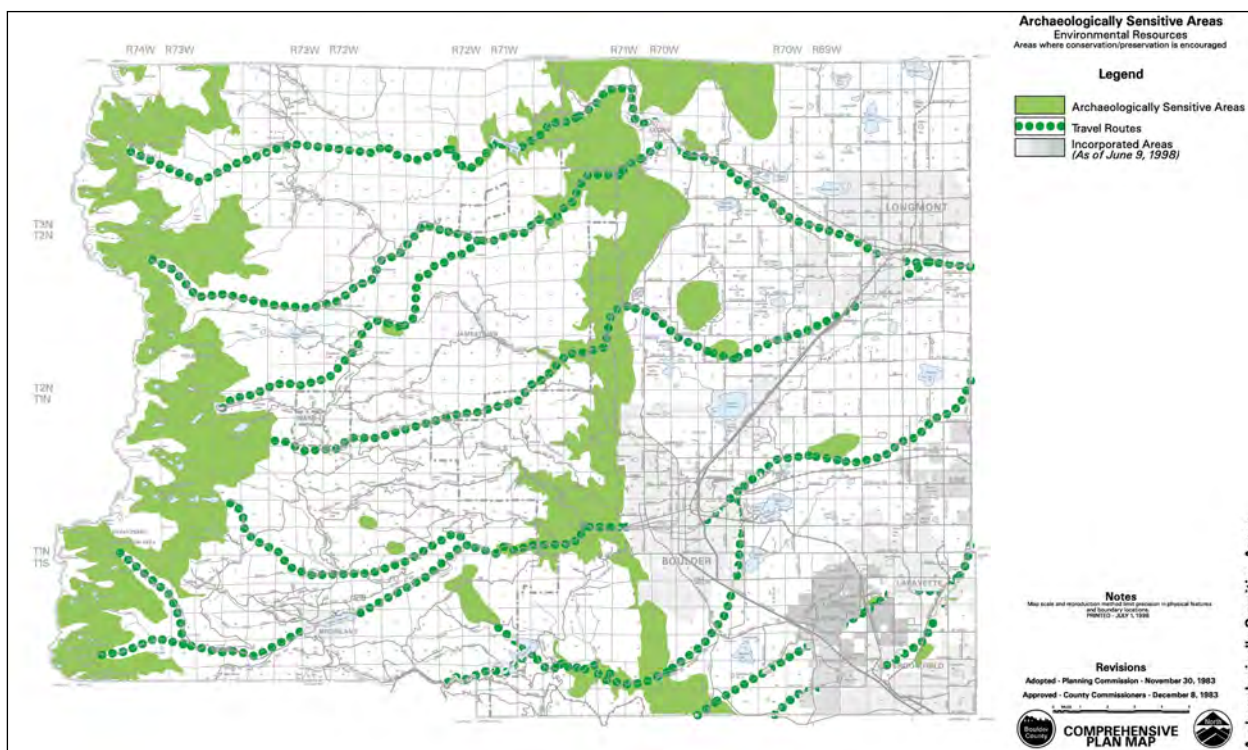
Once listed in the National or State Register, a historic property may be eligible for investment tax credits for approved rehabilitation projects (see section below). Listed properties are also eligible to compete for grants from Colorado's State Historical Fund (see next section).

Although OAHF strongly encourages the preservation of National and State Register properties, listing offers no automatic protection. Projects involving federal or state agency actions or funding are reviewed by OAHF with the goal of preserving historic resources whenever possible (both listed and eligible). Private owners of National and State Register properties using private funds, however, may alter or demolish listed properties within existing local regulations. (Only local zoning laws can govern the actions of private owners, including local preservation ordinances.)

OAHF staff is available to assist with the initial assessments of eligibility and to provide guidance in the completion of register nominations.

### State Historical Fund

The State Historical Fund was created by the 1990 state constitutional amendment allowing limited



gaming in the towns of Cripple Creek, Central Town, and Black Hawk. The amendment directs that a portion of the gaming tax revenues be used for historic preservation throughout the state. Funds are distributed through a competitive process; successful projects demonstrate strong public benefit and community support. Grants vary in size, from a few thousand dollars to amounts in excess of \$200,000; to date, grants have been awarded in all 64 counties, for well over 4,000 projects and totaling more than \$273 million. It is pretty safe to say that no other state in the nation has access to such generous funding, and it is one (though not the only) reason that the state's heritage tourism has grown exponentially since 1990.

The State Historical Fund assists in a wide variety of preservation projects including survey and planning projects; designation and interpretation of historic places; education and training programs; architectural assessments; acquisition, restoration, rehabilitation or development of historic resources; and archaeological excavations.

### **Funding for Certified Local Government Operations and Programs**

Certified Local Governments (CLGs), as described earlier, have access to grant funds available only to CLGs (through Colorado's federal grant, not the State Historical Fund). These grants do not require a cash match and can be used for survey, planning, nomination, or educational activities.

*The Boulder County Comprehensive Plan shows areas and travel routes of archaeological sensitivity north, south, and west of Erie's planning area (map at pdf p. 138, <https://assets.bouldercounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/bccp-comprehensive-plan.pdf>).*

### **Preservation Tax Credits**

Federal and state tax laws provide tax incentives for historic preservation projects that follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Appendix C). These credits allow taxpayers to reduce the amount of income tax they owe to the government. Colorado was among the first states to offer such tax credits, with a program established in 1990. In 2015, recognizing that the program leverages more financial returns (not to mention many other community and job benefits "off-balance-sheet") than it costs the state's taxpayers, Colorado began offering enhanced credits.

**Buildings landmarked under local law by Certified Local Governments may qualify for the state (but not federal) tax credits** (described in sidebars on p. 32 and in the info-graphics found on pp. 4-5). Moreover, Certified Local Governments have reviewed more than 90% of all applications for the State Historic Preservation Tax Credit, no matter how buildings are listed and able to qualify.

It is important to note that applicants are urged to contact OAHF staff as early as possible to ensure that



**Table 3-1 Roles of Erie Agencies, Staff, and Partners in Encouraging Historic Preservation**

<b>EHPAB Ordinance Citation</b>	<b>EHPAB Ordinance Language</b>	<b>Related Agencies/Staff/Town Partners</b>
3-3-2.D	Protect and enhance the town's attraction to tourists and visitors, increase the quality of life for the citizens and enhance future economic development.	For tourism: Town of Erie Economic Development Coordinator; Town of Erie Marketing Office; Parks and Recreation Department (calendar for town-sponsored events); Erie Chamber of Commerce (calendar for other events). For economic development: Town of Erie Economic Development Director, Erie Economic Development Council, Erie Chamber of Commerce. For economic development, plus quality of life: Planning Commission; Community Development Department (primarily the Planning Division); Urban Redevelopment Authority. (Also for quality of life, see next entry)
3-3-2.E	Promote the use of outstanding historical or architectural sites, structures, and objects for the education, stimulation and welfare of the people of the town.	Open Space and Trails Advisory Board; Parks and Recreation Department; Town Clerk's Office; High Plains Library District; Erie Historical Society; public K-12 schools (St. Vrain Valley School District; Boulder Valley SD) and private K-12 schools (The Alexander Dawson School; Holy Family High School; Vista Ridge Academy); and higher education institutions; also, outreach to such civic institutions as Rotary and Erie Seniors
3-3-2.F	Promote good urban design.	Planning Commission; Community Development Department (primarily the Planning Division); Parks and Recreation Department; Urban Redevelopment Authority
3-3-2.G	Promote and encourage continued private ownership and utilization of such sites, structures, or objects.	Planning Commission; Community Development Department (primarily the Planning Division but also the Building Division); Economic Development Director; Urban Redevelopment Authority; Erie Economic Development Council; Erie Chamber of Commerce
3-3-2.H	Integrate historic preservation with the town comprehensive development plan.	Planning Commission; Community Development Department's Planning Division

*Source: Heritage Strategies, LLC, 2017*

all requirements are met when applying for these programs. OAHP staff can provide advice to owners, developers, and architects concerning appropriate preservation and rehabilitation measures. In some cases, the staff will review applications for tax credits and make official recommendations for approval.

### **Review and Compliance**

When a federal agency funds, licenses, or permits an activity that may affect cultural resources, the agency must consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer. This is known as Section 106 review or

consultation (named after the section of the National Historic Preservation Act that lays out the authority). State agencies must also consult when their activities involve nominated or listed State Register properties. Local governments may be included in the consultation process, and Certified Local Governments may be delegated to undertake such reviews.

OAHP's review and compliance staff assist federal and state agencies and their applicants in carrying out these responsibilities. This consideration process involves a series of steps including:

- Identifying and evaluating the eligibility of the cultural resources.
- Determining effects of proposed work on eligible or listed properties.
- Seeking alternatives to avoid, minimize, or mitigate effects to such properties.

### Archaeology

Colorado's Office of the State Archaeologist (OSAC) investigates impacts to archaeological resources, provides technical and administrative assistance, and provides guidance relating to the identification, documentation, and protection of archaeological resources. These responsibilities are enumerated in state rather than in federal statutes and include the issuance of permits for archaeological and paleontological work on nonfederal lands in the state.

Under state law, the State Archaeologist responds to the discovery of unmarked human burials. The staff works with citizens to resolve potentially conflicting concerns between development, scientific research, and respectful treatment. More than 265 cases involving human remains have been reported to OSAC since Colorado law protecting unmarked graves was passed in 1990.

The Colorado Archaeological Society (CAS) and OSAC jointly operate Colorado's Program for Avocational Archaeological Certification (PAAC), a mutually beneficial educational program for avocational and professional archaeologists.<sup>15</sup>

### 3.5 Other Erie Agencies

Local, state, and federal historic preservation programs by themselves are both robust and specialized. So much so, in fact, that historic preservation practitioners, lay and professional alike – not to mention others outside the “historic preservation silo” – sometimes assume that a community's preservation needs are taken care of by a local commission and such immediate partners as preservation advocacy groups and historical societies.

The Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board is indeed a key player in ensuring that Erie and its residents take greatest advantage of local, state, and federal historic preservation programs.

Other activities of the Town of Erie and supporting organizations (“partners”), however, can be expected to affect historic resources in a wide variety of ways, potentially quite important ones. The ordinance establishing the advisory board makes this clear, outlining purposes of the EHPAB that indicate

### Vision Statement from Erie's Comprehensive Plan

Erie's 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update is an important guide for historic preservation. The vision statement (page 2-1) strongly supports Erie's “historic small town character”:

Erie is a community which recognizes the importance of conserving and enhancing its historic small town character, the roots from which it grew, preserving the natural environment in which it resides; a caring community which offers its residents an environment in which to seek a high quality of life; a balanced community with a diverse range of housing, employment, educational, shopping and recreational opportunities; and a vital community which provides financial and social support for quality of life programs.

coordination with other town programs, whether or not their names appear in the ordinance. The purpose of this section is to delineate those relationships.

Chapters 5 through 8 offer many recommendations that suggest useful alignments among all agencies and partners affecting historic preservation.

Table 3-1 offers key statements from the “purpose” section of the EHPAB ordinance, paired with relevant boards or commissions, town agencies, and key partners. The roles of these various actors are described in the following pages. The master plans that they follow are listed in Table 3-2. Text from those plans most likely to affect historic preservation goals is described along with agency roles in the following sections.

### Community Development Department

The Town of Erie's Community Development Department includes two divisions. The Planning Division is responsible for zoning, the land use review process, setback requirements, flood plain status, and allowable uses. The division also administers and updates the Town of Erie Comprehensive Plan, Unified Development Code, and other related regulations. The division also reviews all land use development applications from annexations through final plat.

The Building Division is a “one-stop shop” for individuals planning improvements to their properties. The division reviews construction plans, issues permits, performs inspections, and enforces

**Table 3-2 Plans in the Town of Erie Potentially Relevant to Historic Preservation**

<b>Name of Plan</b>	<b>Year Adopted</b>	<b>Town of Erie Lead Agency</b>
Airport Master Plan	2016	Airport Advisory Board
Airport Area Urban Renewal Plan	2012	Urban Renewal Authority (URA)
Coal Creek Park Conceptual Design	(in preparation)	Parks and Recreation Department (PRD)
Comprehensive Plan	2015	Planning Commission; Community Development Department (Planning Division)
Daybreak Urban Renewal Area Plan	2013	URA
Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan	2016	PRD
Four Corners Urban Renewal Area Plan	2015	URA
Highway 287 Urban Renewal Area Plan	2015	URA
Historic Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan	2013	URA
Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) Master Plan Update	2016	PRD

Source: <https://www.erieco.gov/526/Master-Plans>, accessed 3/24/17, updated by Heritage Strategies, LLC, 2017; does not include public works plans or plans of the multijurisdictional Urban Drainage and Flood Control District (UDFCD).

ordinances that ensure safe buildings and a healthy environment. It also manages the licensing of contractors and trades.

The Building Division’s application process is the basic mechanism for flagging landmarked buildings to receive added review by the EHPAB so that building improvements can attain certificates of appropriateness in addition to other applicable permits.

Many of the Community Development Department’s activities can affect historic resources, as indicated by the following two sections on the primary sources of guidance for the department’s operations, the Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Code (UDC).

Two “statutory boards” are required by the Colorado Revised Statutes, the Planning Commission and the Board of Adjustment. Both serve important functions in land use and are composed of town residents (volunteers appointed by the Board of Trustees).

### **Comprehensive Plan**

A goal clearly related to historic preservation in Chapter 13 of the Comprehensive Plan, “Community

Character and Design,” is Goal #1: “Maintain and Enhance Erie’s Character: Guide the appearance, scale, and location of development to enhance and maintain Erie’s unique character.” The “background and intent” statement introducing this chapter is important (p. 13-1):

Erie’s citizens take pride in the attractiveness and livability of their community. The Town will promote a high standard of design for all new development as well as for renovation and rehabilitation in the Old Town area to reinforce and maintain the established visual character of the community and the quality of life of its residents. In addition, the Town will promote the preservation of the community’s natural character by encouraging the retention of open space in all new development.

The Old Town area’s “unique character” or “visual character” (or “distinct neighborhood character,” all terms used on p. 13-1) clearly derives from the area’s historic resources and historic development pattern, which provide context from which to derive clear standards and guidelines for design. As noted in Chapter 5 of this preservation plan, further study of





*Erie is known regionally for its trails and open space system. The town had more than 40 miles of trails as of completion of an asset inventory undertaken for the update to Erie's Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan completed in 2016.*

the Old Town area would provide detailed knowledge of the elements of this context.

Several policies enumerated in Chapter 13 are important background for this Historic Preservation Master Plan, but the one most essential to the establishment of the town's historic preservation programs is this:

- "The Town will support the **preservation of structures and districts with historic and cultural significance**, encouraging the preservation and enhancement of historic resources in the community." (p. 13-2)

Other policy statements and key points made by the Comprehensive Plan are provided in Appendix D.

### Unified Development Code

The Town of Erie's Municipal Code, Title 10, also known as the Unified Development Code or UDC<sup>16</sup> governs the town's land use and the particulars of development (lot size, setback, clustering, design, etc.). The most recent version was completed in 2017, a continuation of a longstanding UDC. Following is a summary of the elements of the UDC that support or affect historic resources (see Appendix H for excerpts):

- Chapter 2 establishes **zoning districts**, including three affecting Erie's Old Town: Old Town Residential (OTR) (p. 8) and the mixed-use (commercial and residential) areas of Old Town known as Downtown (with two different zones, DT and NMU-Old Town) (p. 10); other zoning districts affect the historic landscape surrounding Erie, but are less discernably connected to specific landscape qualities (see Chapter 7 of this preservation plan for more discussion);

- The purpose of zoning for the OTR zone is "to ensure the preservation of the unique character and quality of life in the historic residential area of the Town by encouraging compatible redevelopment and infill development." Single-family residential development is allowed up to 5 dwelling units per acre and multi-family residential development of up to 16 dwelling units per acre is permitted throughout OTR (p. 8), although anything beyond single-family residential and residential duplexes requires special review (p. 35 – Comp Plan Table 3-1).
- Standards for the **Downtown (DT) and Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU-Old Town) Districts** "are intended to provide guidance for all mixed-use, commercial and public/institutional infill and redevelopment within the DT and NMU (Old Town) and to **ensure that new development respects the small-town scale and historic context of the area**. The standards will assist investors in making design choices that will have a positive impact on both the historic and future character of the DT and NMU (Old Town). Development in the DT and NMU (Old Town) should respect the historic character and reinforce the image of the DT and NMU (Old Town) as an attractive, pedestrian-oriented district." (p. 158)
- Chapter 1 also makes exceptions for historic structures relating to **variances** (p. 30<sup>17</sup>), procedures that are not necessarily tied to the town's historic preservation ordinance.<sup>18</sup>
- Finally, Chapter 1 incorporates historic structures into **permitting for a PUD or Planned Unit Development** (for reuse of "serviceable existing structures of historic value or artistic

*Erie's small commercial area has expanded in recent decades. The Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan and Historic Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan both aim to enlarge opportunities for new commercial development. Seen here: a brewery/restaurant, one of two recently constructed in Old Town.*



merit” (p. 31). Approval criteria for establishing a PUD (in Chapter 7, Review and Approval Procedures) include this statement, to which the PUD must conform: “The PUD Rezoning is not likely to result in significant adverse impacts to significant scenic and historic features as identified in plans adopted by the Town.” (p. 206)

- Chapter 6 establishes “General Site Design Requirements to Protect Natural and Scenic Features,” including “the natural and man-made features that contribute significantly to the **Town’s scenic quality and small-town character**, including the: varying topography and hillsides, **reservoirs**, stream corridors, floodplains, **irrigation ditches**, wetlands, native and **specimen trees and vegetation**, wildlife habitat and corridors, dramatic view corridors to the mountains, **historic or cultural sites**, and other significant features.” (pp. 94-95)
- Chapter 6 also establishes the rationale for protecting open space as the town develops: “Broad views and rolling agricultural lands are abundant and contribute significantly to the Town’s character; however, many of these lands are planned for future development in the Town’s Comprehensive Master Plan. In addition to providing land for trails, open space can help direct growth, **maintain rural character**, protect sensitive environmental areas, **scenic views and historic resources**, and provide **opportunities for education**, wildlife protection and observation, hiking, and other passive and active recreation activities for existing and future the Town residents.” (p. 108) Clear guidelines that follow this statement of intent include the statement that “Open space shall not consist solely of

undevelopable or ‘left-over’ pieces of the site, but shall be **designed as an integral part of the overall development plan**, incorporating identified environmentally and historically significant components of the site.” (p. 110)

- Finally, Chapter 12 sets forth regulations for oil and gas operations. **Oil and gas developments** – including both operations and road access – “shall not cause significant degradation to resources of historic, cultural, paleontological, or archaeological importance.” (p. 331)

### **Parks and Recreation Department**

The Parks and Recreation Department’s mission is to build “community through the delivery of exceptional parks, open spaces, trails, facilities, programs, and services.” The department manages parks, indoor and outdoor recreation, open space, and trail facilities, programs, and services. The town’s Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan, updated in 2016 (“PROST Master Plan Update”), notes that “86% of the Erie town limits is within one mile of a recreation opportunity.”

In 2004, voters approved a ballot measure for “Trails, Natural Areas, and Community Character” that established a ten-year commitment to a 4.0 mill property tax. As explained in the PROST Master Plan Update, “Revenue from the tax is intended for the purpose of creating hiking, biking, and walking trails throughout town to connect neighborhoods and the regional trail network; purchasing natural areas to separate Erie from other communities; preserving wildlife habitat; protecting natural areas along Coal Creek and Boulder Creek, and conserving scenic landscapes and views.... As of 2015, it has been extended another 10 years to 2024. This source of





*The south end of Briggs Street (past the last flag on right in front of the two-story building, the Old Mine Restaurant) is predominantly single-family residential. Redevelopment for modern commercial and residential uses is encouraged under current plans. The sunny southern entrance to town, a key gateway, is visible in the distance.*

funding flows into the Trails and Natural Areas Fund.” (p. 104)

Thanks to this funding plus the implementation, as new neighborhoods are constructed, of development agreements establishing land contributions or fees-in-lieu in support of open space and recreation planning, Erie is known regionally for its **trails and open space system**. The town had more than 40 miles of trails as of completion of a current asset inventory undertaken for the master plan update completed in 2016. (p. 75)

The department’s recreational and trail responsibilities include **signage and interpretation**; installation of interpretive signs around Old Town is currently under development.

The broad mandate of the voters means that as Erie has grown, **through open space purchases the town has been able to acquire some historic properties**, most notably the Al and Mary Schofield Farm, discussed in Chapter 6. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for managing these properties.

The Parks and Recreation Department staffs two citizen-volunteer boards mandated and appointed by the Board of Trustees, the Open Space and Trails Advisory Board (OSTAB) and the Tree Board. The OSTAB advises the Board of Trustees on open space and trails-related issues. The Tree Board supports programs that assure that Erie continues its “Tree Town USA” designation, which is granted by the National Arbor Day Foundation to municipalities that effectively manage their public tree resources and implement community forestry programs.

### **Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails (PROST) Master Plan**

The UDC states that

open space shall be organized to create continuous, integrated systems that physically and visually connect with the following features dedicated or identified in the Town of Erie Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan: (A) Parks or greenways; (B) School sites; (C) Historic, cultural, or archaeological sites and features; or (D) Trail and open space systems.

The 2016 PROST Master Plan Update does not definitively address (C), simply echoing general guidelines and affirmation of the Comprehensive Plan and the UDC concerning the importance of historic resources when and as they are encountered in the open space protection process.

The master plan update has a strong focus on land protection and does address parks, greenways, school sites, and trails and open space systems. Evaluators of proposed acquisitions are able to draw on an adopted Natural Areas Inventory from 2008, which “identifies and evaluates 140 parcels within the Erie planning area based on their value in the categories of wetlands, habitat, wildlife, and vegetation.... [and is] an important starting point for evaluating properties within Erie’s planning area for protection as natural, vegetative, and wildlife open space.” (p. 104)

Besides Schofield Farm mentioned above, two projects currently under development by the Parks and Recreation Department, following guidance from the PROST Master Plan Update, are important in relation to historic preservation in the Town of Erie: The Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan and



### Objectives of the Historic Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan (2013)

- Eliminate and prevent blight by facilitating development and redevelopment.
- Implement elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Support and advance actions identified in existing plans prepared by the Town of Erie related to **development of vacant and under-utilized parcels** that are consistent with the vision of this Plan.
- Improve the **relationship between this area and the balance of the community**.
- Encourage a **mix of land uses** and product types that foster vitality within the Area and compatibility with used [uses] in surrounding areas.
- Provide **infrastructure that encourages non-vehicular movement** within and to the Area.
- Increase property values and strengthen the Town's economic base.
- Provide uses supportive of and complementary to planned improvements.
- Encourage the **continued presence of existing viable downtown business**.
- Support local businesses.
- Increase the **capacity and quality of infrastructure** in the Area.
- Support **the preservation of historic and other structures** deemed significant.
- Balance **infill and fringe development** in an effort to keep both healthy.
- Develop and enhance **gateways** to Old Town.
- **Enhance established neighborhoods**.
- Support **landscaping standards for properties located along Briggs and Wells Streets**.
- Improve the public realm including **streetscape amenities**.
- Incorporate safe, convenient **pedestrian linkages** between the Area and other centers of activity.
- Advance uses that can leverage public investment in planned improvements.
- Provide a range of financing mechanisms for improvements.
- Facilitate public-private partnerships.

a conceptual design for Coal Creek Park as a part of Historic Downtown Erie.

### Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan

This plan ("Downtown Plan," adopted in December of 2016) is intended as a companion to the Comprehensive Plan, Unified Development Code, and Historic Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan and addresses both the Downtown (DT) District and the Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU – Old Town) District. As noted in the introduction, the Downtown Plan "also recognizes the importance of the relationship to the major elements of the park program in the Coal Creek Park Conceptual Design document." (p. 1)

Also in its introduction, the Downtown Plan states:

The Town of Erie is in the process of cementing its position as a unique, historic downtown that will provide a variety of opportunities for new restaurants, retail, office, possible small scale live work environments, multifamily, recreation, and community events.

The growth of residential communities in the surrounding areas are bringing a demographic that will seek the experiences provided in a historic downtown with a contemporary small town atmosphere. (p. 1)

Intended to support the development of a "healthy, vibrant, welcoming and economically strong Downtown," the Downtown Plan is designed to help "create and promote the Historic Downtown core as 'The Place' to gather, live, work and play" and retain Erie's status as a "pedestrian scale town that once was typical of small rural towns in the west."<sup>19</sup>

Physical improvements addressed by the Downtown Plan include the following (from p. 2):

- **Vehicular gateways** to provide guidance for improvements on sign identification and improvements
- A **new street access** to the Downtown from Colliers Hill.
- Trail improvements, including:
  - ♦ A **new circulator trail for non-vehicular access through the Downtown** District from the Coal Creek trail to the Erie Community Center. (A goal is to encourage alternate forms of transportation and ease parking challenges during events.)
  - ♦ A **new pedestrian/bike bridge into Coal Creek Park** from the Coal Creek trail corridor.

- ♦ A **dedicated on-street bike lane on Wells Street** from Coal Creek Park to Erie Middle School. Implementation of the on-street bike lane will require a one-way configuration of Wells Street.
- ♦ A dedicated **off-street pedestrian/bike trail adjacent to High Street** on town-owned property [once a railroad right-of-way].
- Strategies to **improve parking availability** for on-street parking and off-street parking lots.
- Recommendations for **streetscape improvements** to create a consistent identity in the Downtown and Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts.
- Relay a **Town of Erie vision for redevelopment proposals** on property within the Downtown and Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts.

As further detail on the last point, the Downtown Plan notes

The Downtown and Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts within Old Town Erie provide a unique historic character that includes a variety of civic, commercial, office and residential uses in a pedestrian friendly setting. The overall character of the area is of significant importance to the broader community as it is the location of small businesses, the location for a wide variety of events and is the historic center of the community that creates a draw for the community as a whole. (p. 12)

The plan describes strategies for circulation, streetscape and parking; responsibility of private developers; and downtown redevelopment. A sampling of relevant strategies:

- Provide parking (and employ strategies that encourage use of bikes) to “minimize vehicular circulation through the Downtown area in search of parking which creates congestion and greater opportunity for pedestrian vehicle conflict” (pp. 13-14)
- Improve “the streetscape edge of Wells Street” that will “create a pedestrian corridor that is in keeping with the streetscape image already present in the 500 block of Briggs Street” – “as an opportunity to create additional store fronts.” (p. 14)
- Important guidelines (echoing requirements found in the UDC) styled as the “responsibility of private developers” in redeveloping targeted areas “in a manner that is sensitive to and

reflects the character of the surrounding neighborhood.” (pp. 16-17)

### Coal Creek Park Conceptual Design

The conceptual design for Coal Creek Park, still in process, developed two themes in early planning, “nature” and “historic.” In the current draft, the two themes are combined, in recognition that the park serves as the transition from the historic Downtown District to the natural environment along Coal Creek. Development of the park will influence the ability of the historic downtown to host even more events, by providing space, amenities such as a designed area for outdoor vendors, and parking; and will help to attract Erie’s families to an outstanding part of town (both park and the downtown). Implementation of this plan will do much to activate, even more, Historic Downtown Erie and help it to grow as a lively business, service, and residential district serving both residents and visitors.

### Urban Renewal Authority

EURA (URA), which is the BOT and other entities functioning under a different name, is a mechanism to allow the Town of Erie to take advantage of certain financial programs allowed under state law to be established by the town. By delineating certain areas for urban renewal, allowing removal of “blighted” structures and use of eminent domain, the town is able to obtain grants, make loans, and undertake “tax increment financing” in a delineated district (“TIF district”<sup>20</sup>). Modern urban renewal programs can be compatible with historic preservation.

### Historic Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan

One of Erie’s several urban renewal plans for specified areas within the town and its planning area is a 2013 plan for “Historic Old Town Erie” (“URA Old Town Plan”; for others, see Table 3-2). It includes the entire area of Old Town, both residential and commercial. The plan’s purpose is to

Reduce, eliminate and prevent the spread of blight within the Area by stimulating growth and investment within its boundaries. To accomplish this purpose, the Plan is intended to promote local objectives expressed in adopted community plans with respect to appropriate land uses, private investment, and public improvements.... Specifically, the Plan seeks to advance the vision and priorities of the Town of Erie Comprehensive Plan.... The development of properties within the Area will be accomplished

through the improvement of existing and construction of new, structures and infrastructure, attraction of new investment and investment in the Area through the involvement of the Authority and Town with participation and cooperation by the private sector. (Section 3.0 (pdf pp. 8-9))

The URA Old Town Plan specifically notes that it is designed to support the Comprehensive Plan “with respect to connectivity to neighborhoods, accessibility to open space, completion of infrastructure including activity centers, preservation of natural features and quality design that promotes Erie’s unique identity.” (Section 5.1 [pdf p. 12]) Historic preservation is not specified in this statement, but as discussed above, the Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of historic structures.

Moreover, at least one objective of the URA Old Town Plan is specifically to “support the preservation of historic and other structures deemed significant.” (see sidebar, p. 40) The URA Old Town Plan also affirms a Comprehensive Plan “key principle” that includes this statement: “The Town will work to maintain the quality and character of established neighborhoods and ensure that infill and redevelopment is designed in a manner that minimizes impacts on existing neighborhoods.” (URA Plan pdf p. 15)

Basically, the URA Old Town Plan describes and puts in place necessary funding mechanisms and town powers for undertaking goals and objectives described in the plan and the Comprehensive Plan. It therefore sets up the town’s ability to implement specific projects identified in the Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan described earlier in this chapter. The URA plan does not, however, provide any specificity as to priorities or projects intended (a listing of priorities is a repeat of many goals and policies from the Comprehensive Plan), and its reach goes well beyond the limited DT and NMU-Old Town mixed-use zones, potentially affecting the entire Old Town, including extensive residential areas.

### **Town Clerk’s Office**

Town clerks everywhere have a central role in keeping the wheels of municipal administration moving. In the Town of Erie, the Town Clerk, web page lists a host of responsibilities: Board of Trustees recording secretary, election administration, records management, a variety of licenses and permits, and the town’s legal notices.

In terms of historic preservation, Erie’s Town Clerk carries out two special roles. First, she provides staff support to the EHPAB, supporting the all-volunteer board’s meetings, administering its CLG grants (including the 2009-10 and 2016 surveys and this preservation plan), and submitting the annual CLG report required by History Colorado.

Second, tucked off to one side on the office’s web page is a link to “cemetery,” leading readers to information on the town-owned cemetery, featuring how to buy a plot and access plots they own, administered by the Town Clerk. The town-owned Mount Pleasant Cemetery, however, is no ordinary cemetery. The 2016 survey suggests that it is eligible for the National Register, and the web link for the cemetery includes a thorough history of the cemetery. The former Town Clerk has devoted considerable time to researching the people interred there (and has been known to work on mysteries of unnamed graves, monument restoration, and the design of new fencing installed when a nearby development was approved). As a result, she developed both a passion for the cemetery and expertise on town history, and was known to give an entertaining walking tour.

### **Economic Development**

Town and partner economic development activities can offer a point of outreach to business owners and could partner with the EHPAB on training for business property owners and others who interface with property owners (such as real estate agents). Depending on the roles of various partners, they can also influence support for heritage tourism activities as described in Chapter 9.

Erie’s economic development is coordinated by the Town’s Economic Development Director, a part of the Town Manager’s Office. The coordinator focuses on attracting primary employers<sup>21</sup>, retail businesses, and other economic development to help the town grow. The Director helps clients with such needs as understanding site acquisition prospects and data to evaluate potential sites; arranging prospects’ visits, briefings, and community familiarization tours; and assisting businesses through the development and permitting process. The administrator also helps provide support to the Northeast Central Colorado Small Business Development Center (SBDC), allowing opportunities for local SBDC assistance several times a month to Erie businesses, and coordinates training and a variety of small business financial incentives. Finally, assisted by the Town Clerk, the Economic





*Mount Pleasant Cemetery dates back to Erie's earliest days and is still in active use. It is supervised by the Town Clerk.*

Development Director provides staff support to the Urban Renewal Authority.

Erie's 2007 Economic Development Plan, prepared by Upstate Colorado Economic Development, a public/private non-profit economic development corporation that provides services to all of Weld County and its 31 communities (<http://upstatecolorado.org/>), notes the following key marketing strengths<sup>22</sup>:

- Prime location for development, given its proximity to Boulder, and the access it enjoys by way of I-25, Highway 7 and Highway 287
- A highly-educated workforce, with significant discretionary income
- Access to higher education (CU, Front Range and Aims Community Colleges), including online availability
- Adequate water resources
- Good access to utilities
- Generally good access to telecommunications
- Old Town Erie provides community focal point
- Broad range of housing opportunities
- Prevailing attitude is forward-thinking

### **3.6 Existing and Potential Local Partners in Preservation Activities**

In addition to Erie's town boards and staff, a few other organizations outside Erie's direct control may be able to play roles in encouraging historic preservation in Erie.

#### **High Plains Library District**

Erie's modern library, located next to the community center, offers meeting space and routinely sponsors history lectures (co-sponsored with the EHPAB and the Erie Historical Society). The current branch administrator has indicated an interest in helping the town and its residents to address the challenge of archiving historical documents related to Erie's history. Along with the community center, the library offers space for rotating exhibits, generally local artists.

The High Plains Library District is special taxing district and branch library system of which the Town of Erie is a member. The district currently operates seven branch libraries (including one in Erie) plus bookmobile services. Six autonomous libraries governed by separate boards of trustees are also members.

The district's web site explains it was established in 1986 as the Weld Library District "to improve library service to residents through the sharing of books, staff, and tax revenue. The taxing authority includes most of Weld County.... In 2007 the Town of Erie's Boulder County residents voted to become part of High Plains Library District. The major source of revenue for High Plains Library District is derived from a 3.349 mill levy applied to the assessed value of portions of Weld and Boulder County properties. The District serves over 245,959 residents of Weld County and parts of neighboring counties, and covers a geographic area of almost 4,000 square miles." It was renamed in 2008. A Board of Trustees serves as the governing board, appointed through a selection committee.<sup>24</sup>

### **Erie Historical Society**

Communities across the United States often have a historical society organized to take care of collections of archives and objects, quite often operating a museum or other heritage facility relating to community history. Interestingly, historical societies rarely get directly involved in historic preservation. That is usually the domain of a governmental body like EHPAB, and if a community is very lucky (and usually very large) it will also have a nonprofit advocacy group for historic preservation. There is no such advocacy group in Erie.

Founded in 1984, the Erie Historical Society states on its website (<http://www.eriehistoricalsociety.org/>) that the society honors “those hard working pioneers who mined the coal, worked the fields and ran the railroads, as well as the pioneer women who raised the families and educated the children.” Its articles of incorporation include this statement from its website about its purpose: “The purpose of this society shall be to bring together those people interested in history especially the history of Erie, and to bring about an appreciation of the heritage of the American West. It will collect and preserve artifacts of the period and shall provide educational programs illustrating life in the early 20th century. It shall preserve and disseminate printed historical material regarding the community.”

The society operates the beautifully restored 1870 Wise Homestead on Jasper Road just west of Old Town, considered one of the oldest frame houses in Boulder County. A blacksmith shop original to the property is at the entrance to the site to which the homestead was moved (not far from its original location), and across the road are the remains of a mill and two outbuildings associated with the homestead. Massive cottonwoods line this stretch of Jasper Road (photo opposite, bottom).

The society’s website explains, “Sarah Wise, great-granddaughter of Oliver Wise [the builder] and longtime Erie resident, became involved in the Erie Historical Society in the early 1990’s. It had been her dream for many years to honor her family’s heritage by turning the house into a museum. With Sarah’s help, the Erie Historical Society received a grant from the Colorado Historical Society for the restoration of the original farmhouse’s exterior. Eventually, the restoration of the home’s interior was also funded and completed. The Wise Homestead museum opened to the public in July 2007.”

The historical society also sponsors one of the town’s popular seasonal events, Biscuit Day. The September

2017 Biscuit Day will be the fifteenth year of what it explains is a revival of a tradition established in Erie in the 1870s: “Most likely, Biscuit Day was one of the final community gatherings before the men returned to work in the coal mines. In Erie, the mines were closed in the summers because the particular type of coal that was mined in the area would disintegrate in hot weather.”<sup>24</sup>

### **Economic Development**

Private, nonprofit organizations supporting business development in cooperation with the town are the Erie Economic Development <http://www.erieedc.com/>; and the Erie Chamber of Commerce, <http://www.eriechamber.org/>. The EEDC’s mission is consistent with Erie’s Economic Development Director and its investor-members support similar business-recruitment activities. The Chamber is a business networking and advocacy/support group with approximately 300 members and, with the town’s support, is a partner with the SBDC. The Chamber’s events calendar may serve as a posting site for announcements of community events not sponsored by the town (which has its own events calendar operated by the Parks and Recreation Department). The Chamber’s lively website also includes a “history highlight” borrowed from an EHPAB publication.

### **Other Organizations**

Local organizations represent potential partners and other sources of support. The EHPAB has made presentations to the Erie Rotary Club and Erie Seniors, for example. The Arts Coalition of Erie, which represents about 70 artists, or approximately 60 percent of the artists in town, operates The Art Center of Erie (known as the A.C.E.), located in Old Town, to present visual and performing arts programs, classes, and events. The site is an old children’s library owned by the Town of Erie and leased by the Coalition.<sup>25</sup>

Because Erie is located in two counties, there are two K-12 public school districts that might also participate in a variety of historic preservation programs, St. Vrain Valley and Boulder Valley, plus three private schools (<https://www.erieco.gov/302/Schools>).

## **3.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a thorough look at the many possible actors and partners in Erie and beyond whose work and policies can affect the progress of historic preservation in Erie. In the next chapter, we focus on concepts and principles for achieving historic preservation.





*The Wise Homestead Complex, an Erie-designated Historic Landmark, is owned by the Erie Historical Society and managed as a museum. In addition to the 1870 ranch house (pictured on p. 15), the complex includes a peg barn (top, moved to the property); plus a blacksmith shop and scale house (second photo, foreground); the remains of a grain mill (second and third photos, background); and a granary and chicken coop (third photo, foreground, midground). All but the peg barn are in their original locations. Jasper Road itself is also considered historic (views east and west shown in bottom two photos). Sarah Wise, granddaughter of the builder of the complex, recalls, "Jasper was the lane into the Wise farm and farmers unloaded their grain for grinding on that side of the mill."*





### End Notes for Chapter 3:

<sup>1</sup> If professionals in these fields are not available, the SHPO can waive this requirement if the local government demonstrates its capability to carry out commission responsibilities. When the disciplines of architecture, history, architectural history, or archaeology are not represented in HPC membership, the HPC should seek additional expertise when considering National Register nominations and any other delegated actions [discussed in the section below re History Colorado] that will affect properties that are normally evaluated by a professional in that discipline.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bouldercounty.org/property/build/pages/bccp.aspx>, paragraphs combined.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.erieco.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/989>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.bouldercounty.org/property/build/pages/histpresmain.aspx>

*(Above) The house museum at the Wise family ranch maintained by the Erie Historical Society includes this massive cookstove, up-to-the-minute technology when the ranch house (pictured on p. 15) was built around 1870.*

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bouldercounty.org/doc/landuse/bocomplan.pdf>, pdf pp. 58-62, evidently written at the time of the program's establishment

<sup>6</sup> Reported by the National Park Service's CLG program at [https://grantsdev.cr.nps.gov/CLG\\_Review/GetCLGCoordinator.cfm?IDNumber=675](https://grantsdev.cr.nps.gov/CLG_Review/GetCLGCoordinator.cfm?IDNumber=675). Boulder County's survey data may be even more extensive, as suggested by information found on the web page <http://www.bouldercounty.org/property/build/pages/hpbackground.aspx> on the history of the county's historic preservation program.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.bouldercounty.org/doc/landuse/agriculturalheritagewolfenbarger.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.bouldercounty.org/property/build/pages/hpgrantprogram.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/612.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/612.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.historycolorado.org/oaHP/state-preservation-plan>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Programs/StatePlan\\_Summary2016.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Programs/StatePlan_Summary2016.pdf), 2016 Update, Summary, p. 3, emphasis added.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, emphasis added.



<sup>13</sup> Note: The following passages are based closely on History Colorado's web pages for these programs; all are described in detail at <http://www.historycolorado.org/oahp>.

<sup>14</sup> For a list of those already available, generally on a statewide basis, see <http://www.historycolorado.org/archaeologists/historic-prehistoric-contexts>

<sup>15</sup> Established in 1978, PAAC allows CAS members and other Coloradoans to obtain formally recognized levels of expertise outside of an academic degree program. It also facilitates avocational public service and assistance in education, governmental management of cultural resources, research, and the protection of archaeological resources in Colorado. PAAC complements, but does not replace, existing university and governmental training programs. For more information, see <http://www.historycolorado.org/oahp/program-avocational-archaeological-certification-paac>.

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.sterlingcodifiers.com/codebook/index.php?book\\_id=477](http://www.sterlingcodifiers.com/codebook/index.php?book_id=477)

<sup>17</sup> "Variances may be issued for the reconstruction, rehabilitation or restoration of structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places or the State Inventory of Historic Places, without regard to the

procedures set forth in the remainder of this Section." And: "Variances may be issued for the repair or rehabilitation of historic structures upon a determination that the proposed repair or rehabilitation will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a historic structure and the appeal is the minimum necessary to preserve the historic character and design of the structure." (both on p. 30)

<sup>18</sup> Note that the UDC has the usual language up front dealing with "Conflict with Other Public Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, or Permits: This UDC is intended to complement other Town, State, and Federal regulations that affect land use. This UDC is not intended to revoke or repeal any other Town, State or Federal law, ordinance, regulation, or permit. However, where conditions, standards, or requirements imposed by any provision of this UDC are either more restrictive or less restrictive than comparable standards imposed by any other Town, State or Federal law, ordinance, or regulation, **the provisions that are more restrictive or**

*(Above) The Rose Café is a popular business in the central commercial block on Briggs Street. It is one of the many properties that has yet to be formally surveyed, but was included in a recent reconnaissance by EHPAB volunteers.*





*Mature street trees along Holbrook Street dwarf the modest houses of Old Town Erie. The house on the corner is a nice example of a 1940s residence with its distinctive unbalanced roofline on the entry.*



**that impose higher standards or requirements shall govern.” (p. 3, emphasis added)**

<sup>19</sup> As described on the web page describing the Downtown Plan, <http://erieco.gov/1365/Parks-Recreation-Master-Plan-Projects>

<sup>20</sup> A tax increment financing (TIF) district is a way of dedicating the “increment” of new tax revenues from new development to spending in the district rather than directing it to local municipal, county, school district or special districts. Often administrators of TIF districts borrow against future revenues to amass funds for infrastructure to attract and support the new development.

<sup>21</sup> Primary employers create a product or service sold beyond a community, thereby drawing new money and profits into the community. They may include manufacturing, back-office operations or service centers, corporate headquarters, distribution facilities, and research and development. Primary jobs create the disposable income that allows development of retail, entertainment, and service sectors (secondary jobs).

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.erieco.gov/documentcenter/view/291>, pp. 11-12. The plan appears to be valid and useful despite being ten years old. It recommends a façade improvement program for Old Town Erie, an indication of the value it places on the downtown district’s attractiveness. See Chapter 6 for discussion of ideas for Old Town Erie’s commercial downtown.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.mylibrary.us/about-us/>  
#1483078411971-823eb0cb-a52e

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.eriehistoricalsociety.org/erie-biscuit-day/>

<sup>25</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erie,\\_Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erie,_Colorado)





## Chapter 4: Historic Preservation Approach

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter offers an approach to preservation in Erie, lays out Erie's vision and goals for historic preservation, and provides additional thoughts on how preservation principles and best practices apply in Erie.

Erie's historic mining, agricultural, and railroading stories are celebrated among residents and local historians – as indicated by local histories produced by local high school classes<sup>1</sup> to recent books by local historians. Moreover, town residents flock to the tiny, historic downtown of Old Town Erie, sensing without

knowing much in the way of detail that Erie has a unique identity and enjoying the businesses that are prospering from the downtown's growing popularity. The Erie Historical Society's Biscuit Day, a celebration of local heritage, is a beloved September event and other community events take place in Coal Creek Park beside the downtown.

Though the many stories collected about Erie are appealing, the survival of so many buildings over more than a century and the town's remarkable, layered historical environment are not as greatly appreciated. Many of the buildings have changed, but with every change, there's a story. A false-front commercial building built in 1908 (545 Briggs Street) now is covered with half-log siding from 1948, now old enough to be historic in its own right (photo, p. 89). What made that owner renovate the building,



*(Above and left) Alice B. Powell, daughter of Reverend Richard J. Van Valkenburg (an Erie founder), and her husband erected the Powell House at 370 Briggs Street in about 1891. The hostel, later known as the Egnew Hotel, provided lodgings for bachelor miners. Erie historian Anne Dyni explained: "Rent was paid by the month for room and board, which included packing a dinner bucket to take into the mine... In its heyday [the Egnew] had nine sleeping rooms upstairs and a dining room below." (Caption courtesy Front Range Research Associates, 2009-2010 Erie survey. The building today is a private residence.)*

*Erie has been surveyed only lightly, in Old Town and in Erie's larger planning area, where agriculture, mining, and railroading are evident in the layers and patterns of the cultural landscape.*



soon after World War II? There are countless hidden stories like this everywhere in Old Town. This is a town that has been lived in, and loved, for a long time. To walk or drive Erie's streets and see the rhythm of these buildings, the layout of the town, the variety of buildings built by miners themselves, and catch glimpses of remaining railroad rights of way in town and beyond, where the mining actually took place, is to enter into a place with a powerful identity.

As Erie as a whole grows and changes and responds to trends beyond its boundary on the Front Range, it should be possible to retain and enhance the identity of Erie's Old Town. Erie has grown large and wealthy around this historic kernel surviving from the 1870's, an adaptation to late 20th and early 21st century trends that should enable Old Town's future. Remote and declining Crested Butte, no longer a mining town, was saved many years ago because of new economic trends in skiing and other mountain recreation. The economic boom of the Front Range should likewise be harnessed to celebrate Erie as a rare, high-quality survivor of Colorado's earliest frontier heritage.

## 4.2 An Approach for Historic Preservation in Erie

The preservation approach for Erie's historic preservation master plan is founded on three insights:

1. It is vital to **understand Erie's buildings and landscapes**;
2. it is critical to **educate owners and community leaders** about the value of Erie's buildings and

landscapes and how to take care of them (and what resources exist to help them); and

3. Erie's **planning and investment must be aligned with stated goals for preserving Erie's unique character**, in order to encourage the survival of Erie's historic buildings and landscapes.

The chapters that follow will lay out strategies for action in detail. For this chapter, let's start by examining the three steps outlined here.

### **Understand Buildings and Landscapes**

Erie has been surveyed only lightly, in Old Town and in Erie's larger planning area, where agriculture, mining, and railroading are evident in the layers and patterns of the cultural landscape.

In the Old Town, "selective-intensive" surveys of 36 buildings offer tantalizing clues to the quality of the whole. Thanks to those surveys, there are already a few properties identified as individually eligible for the National and State Registers (either just the state's, or both; see sidebars, p. 76). Many more might be found eligible as elements of districts – depending on how the whole, or some neighborhoods, are understood. (As explained in Chapter 3 and Chapter 8, this kind of district recognition has no impact on private property owners' ability to make changes. It simply makes them eligible for tax benefits and perhaps grants and loans.) Surveying can take place even as the EHPAB continues to encourage local landmarking – which qualifies owners for state tax credits, and enlists





*Public outreach may appear in the last chapter, but it needs to be understood as an effort completely parallel, from the beginning, in the preservation work to be inspired by this historic preservation master plan. The Heritage Strategies team of preservation planners enjoyed friendly waves and conversations with proud homeowners during several walks around Old Town Erie.*

owners in the research effort required by the Erie landmark nomination form.

As also explained in Chapter 8, it is urgent to gain more information about resources in Old Town, both in the neighborhoods and in the commercial area, but most particularly along Briggs, Wells, and Cheesman Streets. There, new mixed-use development and changes in use to existing buildings are currently planned, with likely “edge” impacts to their immediate surroundings. Both development of Coal Creek Park and related changes to create more trail access and urban renewal investment in various forms of infrastructure and other development have the potential to stimulate more growth and change before the historic resources in those areas are fully understood.

As explained in Chapter 7, in Erie’s planning area beyond official town boundaries, where annexations and development are proceeding apace, Erie’s Natural Resource Inventory of 2008 and earlier surveys by Boulder County are starting places for cultural landscape assessment and historic resource surveying. Erie has the funds and the opportunity to purchase more properties for its open space and trail system and/or the ability to identify resources for protection and trail development during private development, in the town’s review process. A better understanding of historic resources and the entire landscape would aid in further trail planning (with, we hope, added interpretation over time, as mentioned in Chapter 7).

As mentioned in Chapter 3, History Colorado is fully behind the ambition for more and better surveying.

### **Educate Owners and Community Leaders**

Public outreach and education as a strategic activity to support historic preservation in Erie starts with making plans to disseminate what has been learned through surveys, as noted in Chapter 9. From such old-fashioned techniques as calendars, note cards, and walking tours to richly designed web sites, mobile app tours, and interpretive waysides, Erie’s residents should be presented with many opportunities to learn alongside the EHPAB as it leads the effort to learn more about Erie’s surviving historic resources. Chapter 9 focuses on some of these techniques; discussion of public outreach may appear in the last chapter, but it needs to be understood as an effort completely parallel, from the beginning, in the preservation work to be inspired by this historic preservation master plan.

Alongside reporting to the public on what the survey and research program reveals, it is critical to stimulate robust outreach to property owners and community leaders to discuss needs and opportunities for encouraging great private preservation. What is possible? What does a great historic preservation program look like? What fits well with community needs and funds and staff and volunteer capacity? What outside resources are available? How can the ordinance establishing the EHPAB be tuned up to achieve efficiencies and more and better individual and community action? The planning process for this plan is just the beginning of what needs to be an ongoing conversation. The entire community needs to understand both the value of the historic resources that have survived here, and what historic preservation means and how to “own” it, in a way that works for Erie.



*The Pearl Winslow House (historic name) is an Erie Historic Landmark.*



A principal benefit of this plan has been to build upon Erie's current foundation of planning and preservation through community dialogue and learning about the possibilities of historic preservation's contribution to Erie's community-building mission. This plan is a record of what is possible, and where future dialogue and action are needed if Erie's character and wealth of historic resources are to be preserved and enhanced. While community action is expected and encouraged in this plan, this plan's approach also expects (and respects) the participation of property owners, whose knowledge, investment, and individual action will be fundamental to the long-term survival of Erie's historic structures.

### **Take Steps to Enhance Erie's Resources and Identity**

The planning for Erie is state-of-the-art in many ways. But as much as there is significant running room for historic preservation in both the Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Code, and simple notations of "historic character" in other plans that reflect the Comp Plan's guidance, there are many details for the preservation of historic resources (in Old Town especially) still to be worked out. Just exactly what steps should Erie be taking to preserve its "historic character" for the long run?

Chapters that follow recommend specific strategies. For example, local incentives are possible to encourage good maintenance of landmarked buildings – can Erie afford them? Exactly how are the goals to be accomplished that expressed in both the Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan and the Historic Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan for new,

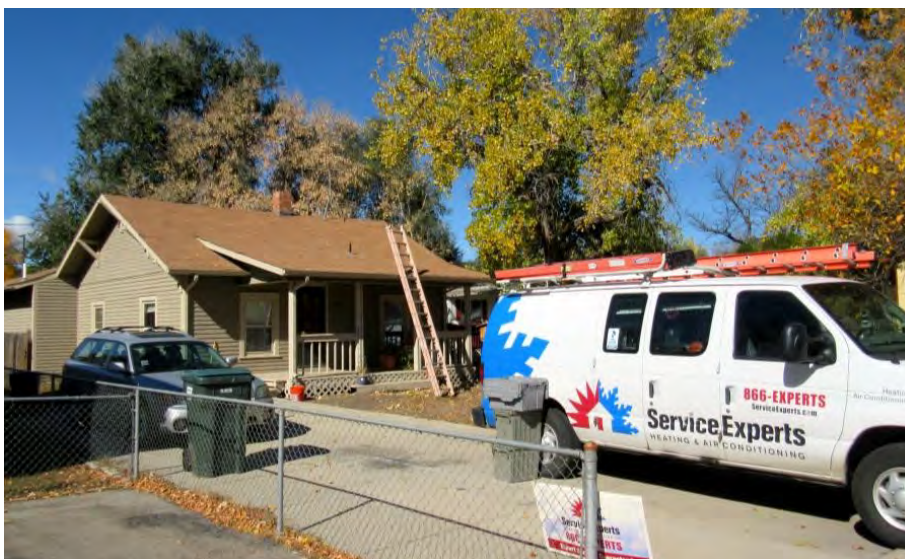
denser development, changes in use from single-family residential to commercial and multi-family, and avoidance of undesirable effects on neighboring areas? Right now, demolitions cannot be delayed and alternatives pursued if someone were to make a redevelopment proposal for one or more parcels including historic structures along Briggs Street. The surveying recommended as first priority in Chapters 5 and 8 will provide an important basis for more planning, decisions, and investment by the Town of Erie and private developers. There may be just enough time to influence the outcome of the changes that are sure to come.

## **4.3 Vision and Goals for Historic Preservation in the Town of Erie**

The following vision and goal statements provide additional guidance for chapters that follow.

### **4.3.1 Vision Statement**

In the coming years, the Town of Erie will become **widely recognized** for its historic role in coal mining and Colorado's development, the quality of its resources that express that history, and its programs to achieve experience of local history and enthusiastic historic preservation. Historic character will help to **distinguish Erie's identity** among the Front Range's many growing communities and **add to residents' quality of life**. The preservation of historic buildings and landscapes will **contribute measurably to the Town's programs** for economic development, recreation and open space, and community events and education.



*In general, across the nation historic preservation has been found to support more local jobs than new construction.*

### 4.3.2 Goals

- **Goal 1 – Community Identity and Quality of Life:** Make Erie’s historic buildings and landscapes a recognized part of the community’s identity. Ensure that Erie’s historic character is a valued community asset that contributes visibly to the town’s economy, community programs, and quality of life.
- **Goal 2 – Research:** Deepen understanding and appreciation of Erie’s heritage and its related historic resources through an ongoing program of research and investigation.
- **Goal 3 – Private Preservation:** Identify historic resources and assist property owners to enhance their properties in ways that respect historic character and layers of change reflecting the town’s evolution.
- **Goal 4 – Public Domain:** Continue to support Town of Erie ownership of historic properties and ensure high-quality long-term stewardship and interpretation.
- **Goal 5 – Downtown Erie:** Continue to strengthen Erie’s historic commercial and community center.
- **Goal 6 – Old Town Erie’s Neighborhoods:** Make historic preservation a key strategy for supporting the livability and vitality of Old Town neighborhoods.
- **Goal 7 – Community Engagement:** Engage residents and visitors in many ways with respect to Erie’s story through the experience of its buildings and landscapes.

These goals will provide the organizing principle for reporting on and evaluating historic preservation activities in the Town of Erie.

### 4.4 Principles for Historic Preservation in Erie

In addition to the three basic elements to the approach described earlier in this chapter, this historic preservation plan also follows these principles:

- **Emphasize community character**, not simply historic architectural design. Seek to understand the ways historic buildings express regional trends and traditions. Appreciate layers of change exhibited by buildings that may be historic in their own right, no matter how well related, or unrelated, to the original structure, and **find the stories that bring buildings in their entirety to life.**
- **Plan for the landscape as a whole** – emphasize the relationship of historic buildings to their surrounding contexts, both in Old Town Erie neighborhoods and in the Town of Erie’s undeveloped planning area. The “whole” is greater than the sum of its parts. Recognize, enhance, and interpret character-defining features – including but not limited to buildings. In the planning area, for example, such landscape features as reservoirs and ditches tell an important story about the development of agriculture in the region.
- **Encourage private sector investment** in historic preservation. What are the barriers to good preservation practices by property owners, investors, and developers? What are incentives that might help to encourage preservation stewardship and sustainable adaptive use?

- **Emphasize public outreach and encourage participation by property owners** in both story-telling and advancing best practices for preservation stewardship.
- **Celebrate Erie’s history in as many ways as possible** – through events, publications, websites, social media, interpretive exhibits, walking tours (with docents or with apps). The possibilities are endless. Find the vibe that works for Erie – and have fun!
- Always seek to **connect Erie’s history to historic resources** – existing structures, neighborhoods, and landscapes.
- **Energize grassroots action** through sharing information about Erie’s history and historic resources and what steps it is possible for Erie to take to encourage property owners to cherish them.
- **Use as many tools as possible**, not just those traditional to historic preservation. Preservation tools are robust, practical, varied, and not all that difficult to understand (one at a time, anyway). But they go further when they are reinforced by other planning tools and investments that are carefully aligned to achieve preservation and strengthen community character and identity. Therefore, **integrate historic preservation into all town programs** (including comprehensive plan, unified land development code, parks and recreation, downtown planning and urban renewal, public works, economic development).
- **Follow best practices** for historic preservation:
  - ♦ Learn the definitions of the four different treatments for historic resources: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction – see Appendix E; and
  - ♦ Follow the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties: there are ten, and they are less than two pages in length – see Appendix C. They are particularly useful in considering the appropriate maintenance of historic buildings; the alteration of older buildings as necessary for reuse, safety, and accessibility; and the construction of new buildings in a historic context.

## 4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on strategies and principles for achieving historic preservation. In the next chapter, Erie’s historic preservation program receives a thorough examination. With this foundation for understanding Erie’s historic preservation program,

this Historic Preservation Master Plan can then begin to explore how historic preservation can be integrated into Erie’s regular planning for public-trust and public-domain properties, the landscape beyond Old Town, and Old Town itself.

## End Notes for Chapter 4:

<sup>1</sup> A remarkably early example from 1967 and updated in 1974 was unearthed by the Town Clerk as background for this plan, “Erie Yesterday & Today.”





## 5.1 Introduction

The Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board (EHPAB) is an important advisory resource for the Board of Trustees to use in identifying and facilitating preservation of the Town's historic resources. This chapter primarily addresses the nuts and bolts involved in the EHPAB's work.

## 5.2 Roles of the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board

The responsibilities of the EHPAB are delineated in the current ordinance. If the ordinance is rewritten as

### Goals of the Historic Preservation Master Plan Related to Chapter 5

#### Goal 1 – Community Identity and Quality of Life:

Make Erie's historic buildings and landscapes a recognized part of the community's identity. Ensure that Erie's historic character is a valued community asset that contributes visibly to the town's economy, community programs, and quality of life.

**Goal 2 – Research:** Deepen understanding and appreciation of Erie's heritage and its related historic resources through an ongoing program of research and investigation.

**Goal 3 – Private Preservation:** Identify historic resources and assist property owners to enhance their properties in ways that respect historic character and layers of change reflecting the town's evolution.

recommended below, some language may need to be tuned up to fit current needs. In general, however, because the ordinance conforms to History Colorado's requirements for a Colorado-based community (based on federal standards) to become a Certified Local Government, it covers the bases. Table 5-1 offers an overview of these roles, lined up with goals articulated in Chapter 4.

In general, following from the ordinance's statement that one purpose of the EHPAB is to "promote good urban design," the role of the EHPAB in undertaking this purpose is thoroughly articulated in the ordinance, with no less than six additional, related statements. These purposes (which might also be called values or principles) are addressed throughout

*(Above) 405 Holbrook Street, the Vaughn/Hunter House, was built of brick in 1892 by Enoch T. Vaughn, an early Erie coal miner who was born in England in 1838, following a house design common in Erie but usually wood frame. It was later owned by Thomas B. Hunter, a prominent Erie merchant. The Italianate detail (bracketed cornice, arched windows) is unusually late for the Victorian period; architectural historians generally accept Italianate style in the US as spanning 1845-1890. Note also the unusual "battered" walls visible at the window openings – their graduated depth is most apparent in the far right window (not a distortion of the photo).*

Table 5-1 Relationships among EHPAB Roles, Plan Goals, and Erie's Ordinance Language

EHPAB's General Roles	Goals of the Preservation Plan	Town of Erie Historic Preservation Ordinance
<b>Promote Good Urban Design</b>		<b>(Master Preservation Plan (MPP) Chapters 7-8)</b>
	<u>Goal 1 – Community Identity and Quality of Life:</u> Make Erie's historic buildings and landscapes a recognized part of the community's identity. Ensure that Erie's historic character is a valued community asset that contributes visibly to the town's economy, community programs, and quality of life.	Promote good urban design. (Town Code 3-3-2.F)
	<u>Goal 5 – Downtown Erie:</u> Continue to strengthen Erie's historic commercial and community center.	Integrate historic preservation with the town comprehensive development plan. (3-3-2.H)
	<u>Goal 6 – Old Town Erie's Neighborhoods:</u> Make historic preservation a central strategy for supporting the livability and vitality of Old Town neighborhoods.	Stabilize or improve aesthetic and economic vitality and values of such sites, neighborhoods, structures, and objects. (3-3-2.C)
		Protect and enhance the town's attraction to tourists and visitors, increase the quality of life for the citizens and enhance future economic development. (3-3-2.D)
		Designate, preserve, protect, enhance and perpetuate those sites, structures, and objects which reflect outstanding elements of the town's cultural, artistic, social, ethnic, economic, political, architectural, historic, technological, institutional, or other heritage; and to create a method to specifically changed Erie's  unique historic character.... (3-3-2.A)
		Establish such rules, regulations and procedures relating to designation, nomination, preservation, relocation, demolition, exemptions, economic exemptions, economic incentives, appeal of decisions, or other processes relating to the powers and duties of the historic preservation advisory board. (3-3-7.I)
<b>Recognize Historic Resources Important to Erie (and Undertake Related Special Projects)</b>		<b>(MPP Section 5.3 below; special projects described in MPP Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8)</b>
	<u>Goal 2 – Research:</u> Deepen understanding and appreciation of Erie's heritage and its related historic resources through an ongoing program of research and investigation.	Conduct surveys for the purpose of creating a preservation plan of historic properties.... (3-3-7.B)
		Make a recommendation to the board of trustees for the removal of properties from the register for reasons the historic preservation advisory board deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, forces of nature. (3-3-7.J)

Table 5-1 Relationships among EHPAB Roles, Plan Goals, and Erie's Ordinance Language, cont'd

EHPAB's General Roles	Goals of the Preservation Plan	Town of Erie Historic Preservation Ordinance
		Recommend criteria for approval by the board of trustees by which the advisory board shall conduct their review of historic properties and review proposals to alter, demolish, or move designated properties. The advisory board shall identify those properties or districts which meet the applicable criteria to be placed on the local register, and shall make a recommendation to the board of trustees that such properties or districts be placed on the local register. (3-3-7.A)
		When appropriate, encourage and assist owners of historic properties to apply for nomination to the national register of historic places. (3-3-7.E)
<b>Enable Private Property Owners to Maintain Historic Structures</b>		<b>(MPP Section 5.4 below)</b>
	<u>Goal 3 – Private Preservation:</u> Identify and preserve historic resources and enable property owners to enhance their properties in ways that respect historic character and layers of change reflecting the town's evolution.	Conduct surveys for the purpose of creating a preservation plan of historic properties. Such inventory is for the purpose of informing citizens who own such properties that the advisory board anticipates these properties may meet the criteria for designation. (3-3-7.B)
		Advise and assist owners of historic properties on physical and financial aspects of preservation, renovation, rehabilitation, and reuse. (3-3-7.D)
		Promote and encourage continued private ownership and utilization of such sites, structures, or objects. (3-3-2.G)
		Assist in pursuing financial assistance for preservation related programs. (3-3-7.D)
<b>Undertake Public Outreach and Education to Raise Awareness and Appreciation</b>		<b>(MPP See Chapter 9)</b>
	<u>Goal 7 – Community Engagement:</u> Engage residents and visitors in many ways with respect to Erie's story through the experience of its buildings and landscapes.	Foster civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past. (3-3-2.B)
		Promote the use of outstanding historical or architectural sites, structures, and objects for the education, stimulation and welfare of the people of the town. (3-3-2.E)
		Develop and assist in public education programs including, but not limited to, walking tours, brochures, a marker program for historic properties, lectures, and conferences. (3-3-7.F)
		Allow adequate public participation in the advisory board's part in the national register nomination process.... (3-3-7.E)



Table 5-1 Relationships among EHPAB Roles, Plan Goals, and Erie's Ordinance Language, cont'd

EHPAB's General Roles	Goals of the Preservation Plan	Town of Erie Historic Preservation Ordinance
<b>Maintain Effective Communication with Erie's Board of Trustees (and Interface with Town Planning Processes)</b>		<b>(MPP Section 5.5)</b>
	<b>Goal 4 – Public Domain:</b> Continue to support Town of Erie ownership of historic properties and ensure high-quality long-term stewardship and interpretation. (This is a goal, but only one aspect of the broader relationship with the town.)	Advise the board of trustees on matters related to preserving the historic character of the town. (3-3-7.G)
		Assist in pursuing financial assistance for preservation related programs. (3-3-7.D)
		Advise and recommend to the board of trustees exclusively on those matters pertinent to the historic preservation advisory board's duties and subject area, as set forth [in the ordinance]. (3-3-26.A)
		Biannually prepare a written report which shall be presented orally to the board of trustees at a board of trustees meeting, with the first report and presentation occurring after the first of the year and the second prior to the start of the town's budget consideration for the following year. (3-3-26.B)
		A member of the board of trustees shall be appointed as the board of trustees' liaison to the historic preservation advisory board. The liaison will attend regular board meetings and be the conduit of bidirectional information to and from the board of trustees. The liaison is not a member of the historic preservation advisory board nor is the liaison entitled to a vote. (3-3-26.D)
<b>Maintain Efficient, Effective Operations</b>		<b>(MPP Section 5.6)</b>
		Staff will be available to attend historic preservation advisory board meetings quarterly at the request of the historic preservation advisory board's chairperson. (3-3-26.C)
<b>Conduct Outreach to Other Governmental Agencies</b>		<b>(MPP Section 5.7)</b>
		Assist in pursuing financial assistance for preservation related programs. (3-3-7.D)
		Advise the board of trustees on matters related to preserving the historic character of the town. (3-3-7.G)
		Bring forward such rules, regulations and procedures relating to designation, nomination, preservation, relocation, demolition, exemptions, economic exemptions, economic incentives, appeal of decisions, or other processes relating to the powers and duties of the historic preservation advisory board. (3-3-7.I)



*Among EHPAB's highest priorities is to study existing properties within Old Town Erie to identify those that are potentially eligible as local landmarks and/or for listing in the National and Colorado Registers, either individually or as part of potential historic districts. (Colorado and National Register designations afford public recognition and tax benefits but no local regulation.) There are many homes such as this miner's cottage that have not yet been studied.*

other chapters in this plan; the last two, dealing with the general purposes related to landmarking locally important historic resources, are also addressed in this chapter. Chapter 9 deals separately with roles relating to general public outreach and education (including interpretation).

### **5.3 Recognize Historic Resources Important to the Town of Erie (and Undertake Related Special Projects)**

The EHPAB's responsibilities, as it is easy to see from just Chapters 3 and 4, are many, and relate to a variety of town priorities and programs. If there is any one activity that is "core" to the EHPAB's work, however, it is recognizing historic resources that are important to the Town of Erie. Much of the town's historic preservation ordinance, in fact, is taken up with the details of this work. The work involves three basic steps: (1) inventorying (or surveying) and compiling the documented survey information into usable form, usually a database combined with a mapping program; (2) recognition, in various forms, as discussed in Chapter 3 and the section below; and (3) the review of "any proposed demolition of, moving of, or alteration to properties of historic value."

Although the work involved in just these basic activities is considerable, it is also important to make use of this information for public outreach and educational purposes as described in Chapter 9. Moreover, from time to time the EHPAB (and Erie as a whole) may need to undertake related special projects, the most critical being identified in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

### **EHPAB Roles in Survey and Documentation**

History Colorado maintains a database called Compass that currently includes 60 entries for Erie, not including the 13 buildings whose surveys were completed in 2016. Just 36 individual sites in Old Town Erie have received close attention from professional surveyors with historic preservation credentials, as described in this chapter and listed in Appendix F. These were evaluated singly, with attention to their potential eligibility for the National and Colorado Registers. It is possible that some buildings that would not rise to the high standard for eligibility for single buildings would be judged as potentially contributing to historic districts. This would be discovered through the more generalized survey effort described in recommendations in this section, focusing on all buildings in geographic groupings, street by street, or neighborhoods (groupings of streets and blocks that recognize neighborhood-level relationships).

In fact, given plans for growth and change in all of Old Town Erie, as described in Chapters 3 and 8 and in concepts articulated in the Downtown Development Framework Plan and the Old Town Erie Urban Redevelopment Plan, subject to funding approval.

Surveys may reveal properties that lack sufficient integrity to qualify for designation as National Register, Colorado Register, or local Historic Landmarks, but which are of local significance nevertheless. Survey information is maintained on these properties, as Erie's ordinance requires, in the town's "Historic Sites Inventory." This enables the EHPAB to encourage property owners to consider

appropriate changes in future work that would come to the attention of the town or when later property owners inquire about recognition.

Surveying in Erie beyond the Old Town area should begin with Erie's 2008 Natural Areas Inventory (<http://www.erieco.gov/344/Natural-Areas-Inventory>), existing surveys undertaken over decades by Boulder County, agricultural context statements for both Boulder and Weld Counties, and records in History Colorado's Compass database. There are two kinds of areas to be considered: parcels that are in Erie's designated planning area, but not part of the Town of Erie's municipal area; and those that are already within municipal boundaries. A third category of land beyond Old Town involves parcels that have already been developed. There, in some instances, remnants or artifacts of the cultural landscape may be worth recording in a survey, although the intensive development undertaken through the clustering pattern generally followed in Erie outside Old Town makes this less likely.

It is most urgent to survey Erie's planning area in order to guide the town in evaluating proposals for new development and/or open space acquisition during the annexation and rezoning/development process, especially to identify opportunities for preservation of historic resources and trail development that would preserve elements of the cultural landscape and/or allow interpretation and linkages of such elements. However, if feasible, surveying of unbuilt areas within the municipality but outside Old Town (that is, those parcels no longer in "planning area" status but actually annexed) and those areas that have actually been developed should be done at the same time for the sake of simplicity and efficiency. (See additional discussion in Chapter 7.)

## Strategies for Survey and Documentation

5.3.1 Undertake survey(s) of existing properties within Old Town Erie to identify those that are potentially eligible as local landmarks and/or for listing in the National and Colorado Registers, either individually or as part of potential historic districts. (Colorado and National Register designations afford public recognition and tax benefits but no local regulation. See additional discussion in Chapter 8, where the same strategy appears as 8.2.1.) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

5.3.2 As part of the surveying recommended in 5.3.1, identify properties that are of local historical significance but may not fully meet the criteria for designation as either National/Colorado Register or

local Historic Landmarks due to issues related to integrity.

5.3.3 Undertake surveys of historic resources related to agriculture, coal mining, and railroading in areas outside Old Town, within Erie's municipal boundary and planning area. (Same as 7.3.1) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

## EHPAB Roles in Designation of Historic Resources

As a Certified Local Government (CLG) as explained in Chapter 3, plays an important role in state and federal recognition of historic resources in addition to its authority to recommend that the Board of Trustees recognize their local significance. Local recognition is informally called "landmarking " subject to funding approval.

Erie's ordinance refers to establishment of a "local register" but as the program has evolved, that term is not used. The town issues free plaques to locally recognized historic structures; to date, the Board of Trustees has conferred eight such recognitions. The recognition is voluntary, requiring the owner's participation in the nomination process (EHPAB recommends, Board of Trustees adopts), including consent.

These properties may therefore become eligible for state preservation tax incentives, and are also thereafter subject to review of "any proposed demolition of, moving of, or alteration to properties of historic value" – which the Board of Trustees may deny. Erie may also consider attaching other locally determined benefits to landmarking, including property tax breaks or grants or other incentives (see next section). Erie's historic preservation ordinance references the Secretary of the Interior's Standards among the criteria for the Board of Trustees to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction or alteration to a landmarked building.<sup>1</sup>

As an all-volunteer board with limited staff resources available, the EHPAB should consider how many landmarking efforts in which it should become involved, particularly in actually writing nominations, while there are other priorities in need of greater attention, at least early in the implementation of this plan.

An alternative to formal, locally designated historic districts in Old Town Erie is the option of establishing Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts, as has already been adopted in Boulder County (see Chapter 8). The process enlists neighborhoods in defining a limited number of characteristics for



overlay regulation, enabled by state land use law (just as are local historic districts).<sup>2</sup>

### Strategies for Designation of Historic Resources

5.3.4 Continue to encourage property owners to pursue voluntary recognition of individual structures as local landmarks and/or through the Colorado and National Registers. (See recommendations in the preceding section – surveying is needed for this. Same as 8.2.2.) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

5.3.5 Notify property owners of individually eligible properties to encourage appropriate designation. For local Historic Landmarks, ask property owners to take the lead in nomination.

5.3.6 Over the long term, work with property owners toward designation of one or more local historic districts, identifying and including any recognized National or Colorado Register properties or local Historic Landmarks.

### 5.4 Enable Private Property Owners to Maintain Historic Structures

It is important to recognize that property owners need all the help they can get in understanding the needs of their historic structures and undertaking appropriate maintenance, and in terms of gaining additional resources to help with costs. There is a public value to private property owners' maintaining historic resources, often at some additional cost (though not always as much as owners assume), which would be the underlying reason for Erie to design a program of incentives. Fortunately, there IS one tax incentive already in place, as discussed in Chapter 3, the Colorado preservation tax credit.

In addition to these incentives, the EHPAB's program of review of proposed demolitions, alterations, and moves of local Historic Landmarks should be viewed as an opportunity to educate property owners individually, at a time when they are considering making improvements to their properties. Property owners in well-run programs for these reviews will often comment that the give-and-take, respectful process they encounter helps them gain a better design in the end. The key to attaining this felicitous result is not only a well-run program, but also rich communications as described in Chapter 9, in the form of much outreach and education on a continuing basis (offering training, especially), so that owners are well aware of their options before they visit with a contractor.



*Erie issues free plaques to locally recognized historic structures; to date, the Board of Trustees has conferred eight such recognitions.*

### Strategies for Assisting Private Property Owners

5.4.1 Publicize the availability of Colorado tax credits for locally designated Historic Landmarks as well as properties listed in the National and Colorado Registers.

5.4.2 Create local incentives for owners of designated local Historic Landmarks, such as property tax breaks, reduced building fees for approved rehab projects, or grants, as appropriate. (Same as 8.2.6.) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

5.4.3 Offer workshops to property owners and property owners' advisors (real estate agents, contractors, accountants, etc.) to educate them about methods for maintaining Old Town Erie properties and about the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The EHPAB has already created a PowerPoint presentation that would support such training, and experts from around Colorado are available to help design, and sometimes even present, such programs. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

5.4.4 Maintain a well-designed, well-communicated procedure for review of proposed demolitions, moves, and alterations to locally recognized historic resources. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

## 5.5 Maintain Effective Communication with Erie's Board of Trustees (and Interface with Town Planning Processes)

As noted in Table 5-1, the EHPAB ordinance goes to some length to explain the relationship of the EHPAB to the Board of Trustees. (There is even more language in the ordinance concerning coordination of the roles of the two bodies when it comes to the exact processes for recognition and regulation of local Historic Landmarks.)

In order to be effective in carrying out its duties, the EHPAB also needs to interface with town planning processes, flowing from the EHPAB's duty to "Integrate historic preservation with the town comprehensive development plan," a plan that is implemented by multiple town departments and boards as well as the Board of Trustees. Town planning processes are described in Chapter 3.

### Strategies for Communications with the Board of Trustees

5.5.1 Prepare biannual reports for the Board of Trustees reviewing the condition of historic resources. Make maximum use of the EHPAB's formal obligation to make these reports to the Board of Trustees twice a year, to point out progress in implementing this plan, educate the Board of Trustees on discoveries about resources, provide observations on community and private property owners' needs and trends, and to continue to discuss resources needed by the EHPAB to accomplish its priorities in a timely fashion.

5.5.2 Share information concerning resources identified in surveys not only with property owners, but also the relevant town departments and boards, including the Planning Commission, Open Space Board, and Tree Board.

5.5.3 Participate in updates to existing and new plans (and related inventories), undertaken by other boards and the Planning Commission. This includes such newly established programs as the Entertainment District and the Sustainability Committee.

## 5.6 Maintain Efficient, Effective Operations

As an all-volunteer board, the EHPAB must be as efficient as possible in undertaking its work. The EHPAB should adopt a brief work plan, following the goals and organization of this master plan. The work plan should be adopted prior to one of the annual reports to the Board of Trustees or at another

appropriate point in the work year. This will insure that all bases and priorities in this master plan are covered and that other agencies (staff or board/commissions) are aware of the needs for collaboration and coordination. If adopted prior to the town's annual budget, such a work plan would provide justification for consideration into the annual budget.

As indicated by the number, complexity, and ambitious priorities of this master plan, the EHPAB's responsibilities are considerable. Other nearby communities of similar size (Louisville, especially) have staff planners, part-time or full-time, to help with the workload. (In fact, one solution to the staffing need in Erie, temporarily or over a longer term, might be establishing an intergovernmental agreement to borrow staff from a nearby jurisdiction.) The EHPAB is to be commended for all that it has accomplished, and as a fairly young board, for recognizing that this master plan is one way to help "get ahead of the curve" in defining responsibilities, priorities, and phasing. Staffing would enable more rapid implementation of this plan.

In terms of other operations, and closely related to the need for staffing, as indicated by the background information provided in Chapter 3, the EHPAB is in need of technical support in two critical areas.

First, the interactive web pages devoted to the EHPAB should be upgraded to include interactive, web-based access to inventory information. The survey information recently collected on the 36 sites as described in Chapter 3 should be posted as soon as feasible (in whole or in part, that is, used as the basis for information appropriate to be made available to the general public).

Second, the EHPAB should maintain its mapping records in the Town of Erie's official Geographic Information System (GIS), instead of relying on individual members of the EHPAB to provide mapping capabilities (the results of which are not publicly accessible, especially through the EHPAB web page, and worse, not capable of becoming integrated with the town's other planning processes).

The EHPAB, for its part, should assist the town (leading where appropriate) in identifying and applying for grant assistance to the town to undertake individual tasks or locate operational support for initiatives (e.g., the initial costs of a web page upgrade) or staffing.

With the growing numbers of local Historic Landmarks, there is an ongoing (and increasing) responsibility to monitor the condition of local Historic Landmarks, including maintaining an ongoing awareness of activities that are being undertaken throughout Erie that affect the preservation and integrity of historic resources (positive or negative). The EHPAB has already implemented a formal assessment process for two properties; this experience should provide the basis for routine reporting to property owners and inclusion of critical observations of conditions and trends in the biannual report to the Board of Trustees.

Finally, as noted in the opening to this chapter, a revision to Erie's historic preservation ordinance would be in order, once History Colorado has completed a promised model local ordinance. (Louisville is currently at work on a revision and also may be able to provide additional insight.) Meanwhile, Erie's experience in implementing the programs and priorities of this plan will provide a strong basis for debating appropriate revisions.

### Strategies for EHPAB Operations

5.6.1 Adopt an annual work program based on this historic preservation master plan. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

5.6.2 Work toward additional staffing resources, whether part-time staff or consulting arrangements with qualified providers.

5.6.3 Upgrade technical support for EHPAB activities, especially web interface and GIS capability. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

5.6.4 Identify and apply for grant assistance to undertake individual tasks or locate operational support for initiatives.

5.6.5 Maintain an ongoing awareness of activities that are being undertaken throughout Erie that affect the preservation and integrity of historic resources (positive or negative).

5.6.6 Undertake a systematic, long-term program of monitoring the condition of historic resources throughout Erie.

5.6.7 Once History Colorado issues a promised model for a local historic preservation ordinance, undertake a close analysis of Erie's ordinance and experience; revise as appropriate.



*The Erie Methodist Episcopal Church (1888) is a designated Erie Town Historic Landmark and was considered eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places during a survey undertaken for the town by Front Range Research Associates in 2009-10.*

### 5.7 Conduct Outreach to Other Governmental Agencies

Just as the EHPAB cannot accomplish its responsibilities without interfacing with other Erie planning processes, as discussed above, it cannot fully accomplish its responsibilities without interfacing with other preservation agencies, at both the state and local levels. Especially, as a CLG under History Colorado's program, must work closely with that organization, whose activities are fully described in Chapter 3. Also at the state level, the EHPAB may be able to call on assistance from Colorado Preservation, Inc. (CPI), the statewide nonprofit organization; at the very least, CPI holds an annual meeting that includes training opportunities that are beneficial to the EHPAB and its members. The EHPAB should identify such opportunities in its annual work program, in order to request a budget to cover the costs of participation.

At the local level, several nearby communities have historic preservation programs where it is useful from time to time to call on their experience and expertise. In particular, Boulder County has responsibilities



within the Erie Planning Area; sharing information on historic resources and EHPAB activities (e.g., surveying in Erie's planning area) would enable close collaboration. From time to time, it may be useful to attend regional meetings of local historic preservation commissions; recently, the EHPAB attended a meeting in Jefferson County. The EHPAB should work to identify such opportunities in its annual work program if at all possible, in order to provide accurate estimates request a budget to cover the costs of participation.

### Strategies for Outreach to Other Governmental Agencies

5.7.1 Maintain an ongoing relationship with History Colorado; take advantage of available grant programs and other financial and technical assistance.

5.7.2 Attend statewide training opportunities for local historic preservation commissions.

5.7.3 Maintain an ongoing relationship with the Historic Preservation Advisory Board of Boulder County<sup>3</sup>; meet at least once a year to review issues and programs within the Erie Planning Area.

5.7.4 Seek opportunities to exchange ideas and experiences with other localities in Colorado.

### 5.8 Conclusion

The incorporation of these strategies and others found in the following chapters into an annual work plan and budget request for the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board will go a long way to ensure a highly successful preservation program and provide guidance to future Erie preservation boards. This chapter has offered a thorough examination of the roles and responsibilities of the EHPAB as described in the Town Code and as they line up with the goals of this plan, plus a description of how a group of dedicated volunteers – EHPAB members – believe they can meet those responsibilities with reasonable town resources. Next, this plan examines ways that the Town of Erie can affect the course of historic preservation through actions in the public domain and community planning programs.

### End Notes for Chapter 5:

<sup>1</sup> Erie Title 3, Section 3-3-20: CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS; NEW CONSTRUCTION OR ALTERATION:

A. The board of trustees shall issue a certificate of appropriateness for any proposed new construction or alteration on a designated historic landmark only if the board of trustees can determine that the proposed work would not detrimentally alter, destroy or affect any architectural or landscape feature that contributes to its original historic designation. The board of trustees must find that the proposed work is visually compatible with designated historic structures located on the property in terms of designs, finish, material, scale, mass and height.

B. In determining compatibility, the board of trustees shall use the definition set forth in section 3-3-25 of this chapter and the following criteria:

1. The effect on the general historic and architectural character of the structure and property;
2. The architectural style, arrangement, texture and material used on the existing and proposed structures and their relation to and compatibility with other structures;
3. The size of the structure, its setbacks, location, and the appropriateness thereof when compared to existing structures and the site;
4. The compatibility of accessory structures and fences with the main structure on the site, and other structures;
5. The effects of the proposed work in creating, changing, destroying, or otherwise impacting the exterior architectural features of the structure upon which such work is done;
6. The condition of existing improvements and whether they are a hazard to public health and safety;
7. The effects of the proposed work upon the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of the property; and
8. Compliance with the United States secretary of the interior's "Standards For Rehabilitation". (Ord. 28-2010, 11-23-2010)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.presnc.org/neighborhood-conservation-overlay-districts/>

<sup>3</sup> Weld County does not have historic preservation as a planning function, only Greeley.

# Chapter 6: Town of Erie Stewardship



## 6.1 Introduction

In addition to the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board (with the EHPAB supported by the Town Clerk) and the Board of Trustees (with the BOT supported by the Town Administrator), the actions

### Goals of the Historic Preservation Master Plan Related to Chapter 6

#### **Goal 1 – Community Identity and Quality of Life:**

Make Erie's historic buildings and landscapes a recognized part of the community's identity. Ensure that Erie's historic character is a valued community asset that contributes visibly to the town's economy, community programs, and quality of life.

**Goal 4 – Public Domain:** Continue to support Town of Erie ownership of historic properties and ensure high-quality long-term stewardship and interpretation.

**Goal 5 – Downtown Erie:** Continue to strengthen Erie's historic commercial and community center.

**Goal 6 – Old Town Erie's Neighborhoods:** Make historic preservation a key strategy for supporting the livability and vitality of Old Town neighborhoods.

**Goal 7 – Community Engagement:** Engage residents and visitors in many ways with respect to Erie's story through the experience of its buildings and landscapes.

of a variety of governmental bodies and staff within the Town of Erie contribute to and reinforce historic preservation:

- Administration (Communications and Marketing Coordinator, Economic Development Coordinator)
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Community Development Department (primarily the Planning Division but also the Building Division)
- Public Works Department
- Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA, the BOT and other entities acting under special authority given by state law)

In addition, town boards and commissions advising the Board of Trustees and with interests intersecting those of the EHPAB, are the Open Space and Trails Advisory Board; the Planning Commission; and the Tree Board, Sustainability Advisory Board.

*(Above) Erie's Linear Park in Old Town (view here is toward the south end) occupies an early railroad right-of-way. The Downtown Development Framework Plan (see Chapter 3, Section 3.5) calls for constructing a bicycle and pedestrian trail within this space, to enhance Erie's trail network and its circulation. This historic preservation master plan further suggests interpreting the park's historic railroad use.*





The relationship of all agencies listed here to Erie's historic preservation ordinance is laid out in Table 3-1 of Chapter 3.

There are three primary ways in which these agencies affect historic preservation:

1. By **conserving landscape resources**, broadly defined for the moment here as open space and trails and including historic resources;
2. In town planning and development, especially the **development review process** and by **encouraging redevelopment** through public investment in Old Town Erie; and
3. In **managing Erie's public domain** (parks or streets and their rights of way, for example), including investment in infrastructure and **historic buildings and sites under Erie's ownership**.

## 6.2 Landscape Conservation

Erie's heritage includes the landscape in which Old Town Erie is centered, in both Boulder and Weld Counties. Both counties, in fact, have such a significant heritage as agricultural working landscapes that, unusually, each has a special "context statement" describing their agricultural heritage. Chapter 7 is devoted exclusively to this topic, concerning Erie's planning area.

## 6.3 Town Planning and Development

A great deal of Erie's ability to affect the fate of historic resources through planning and development is likely to take place during development review. Chapter 8 is devoted exclusively to town planning and development in Old Town Erie.

## 6.4 Town Stewardship of Public-Trust Historic Properties and the Public Domain

A critical responsibility of the Town of Erie is to preserve the buildings and landscapes it already owns – the focus of this chapter. This can range from small features along trails out in the landscape of "new Erie" to entire buildings, such as the Town Hall (Lincoln School), managed by Public Works or the Parks and Recreation Department.

Such "public domain" or "public-trust" properties need ongoing town leadership in demonstrating practical means for historic preservation. Moreover, managing the town's properties according to best practices sends an important signal to others working with historic properties. If they see that the town is managing this challenge well, they are more likely to expect to step up to the mark themselves.

Key properties owned and managed by the Town of Erie are described in the following sections.





*The Al and Mary Schofield Farm was landmarked by the Board of Trustees in February 2017, thus qualifying the publicly-owned property for State Historical Fund grants. The Parks and Recreation Department, which manages it, is undertaking a development concept plan for the property.*

#### **6.4.A Lincoln School (Erie Town Hall – 5WL.216)**

Erie's official seat of government, the Lincoln School (1906) is the town's only property currently listed in the National Register. Any expansion or alteration to this building should follow the guidance provided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards concerning new construction:

STANDARD 9 – New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

STANDARD 10 – New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Interestingly, while many, many properties listed in the National Register can be found described individually in Wikipedia, Erie's Lincoln School (there are many buildings by this name, of course) does not have an entry – a project for a local historian sometime.<sup>1</sup> A nice, but not necessary, companion project would also be to update the documentation for the rather outdated National Register nomination for the building, now well over thirty years old and predating its conversion to town office use.

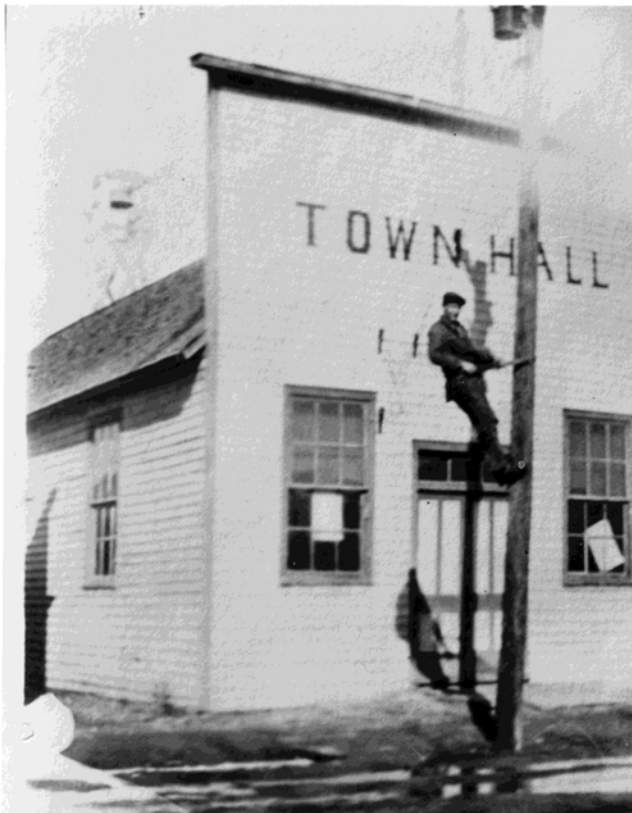
#### **6.4.B Mount Pleasant Cemetery (5WL.7991)**

The 2016 survey of historic properties included Mount Pleasant Cemetery. The surveyors concluded that it is eligible for the National Register, and the Town Clerk (manager of the cemetery) plans to undertake appropriate measures and funding to move forward. In general, the town recognizes this as both a fragile site and as a place for ongoing community traditions, with active cemetery use. Recent installation of fencing around the cemetery is designed to protect it and limit potential for adverse access out of the primary view from the road.

#### **6.4.C Schofield Farm (5BL.786)**

The Town of Erie bought the Al and Mary Schofield Farm in 2014 as a strategic acquisition to support a long-range plan to assure sufficient water for the town's growing population, using dedicated town open space funds for the purchase. A reservoir is a part of the historic property, which had been landmarked by Boulder County at the time of the purchase. The property was leased to the widow of the previous owner, who planned to continue to occupy the historic farmhouse, barns, and outbuildings and to farm two fields with the help of a long-time farmer using horses for plowing and cultivation.

Just two years after the town's acquisition, however, the site's septic system failed. The town deemed it too distant from public sewer (and water) to be served economically, so that the property could no longer support residential use. Thus, the town undertook direct management of the property, including stabilizing several quite early buildings and



*An early Erie Town Hall (left). The town's website notes, "As the Town Constable in 1916, Budd Pitchford had many maintenance duties in addition to 'keeping the peace.'" (Records of the Town of Erie, courtesy Town Clerk's Office.) (Below) The town's second hall continues to be owned by the town, today occupied by the Chamber of Commerce. Built 1930-31, it is considered eligible for the National Register.*



addressing public safety considerations. During the planning process for this plan, interest was expressed by town residents and others in a wide range of creative ways to reuse the site.

As a result of this show of support, the EHPAB encouraged the Board of Trustees to landmark the site, which it completed in February of 2017. The Board of Trustees also asked the Parks and Recreation Department, which has overall responsibility for the site's management, to explore options and create a Development Concept Plan that will address, among other issues, expansion of the reservoir, adaptive use of the buildings, and public programming and support (local, state, private) for the site.

The plan is expected to be a model for how the town can handle such a large, demanding, and historically important site. Because the site is listed as a local landmark under Erie's qualified historic preservation ordinance (see explanation of this in Chapter 3), the Town may apply for State Historical Fund grants and potentially other state funds for preserving and enhancing the site, which would help to implement the pending Development Concept Plan.

#### **6.4.D Old Town Hall (Chamber of Commerce, "City Hall" - 5WL.6206)**

Once Erie's town hall and now home to the Chamber of Commerce (signed "City Hall," although Erie was never a city), in 2000 the Old Town Hall received a State Historical Fund grant of \$82,717<sup>2</sup> for interior and exterior rehabilitation. It is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. An understanding under that grant is that any future physical work involving permanent change should follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Appendix C).

#### **6.4.E The Erie Linear (Railroad) Park**

An important railroad right-of-way that shaped Old Town Erie is now in possession of the town, currently serving largely as un-designed open space. One block has been devoted to a community building and two public art installations relating to Erie history.

This is an example of a cultural landscape element or resource that has not been surveyed in Erie. Some information also exists that a portion of the land, prior to the construction of the railroad, might have been used as the previous location of the town cemetery, moved to the Mount Pleasant location described above.





*Long-range transportation planning may enable a few roads to be retained with their traditional gravel construction and casual native vegetation, such as this beautiful example in the northwestern part of Erie's Planning Area.*

The Downtown Development Framework Plan has called for this right-of-way to supply space for a critically needed bicycle transportation route into the downtown area from Old Town neighborhoods and outlying subdivisions, a key element for improved circulation in Erie's expanding trail system. Along with the upgrade of Coal Creek Park (also planned-for in the Framework Plan), this is a highly important near-term public investment planned by the Town of Erie within the historic Old Town Erie residential zone. The opportunity exists not only to create a functional and attractive bicycle linkage through Old Town to Coal Creek Park, but to create an interesting park that draws further private investment in nearby homes and offers one of the best opportunities to present Old Town Erie stories associated with the town's railroading history (which could be supported by interpretive activities discussed in Chapter 9, Section 9.3).

#### **6.4.F Coal Creek Park**

Although not a historic property *per se* (it is thought to have been built in the mid-1980s), Coal Creek Park is today considered a traditional part of downtown. Moreover, it is a critical element affecting the future development and attractiveness of downtown. It is mentioned here in order to attempt a complete list of town-owned properties affecting (or affected by) this historic preservation master plan. Planning for an upgrade to this park as a central element of the Downtown Development Framework Plan is underway.

#### **6.4.G Other Properties**

The town owns several small properties in the general vicinity of the Town Hall (Lincoln School) and nearby blocks, including two parking lots serving the town hall, the A.C.E. arts building at 625 Pierce Street (an older building said to have been moved to Erie from Boulder and not officially surveyed), and the building housing the community pantry service. In addition, the Sheldon-Allan Farm recently acquired as open space by the Town of Erie includes three small, older buildings of evident historic interest. All properties currently owned by the town should be included in surveys recommended by this plan in Chapters 7 and 8.

#### **6.4.H Public Domain**

The "public domain" encompasses trails, parks, roads, and other infrastructure threading the Town of Erie, in addition to the public-trust ownership of properties described above. The care of a community's public domain can make a great difference to its identity.

Recent streetscaping in Downtown Erie is an example of how the town has undertaken thoughtful changes incorporated into a historic environment. As additional streetscaping is undertaken in the public domain under the Downtown Development Framework Plan and other planning, Erie possesses an example of what already has worked well for the downtown that provides a model for further design.



The use of highly landscaped parkways where roads must be upgraded is a modern rendition of traditional tree-lined roadway experiences that cannot be maintained in parts of “new Erie” in view of safety and traffic flow once level of service is exceeded by the population’s needs. More existing roadways will need such treatment in future; long-range transportation planning may enable a few to be retained with their traditional gravel construction and casual native vegetation.

Another example of the town’s attention to the public domain is the recent determination to undertake interpretive signage related to the open space and trail system, work that is further discussed in Chapter 7. In addition, historic properties acquired for open space purposes by the Town of Erie might benefit from signage that notes the properties’ historic names and website entries that describe the sites’ histories, as Jefferson County has done for several of its ranch acquisitions.

### **Strategies for Town Stewardship of Public-Trust Historic Properties and the Public Domain**

6.4.1 In the surveys recommended for “new town” Erie and Old Town Erie in Chapters 7 and 8, include all town-owned properties not yet surveyed.

6.4.2 Include consideration of the historic character of public domain resources (streetscapes, roads, trails) in capital improvement, recreation, and transportation plans.

6.4.3 Plan upgrades to the linear park in Old Town Erie to reflect and interpret the right-of-way’s original use for railroading.

6.4.4 Pursue National Register listing for Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

6.4.5 Include an assessment of the characteristics and needs of historic features and resources on properties proposed for open space acquisition during the “due diligence” phase prior to acquisition by the Town of Erie.

6.4.6 Follow Erie’s historic preservation ordinance in the management of town-owned historic properties. (That is, use the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and follow the Certificate of Appropriateness process with the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board for landmarked properties.)

## **6.5 Conclusion**

The Town of Erie has considerable responsibilities in the management of the public domain, and an important opportunity in long-range planning and investment for these properties to set an example for property owners and developers throughout the town. Equally important are community planning and investment, both beyond and within Old Town Erie, as described in the following two chapters.

### **End Notes for Chapter 6:**

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincoln\\_School\\_\(Erie,\\_Colorado\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincoln_School_(Erie,_Colorado)). The building is listed and pictured in Wikipedia at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Register\\_of\\_Historic\\_Places\\_listings\\_in\\_Weld\\_County,\\_Colorado](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Register_of_Historic_Places_listings_in_Weld_County,_Colorado) but the National Register nomination that should be linked there is incorrect (History Colorado has been notified).

<sup>2</sup> SHF Grant #00-02-039

# Chapter 7: Taking Advantage of Erie's Historic Landscape



## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a vision of using historic landscape resources to enrich Erie's open space and trail system. Steps include undertaking the research necessary to understand and interpret these resources (both documentary research and

surveying) and putting procedures in place to encourage more preservation of landscape resources.

Erie's heritage includes the landscape in which Old Town Erie is centered, in both Boulder and Weld Counties. Both counties, in fact, have such a significant heritage as agricultural working landscapes that, unusually, each has a special "context statement" describing their agricultural heritage. Though known as a "coal mining town," Erie's residents relied in part on the availability of farming to subsist through the warm months when the damp and friable coal of the Northern Colorado coal field could not be mined and transported (because it would fall apart). Farming, in turn, relied on a clever, vital system of ditches and reservoirs that made it possible to farm the fertile but arid soils of the region. And both farming and mining relied on the railroads to move their products to market.

Today, coal mining has disappeared almost completely from the landscape, only railroads' rights of way remain, some as trails (although one is poised to become part of the regional RTD transportation system some years hence), and agriculture is on the way out, displaced by "the last crop," suburban housing. It is still possible, however, to detect traces of mining, agriculture, and railroading in Erie's landscape, defined for our purposes as the Erie Planning Area as described (and mapped) in the Erie Comprehensive Plan.

### Goals of the Historic Preservation Master Plan Related to Chapter 7

#### Goal 1 – Community Identity and Quality of Life:

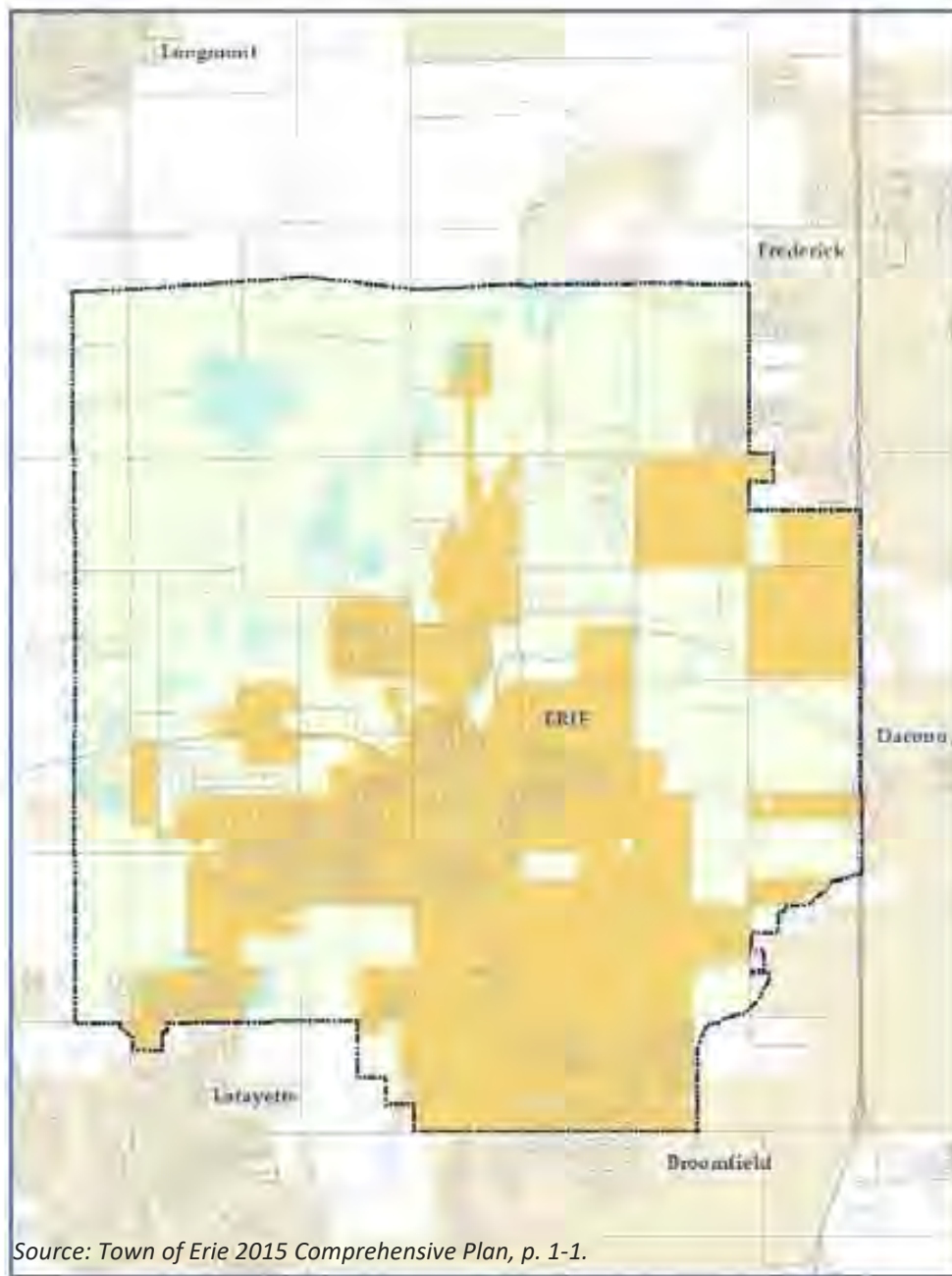
Make Erie's historic buildings and landscapes a recognized part of the community's identity. Ensure that Erie's historic character is a valued community asset that contributes visibly to the town's economy, community programs, and quality of life.

**Goal 2 – Research:** Deepen understanding and appreciation of Erie's heritage and its related historic resources through an ongoing program of research and investigation.

**Goal 4 – Public Domain:** Continue to support Town of Erie ownership of historic properties and ensure high-quality long-term stewardship and interpretation.

**Goal 7 – Community Engagement:** Engage residents and visitors in many ways with respect to Erie's story through the experience of its buildings and landscapes.

### Map 7-1 Erie's Planning Area and Neighboring Community Context



As described in Chapter 3, Erie is widely recognized for its open space and trails program. Requirements under Erie's Unified Development Code have led to developer agreements to set aside funds and open space and construct trails for the program. Moreover, in 2004 and again in 2015, voters approved a 4.0 mill annual levy to support the program, extended in the second vote to 2024.

The ongoing protection of open space as Erie develops, and with substantial funding to back the town's determination to ensure the protection of and

access to open space resources, represents a major opportunity for preservation of historic landscape features and for telling the story of the evolution of Erie's cultural landscape, uniting "old Erie" and "new Erie" through shared stories of the evolution of that landscape.

Erie currently offers its residents and visitors a beautiful and healthy outdoor recreational experience and pleasant links between its many new suburban neighborhoods. While any community might set these goals, Erie's great program for





*Erie's farm landscape includes a wealth of resources to help tell the story of its evolution – plantings (the pines in the foreground) fencing, reservoir, roads, field patterns, and the scatter of farmsteads tracing water sources and roads.*

protecting open space and building trails is capable of going beyond, by adding a distinctive experience of the landscape's history.

This chapter explains steps that Erie might take to integrate its the open space and trails program with the concept of protecting the cultural landscape's most important features. Chapter 9 reinforces this with an idea for telling more stories, by expanding current planning for wayside interpretive signs to further phases that would expand further the enrichment of Erie's trail system.

## 7.2 Historic Landscape Contexts

As described in Chapter 2, the historic remnants and patterns that provide evidence of the earlier economic activities in the landscape surrounding Old Town Erie are still there to be discovered and analyzed. As with the surveying recommended for Old Town Erie (see Chapters 5 and 8), too little is yet known. A first step in using historic landscape resources to enrich Erie's open space and trail system, which will grow as Erie grows, is to study the history that led to the development of those resources in the first place and build on the contexts prepared by History Colorado with additional detail and analysis specifically related to the local landscape. The context should identify the types of resources found within that landscape that are significant to each historic context as would be appropriate within a National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form (for an example of the quality intended, see the MPDF for Agricultural Resources in Boulder County cited below).<sup>1</sup>

Those who enjoy learning about Erie's history (and Colorado's) will like the following resources that help to explain the background for already-known landscape features, and those awaiting discovery and/or appreciation. These context statements provide the departure point for developing Erie-specific historic contexts to be used as the basis for identifying, understanding, interpreting, and preserving the surrounding landscape and resources:

- **Agriculture:** History Colorado has published a historic context statement for agriculture in Weld County.<sup>2</sup> Boulder County has similarly published such a study of its own agricultural context.<sup>3</sup> The latter is complete enough to apply adequately to the large portion of Erie's planning area that is located in Boulder County, and indeed, it has

### Historic Agricultural Property Types

- ✓ Farms, ranches, agricultural districts and rural cultural landscapes
- ✓ Farm house, ranch house, or worker housing
- ✓ Barns and secondary outbuildings
- ✓ Feed storage and processing resources
- ✓ Food storage and processing resources
- ✓ Watering facilities, windmills, and irrigation resources
- ✓ Agricultural landscape features
- ✓ Granges and agricultural society buildings

SOURCE: <http://www.bouldercounty.org/doc/landuse/agriculturalheritagewolfenbarger.pdf>, table of contents.

*Jerry and Cherry Landen, who live on the west side of Erie, enjoyed showing the enormous cottonwood on their ranch to a delegation from the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board on a sunny late fall day. (Photo by Dave Snow)*



been converted nearly wholesale into a Multiple Property Documentation Form accepted by the National Register. Both Weld County and Boulder County documents should be used to inform surveys discussed in the next section.

- **Coal mining:** History Colorado has published a coal context statement that is statewide (also covering all of Colorado's mining) and therefore quite broad.<sup>4</sup> Good background information is also available from the Colorado Geological Survey. History Colorado's coal context should be applied to the landscape within the Erie planning area with additional detailed research and analysis. Not much remains aboveground, but locating former mine operations and compiling complete information about them could support interpretive planning (of both the historic landscape and the natural landscape).
- **Railroading:** Like coal mining, not much remains in evidence on the landscape today in Erie and its planning area except rail rights of way, which shaped and linked settlement. History Colorado has produced a Multiple Property Documentation Form for "Railroads in Colorado 1858-1948."<sup>5</sup>
- **Other possible themes:** Aviation in Colorado does not have a historic context statement; researchers should consult with History Colorado concerning sites related to this industry found in Erie and its planning area.<sup>6</sup> Other potential themes relating to Old Town Erie's settlement

are mentioned in Chapter 8 and should be developed for surveying work discussed in that chapter.

### Strategies for Historic Landscape Contexts

7.2.1 Prepare a detailed historic context for coal mining for the landscape within the Erie planning area. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

7.2.2 Prepare a detailed historic context for railroading in Erie and its planning area. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

7.2.3 Assess other theme possibilities in consultation with History Colorado and in coordination with thematic research conducted for surveying Old Town Erie; pursue as needed.

### 7.3 Surveying Landscape Resources and Sites

With an understanding of the contexts and types of resources expected to be found in Erie and its planning area, the next step is to survey the landscape to detect the resources that remain. The survey would map these resources and assess their significance, quality, and integrity, and potential contribution to landscape interpretation that could accompany trail development and other open space access. The resulting listing is an inventory that would be a reference for development reviews, property acquisitions, and repeated surveys in the decades ahead.



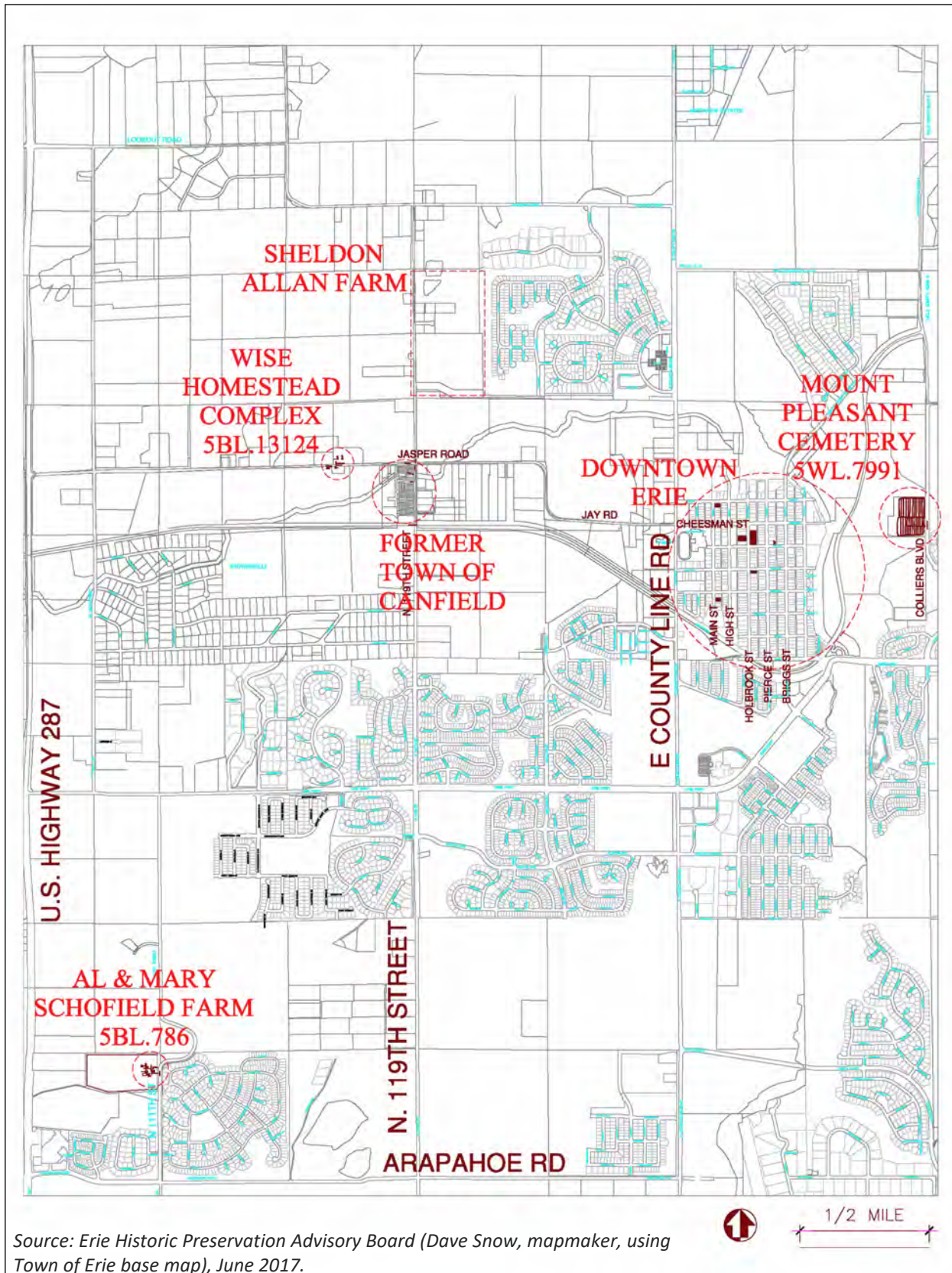
Map 7-2 Town of Erie 2017 Recreation Trail Map



Source: Town of Erie website, <https://www.erieco.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5070>



**Map 7-3 Historic Resources in the Erie Planning Area (Survey Is Needed for Complete Identification)**



It is possible to undertake this task immediately for agricultural resources, given the county-level context statements already in hand. This is fortunate, as most of the resources remaining in the landscape are agricultural. As noted above, little remains from the coal-mining and railroading eras and the most-affected areas have already been mapped, so that a surveyor could incorporate visits to those areas while focusing on agriculture.

**Given the rapid pace of development planned for Erie's growth, the sooner a surveyor can get out into the landscape to develop an inventory of significant features, the better.**

In fact, if a survey must be divided into phases for any reason (funding, grant period, etc.), the survey should be planned with a particular focus on those areas where development is most immediately under consideration. This approach may be particularly pertinent to the well-watered northwest quadrant of the planning area where Erie and Boulder County have engaged in joint conservation planning.

### **Coordinating Surveys with Existing Land Planning in Erie and the Erie Planning Area**

Erie's existing land planning program is already well positioned to support the idea of a more formalized approach to protecting historic landscape features. "Design standards" in the Unified Development Code (UDC) supporting the open space and trails program include historic features.

Some of these resources are already inventoried. For example, in 2008, Erie undertook a Natural Areas Inventory which can be used by developers to identify critical natural resources as they design subdivision plans. Other resources must be identified or verified by developers as they make their plans. For example, for Planned Development zoning, the applicant must provide a "native tree and vegetation survey." (UDC, p. 156)

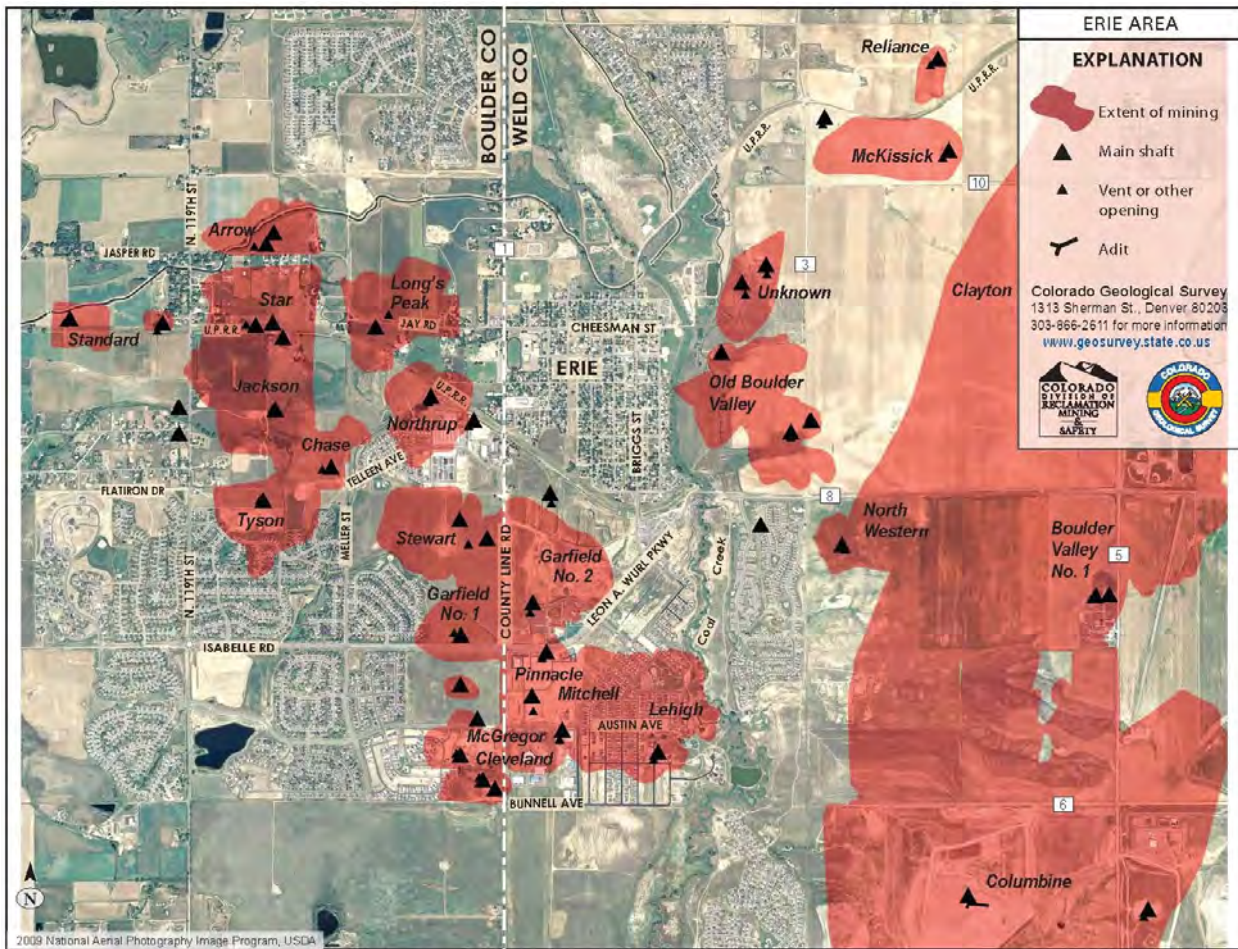
There is not, however, an inventory of historic landscape features for the Erie Planning Area. Boulder County has a comprehensive agriculture, conservation, and open space program that includes lands within the Erie planning area. The county and town have conserved areas of joint ownership. It may be possible to collaborate in a joint survey of the lands that are of interest to both jurisdictions.

There are several good reasons for Erie to support developing such an inventory as a part of its land development program:

- First, Erie could **support the proper identification of site-specific features by developers**, and identify critical features ahead of development, by developing its own cultural landscape inventory and **adding this information to the town's Geographic Information System (GIS)**.
- Second, while technically developers are already required to provide this information at the site level (for example, sketch plan requirements require the developer to "depict any historical or archaeological sites"<sup>7</sup>), it is better to have the **information ahead of the point that a developer is poised to change a site**. This would **give Erie an advance reading of what it does (or does not) want to negotiate for**, and why, and the ability to check a developer's understanding of the site's existing conditions. This is also a **developer-friendly activity, in helping to avoid late-breaking information that raises resource-protection concerns** at a point so far along in the process of site design that the developer is unable to be as creative as possible in working to avoid or incorporate certain features.
- Moreover, information gained from the inventory might **support the town's decisions to protect certain sites or portions of sites ahead of development**, when added to other planning information that may be leading the town to acquire properties (such as planned trail corridors or opportunities for water resource protection).
- Finally, more **up-front information emphasizing historic resources (their existence in the process as well as in the landscape)** would help to counter a certain tendency to "read out" historic preservation from headings like "open space." The UDC's nine-page table of contents, for example, does not include the word "historic" – yet the detailed definition of open space clearly expects historic resources to be included. When investors and developers are just scanning the "headlines" in the UDC, however, they could miss requirements relating to historic resources – especially the less-obvious historic landscape features that are not historic structures. Another way to deal with this lack of visibility is to do a cross-referenced "user's guide" to historic preservation under the Unified Development Code (in addition to the one under Erie's historic preservation ordinance), as a companion piece to the many user's guides already offered by the town for various development situations (see list at <http://www.erieco.gov/1191/Land-Use-Application-User-Guides>).



**Map 7-4 Former Mine Locations in the Erie Region**



### Strategies for Surveying Landscape Resources and Sites

7.3.1 Undertake a survey of historic resources related to agriculture, coal mining, and railroading in areas outside Old Town, within Erie's municipal boundary and planning area. (Same as 5.3.3) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

7.3.2 Consider undertaking such a survey jointly with Boulder County, at least in the northwest portion of the Erie Planning Area where both jurisdictions already cooperate.

### 7.4 Preservation of Significant Landscape Resources

As new development is undertaken in Erie, developers should identify historic landscape resources and, where feasible, work to preserve both historic structures and historic landscape features. Just as is already required for other environmental resources, the **existing condition analysis** undertaken by developers for land parcels entering the

development process, done at the earliest stage of planning review, should include these resources.

Even if there is no survey undertaken by Erie, this already-required procedure should result in preservation and planning that will ultimately enhance the open space and trail system – although it would be better to have a survey of historic resources just as Erie already has for natural resources.

For sites where the required existing condition analysis raises concern about impacts on historic resources, developers should be required to prepare a **historic resource impact study**. Such a procedure would ask developers to identify resources that are present, relate them to existing historic contexts, assess their condition and significance, and propose how they will be treated. Treatment would fall into two general categories:

- Incorporate existing historic resources into the design of new developments whenever possible,





*Erie is planning a program to install interpretive signs as part of town's signage system for parks, trails, and open space.*

preserving the resource and the immediate surrounding landscape context that is related to it.

- When preservation is not possible or when the character or integrity of a resource will be negatively impacted, mitigation measures for the negative impact should be proposed to the Town for consideration, negotiation, and approval.

This process is already implied in the Unified Development Code, but would benefit from more amplification and user-friendly language than would be appropriate in the UDC itself, provided in a flexible document providing guidance that can be altered by the Department of Community Development and Planning as needed (without necessarily requiring formal action by the Board of Trustees). For example, there is a user's guide for historic preservation under the historic preservation ordinance, and a series of other guidance documents, or user's guides, also exists, associated with the UDC.<sup>8</sup>

To take greatest advantage of historic landscape resources, Erie should undertake an interpretive plan to enhance the town's open space and trail system. This could be added to the next update of the open space and trail master plan or could be done separately. If undertaken sooner rather than later, such planning can add to the criteria to be used by the town in acquiring parcels for open space and trail corridors and in reviewing developers' plans.

### Strategies for Preserving Significant Landscape Resources

7.4.1 Incorporate the inventory data that results from the survey recommended in the previous section into Erie's Geographic Information System; make the information publicly available as appropriate (archeological sites should not be included).

7.4.2 Incorporate the inventory data that results from the survey recommended in the previous section into Erie's ongoing planning and plan updates for open space protection and trail development.

7.4.3 Produce a "User's Guide for Historic Preservation in the Town of Erie Planning Area under the Unified Development Code" that shows how the protection and incorporation of historic resources into the land development process is expected to work. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

7.4.5 For sites where the required existing condition analysis raises concern about impacts on historic resources, require developers to prepare a historic resource impact study.

7.4.6 For any resources in Boulder County identified in the survey that are eligible for listing in the National Register, undertake to add these to the existing Multiple Property Documentation Form.

*A well-preserved historic barn on Erie's west side. Farm outbuildings are especially difficult to preserve when properties go out of farming.*



7.4.7 Undertake an interpretive plan to help plan for and enhance Erie's open space and trail system. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

## 7.5 Conclusion

Erie's future requires the further development of farmland surrounding the Old Town. The Unified Development Code anticipates this with a thorough process for review and design that is compatible with the principles of historic preservation of elements of the original cultural landscape that will continue to offer clues to Erie's and Boulder County's past – and provide critical open space and historic resources to contribute to a high quality of life.

## End Notes for Chapter 7:

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/650.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/650.pdf). An "MPDF" is a formal statement of history and significance for National Register nominations that group together individual properties and can be added to later – nominators can simply tie their nominations to the MPDF narrative to help explain the history and significance of any given site under consideration for listing. [https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16b/nrb16b\\_intro.htm](https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16b/nrb16b_intro.htm)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/612.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/612.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bouldercounty.org/doc/landuse/agriculturalheritagewolfenbarger.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/651.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/651.pdf). The National Park Service offers guidelines on assessing mining properties: <https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb42/>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/625.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/625.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> The National Park Service offers guidelines on assessing aviation sites: <https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/aviation/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://co-erie2.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/363>, requirement 8.n, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.erieco.gov/documentcenter/view/6162> gives access to the Historic Preservation User's Guide, and <http://www.erieco.gov/1191/Land-Use-Application-User-Guides> provides access to a series of users' guides for the Unified Development Code.

# Chapter 8: Preserving Historic Resources in Old Town



## Goals of the Historic Preservation Master Plan Related to Chapter 8

### **Goal 1 – Community Identity and Quality of Life:**

Make Erie's historic buildings and landscapes a recognized part of the community's identity. Ensure that Erie's historic character is a valued community asset that contributes visibly to the town's economy, community programs, and quality of life.

**Goal 2 – Research:** Deepen understanding and appreciation of Erie's heritage and its related historic resources through an ongoing program of research and investigation.

**Goal 3 – Private Preservation:** Identify and preserve historic resources and enable property owners to enhance their properties in ways that respect historic character and layers of change reflecting the town's evolution.

**Goal 4 – Public Domain:** Continue to support Town of Erie ownership of historic properties and ensure high-quality long-term stewardship and interpretation.

**Goal 5 – Downtown Erie:** Continue to strengthen Erie's historic commercial and community center.

**Goal 6 – Old Town Erie's Neighborhoods:** Make historic preservation a key strategy for supporting the livability and vitality of Old Town neighborhoods.

**Goal 7 – Community Engagement:** Engage residents and visitors in many ways with respect to Erie's story through the experience of its buildings and landscapes.

## 8.1 Introduction

Preserving Old Town Erie's community character is a stated goal of both the Erie Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Code. The changes and projects that Erie wishes to undertake in order to support further growth in Old Town Erie, especially in the downtown, need to be paired with a renewed look at opportunities for retaining as many of the features that make Old Town Erie distinctive as possible. This historic preservation master plan offers a path for gaining more information and insight for preservation, to help reinforce desired development and redevelopment, and vice versa.

This chapter reviews Old Town Erie historic resources that have already been surveyed and other programs already undertaken to encourage preservation, picking up from preceding explanations of historic preservation programs in Erie. Erie's historic preservation ordinance was created to encourage preservation of qualifying landmarks and districts.<sup>1</sup>

The historic part of Erie, known as "Old Town Erie" or simply "Old Town," has been the primary focus of Erie's historic preservation initiatives to date, although it is important to note that two quite significant agricultural properties have now been



### Properties Preliminarily Considered Eligible for the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties

1. 370 Briggs Street, Powell House/Egnew Hotel (1890-91); 2009-10 survey (5WL.6186)
2. 500 Briggs Street, IOOF Hall/Lockwood Trading Co./State Mercantile Co./Hunter Mercantile Co./Wilson-Larson Store (1889); 2009-10 survey (5WL.6188)
3. 526 Briggs Street, Winslow Store (1940); 2016 survey (5WL.7980)
4. 604 High Street, Nicholson House (1895); 2009-10 survey (5WL.6193)
5. 404 Holbrook Street, McKenna/Heaton House (1891); 2016 survey (5WL.7984)
6. 405 Holbrook Street, Vaughn/Hunter House (1892); 2009-10 survey (5WL.6194)
7. 485 Holbrook Street, Williams/Bixler/McDonald House (1884); 2009-10 survey; **Erie Town Historic Landmark** (5WL.6195)
8. 575 Holbrook Street, Lawley/Milanovich/Johnson House (1880s); 2009-10 survey (5WL.1698)
9. 724 Holbrook Street, Wilson House (1887); 2009-10 survey (5WL.6200)

**NOTE:** 11580 and 11611 Jasper Road, Wise Homestead Complex (circa 1870-1910), is an **Erie Town Historic Landmark** and listed in the **Colorado Register** (2016; 5BL.13124).

**NOTE:** 2203 North 111th Street, Al and Mary Schofield Farm (circa 1880-1910), is an **Erie Town Historic Landmark** and may be eligible for the Colorado Register (5BL.786).

*Source: 2009-10 and 2016 intensive surveys by Front Range Associates, Inc., for the Town of Erie, compiled by the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board, 2017. Numbers in parentheses correspond to site numbers assigned in the Compass database maintained by History Colorado.*

preserved beyond the Old Town zones of the town, the Wise Homestead Complex (Erie Historical Society) and the Al and Mary Schofield Farm (Town of Erie).

Erie has begun or is able to take additional steps to encourage the preservation and appropriate treatment of historic resources and historic community character in Old Town through various means:

1. **Research and recognition** (local, state, and/or federal, all of which are voluntary; see Chapter 5 as well as this chapter);

### Properties Preliminarily Considered Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and Colorado State Register of Historic Properties

1. 520 Colliers Boulevard, Erie Cemetery/Mount Pleasant Cemetery (1871); 2016 survey; **Erie Town Historic Landmark** (5WL.7991)
2. 675 Holbrook Street, Morrison/Charlesworth/Woods House (c. 1897); 2009-10 survey (5WL.6198)
3. 602-04 Holbrook Street, Erie Methodist Episcopal Church (1888); 2009-10 survey; **Erie Town Historic Landmark** (5WL.6196)
4. 365 Main Street, Pearl Winslow Property (1931); 2016 survey; **Erie Town Historic Landmark** (5WL.7989)
5. 704 Main Street, Morgan/Carter House (1892); 2009-10 survey (5WL.6201)
6. 785 Main Street, Woolley/Padfield/Swallow House (1922); 2016 survey; **Erie Town Historic Landmark** (5WL.7985)
7. 235 Wells Street, Erie (City) Town Hall (1930-31); 2009-10 survey; **Erie Town Historic Landmark** (5WL.6206)
8. **NOTE:** 645 Holbrook Street, Lincoln School/Erie Government Town Hall (1906) was listed in 1981; **Erie Town Historic Landmark** (5WL.216)

*Source: 2009-10 and 2016 intensive surveys by Front Range Associates, Inc., for the Town of Erie, compiled by the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board, 2017. Numbers in parentheses correspond to site numbers assigned in the Compass database maintained by History Colorado.*

2. **Incentives** flowing from recognition (Chapter 5);
3. **Aligning the Unified Development Code's existing statements of desired results with the form and design of development in Old Town permitted under the UDC as it affects historic preservation** (this chapter); and
4. **Reinforcing existing planning for Old Town Erie**, especially for the downtown – the Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan and the Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan (Chapter 3 and below).

As one major incentive for preservation, owners may be able to use the Colorado preservation tax credits for rehabilitation of properties recognized as historic by the town or the state even if not listed in the National Register.

Buildings in Old Town have enjoyed increasing popularity in recent years, as the town's population has grown and demand has also grown for unique properties within Front Range communities. In the small commercial area known as "downtown Erie," customers are "voting with their feet," enjoying the attractive restaurants (including two breweries) and other businesses located in historic buildings. Prices for residences (most buildings in Old Town are residential) have been rising, another indicator of the area's desirability.<sup>2</sup>

## 8.2 Research and Recognition

### *Surveying Old Town Erie*

A survey involves researching Erie's history and investigating properties to gain insight into their individual and collective history, historic character, and integrity. (An inventory is the documentation and list that results from surveys, generally using Colorado forms.) The survey identifies properties where it is desirable to maintain ongoing records of historic properties whether or not they can be formally recognized upon completion of the survey. (As they age, some younger properties that are not surveyed, or only lightly investigated, may be re-evaluated for later recognition. This is happening now across the nation with "mid-century modern" structures from the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.)

Erie has undertaken two surveys, both "selective-intensive" in methodology,<sup>3</sup> with final reports provided in 2009-10 and 2016. These surveys provided thorough information about 36 properties in Old Town Erie. Surveyors identified a total of 16 as potentially eligible for the Colorado Register, with a subset of 7 of those also potentially eligible for the National Register.<sup>4</sup> (See sidebars, opposite page)

Three other properties are part of the town's inventory by virtue of separate documentation:

- Lincoln School/Erie Government Town Hall (5WL.216; listed in the National Register in 1981; in Old Town Erie);
- The Wise Homestead Complex (5BL.13124; listed in the Colorado Register and named an Erie Town Historic Landmark, both in 2016; beyond Old Town Erie); and
- The Al and Mary Schofield Farm (5BL.786; named an Erie Town Historic Landmark in 2017 and possibly eligible for the Colorado Register; beyond Old Town Erie).

We do not know how many more older properties in Old Town Erie might be individually or collectively

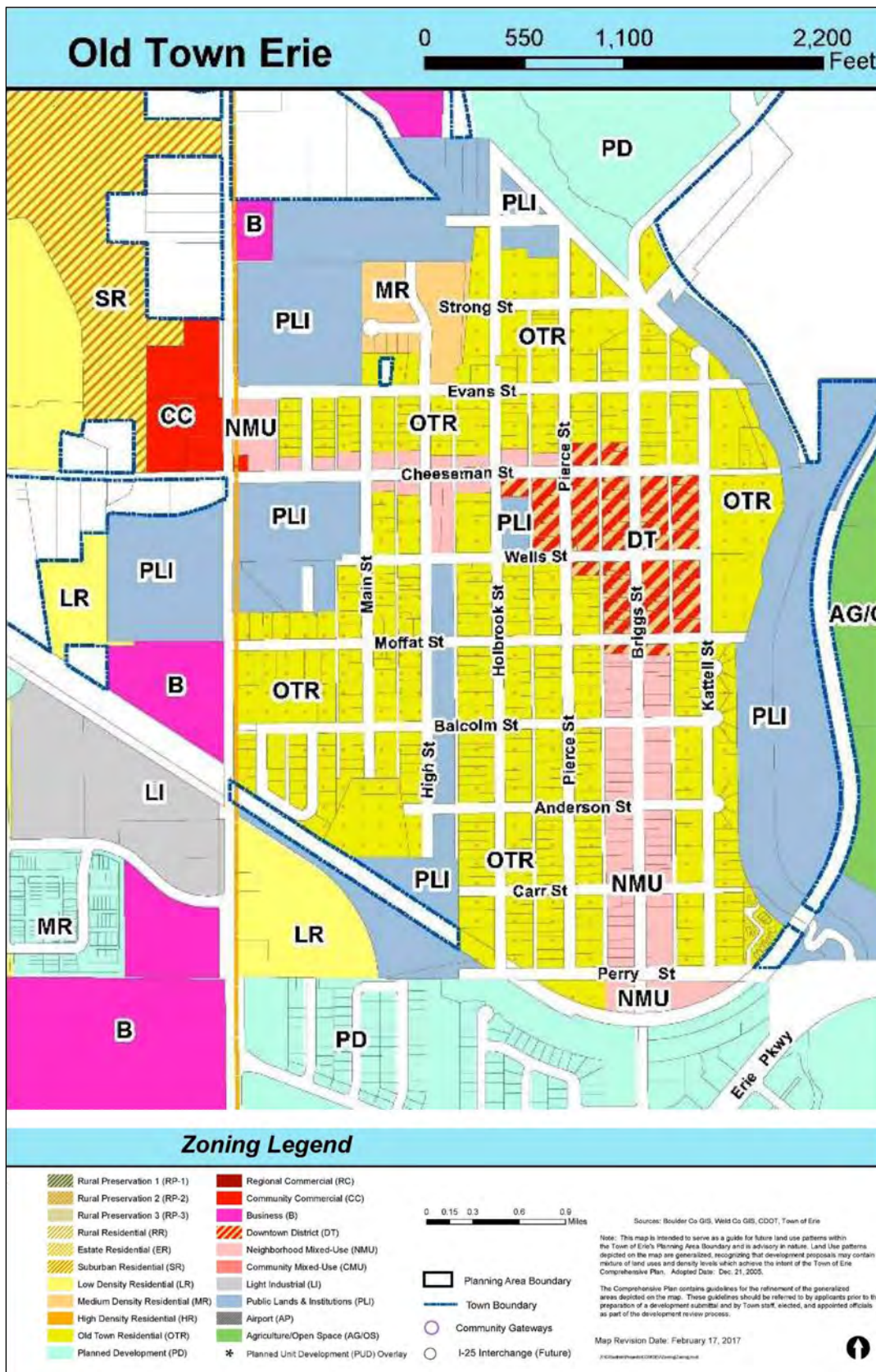
eligible for local, state, or federal recognition. The EHPAB has undertaken a review of buildings in Old Town, at this writing estimated at approximately 200, preparatory to applying for a grant to conduct one or more surveys planned for highest-priority implementation once this plan is complete. Following their background work, EHPAB volunteers will then consult with History Colorado concerning next steps. Focus on the zones most likely to experience development pressure is advisable: Neighborhood Mixed Use-Old Town (NMU-Old Town) district and immediately adjacent blocks of the Old Town Residential (OTR) zone, plus the Downtown (DT) zone. As noted below, there is some urgency to completing survey work in those zones because of upgrades planned for town infrastructure (including Coal Creek Park). Such upgrades are expected to help generate added interest in developing Erie's commercial area and redeveloping adjacent blocks.

Just as critical to this stage of surveying is research. The reports for the two surveys conducted in 2009-2010 and 2016 provide helpful background, including analysis of early insurance maps (called Sanborn maps after the insurance company that produced them over decades of town development). Additional detail may be desirable and should be assessed during planning for the survey(s) described above, perhaps concerning historic contexts for coal mining and railroading in Erie and such other themes as frontier settlement and development, or the influence of ethnicity or reflection of local and national historical trends in town patterns and architecture. Such further research may be needed to enable surveyors to understand how individual buildings fit into a holistic picture of Old Town Erie and its evolution, and value all "layers" discovered from historical periods (not simply what exists from the earliest settlement period).

### *Designating Historic Resources in Old Town Erie*

The survey work described in the preceding section is "step one" of a process to (1) gain greater public recognition for important historic properties in Erie, (2) qualify those properties for incentives to support private property owners' efforts to maintain and enhance their historic properties, and (3) ensure they are protected as much as possible in federal and state environmental review. Let's take each of these in turn. A fourth and final step, to lay proper groundwork for local action to protect resources identified in surveys (existing and future surveys), is addressed in the next section.

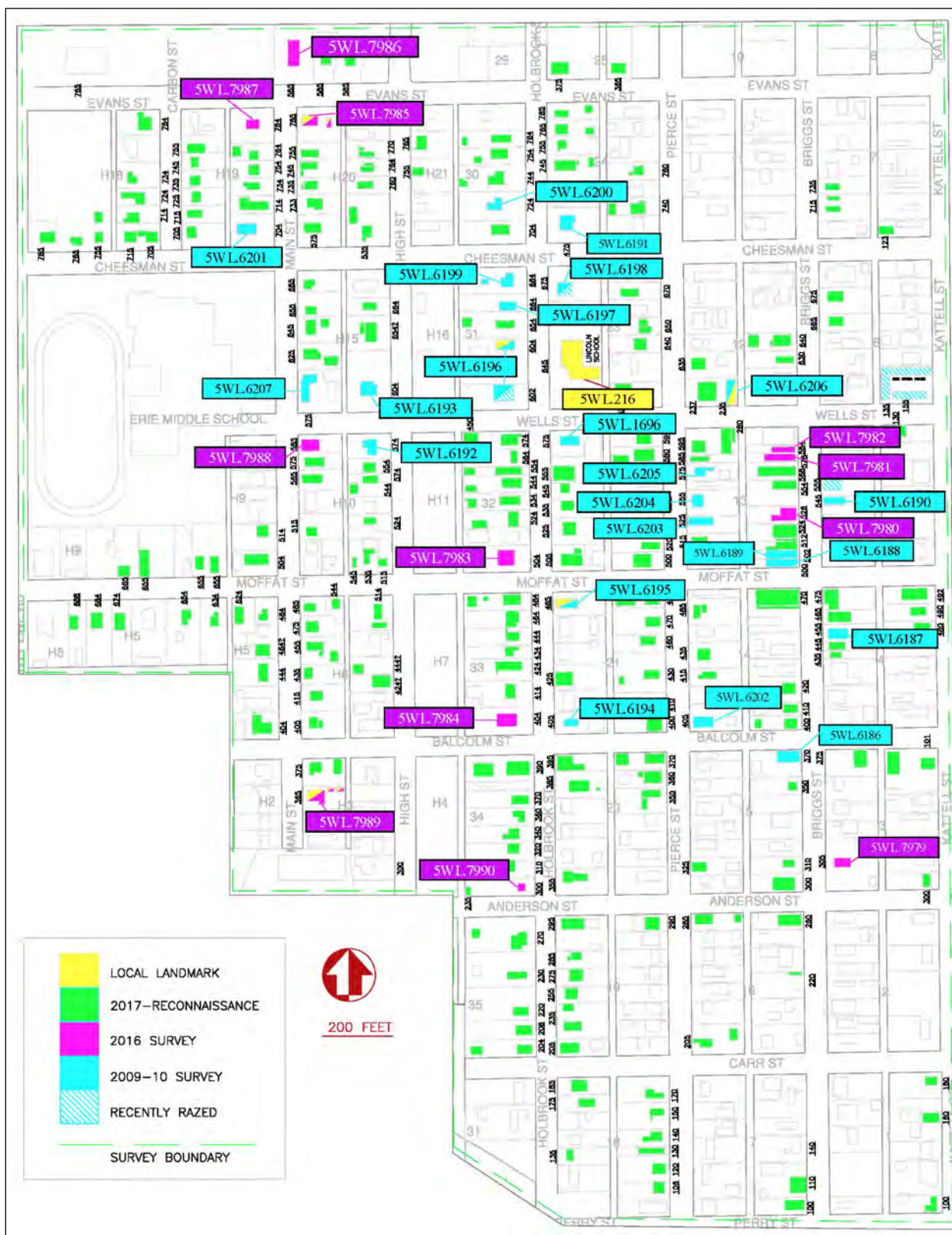
Map 8-1 Town of Erie Zoning Map for Old Town Erie



Source: Resized from Town of Erie official zoning map, <https://www.erieco.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/334>



# Map 8-2 Identified and Potential Historic Resources in Old Town Erie (Survey Is Needed for Complete Identification)



Source: Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board (Dave Snow, mapmaker, using Town of Erie base map), June 2017.

## Public Recognition

The “gold standard” of public recognition is the National Register of Historic Places, operated by the National Park Service. A nomination (done by owners or public or nonprofit groups depending on the kinds of resources and their circumstances) is submitted to History Colorado, which if it approves the nomination then sends it to the National Park Service for review and acceptance. If History Colorado wishes, even if the property is deemed not to qualify for the National Register, it may choose to list the property in the Colorado Register of Historic Properties.

As a Certified Local Government (see Chapter 3), the town can be represented by the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board as an official participant in the process for reviewing National Register nominations. This role is anticipated by language in the town’s preservation ordinance: “When appropriate, encourage and assist owners of historic properties to apply for nomination to the national register of historic places and allow adequate public participation in the advisory board’s part in the national register nomination process.” However, such nominations have yet to be considered for Erie since the EHPAB’s establishment. The only National Register listing in Erie was accomplished in 1981, the Lincoln School (Erie Government Town Hall).

It is possible that surveying discussed in the preceding section could reveal that one or more districts in Old Town might be eligible for the National Register. Such documentation may prove useful in its own right in state or federal environmental reviews (districts need only be shown to be eligible, not necessarily listed) or in supporting other town action, unless and until sufficient owner consent can be identified. The documentation should provide a statement of significance and description, and identify contributing and non-contributing buildings and resources within the selected historic area. Should full listing in the National Register and/or Colorado Register be identified as a possibility, this would be worth pursuing for the sake of enhancing Erie’s identity within the Front Range.

Listing districts under local, state, or national recognition would enable property owners to take advantage of state and federal tax incentives without the expense and effort of pursuing individual recognition; state or national recognition would avoid local obligation for regulatory action to recognize resources under Erie’s ordinance. More buildings might thus become eligible for the tax benefits, contributing to support for local spending on rehab projects.

## Incentives

Listing in the National Register enables owners of commercial historic properties to seek to qualify for federal rehabilitation tax credits. (A tax credit lowers a taxpayer’s bill dollar for dollar, off the “bottom line” of the income tax owed. See sidebars on page 26 and discussion generally in Chapter 3; for more information start with History Colorado’s simple summary – see Appendix G.) Owners of commercial and residential historic properties listed in the Colorado Register may obtain state preservation tax credits; for commercial properties, this can add up to considerable benefits because they can be added to the federal credit. (For more information on the federal tax credit, see <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/before-you-apply.htm>.)

These tax incentives are created in recognition that owners of publicly recognized historic properties are contributing to public benefits, and may encounter added costs in ensuring that treatment of these properties is done according to best practices. For applicants for these incentives, there is an advance process of review by History Colorado for the owners’ plans to ensure that standards are followed (see Appendix C, Secretary of the Interior’s Standards). As a Certified Local Government, Erie also participates in such review, via the EHPAB.

## Protection in Federal and State Environmental Review (“Section 106”)

Federal and state listings do not dictate what property owners can and cannot do with their property (unless they wish voluntarily to qualify for the tax incentives). However, there is a process of requiring federal and state agencies to take account of the existence of properties listed in or eligible for the National Register, whenever a federal agency’s action or funding is involved (including state agencies operating under a federal program or funding). Under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, this is known as “Section 106” (for the applicable section in the federal act); Colorado’s recognition applies to state-recognized properties affected by state agency actions, whether or not related to any federal action.

As a Certified Local Government, Erie has the power to participate in state and federal environmental reviews affecting properties listed in or eligible for the National and Colorado Registers.

## Strategies for Research and Recognition

8.2.1 Undertake survey(s) of existing properties within Old Town Erie to identify those that are





*Town of Erie plans for investment, such as the park and bike-pedestrian trail called for in Old Town's Linear Park (old railroad right-of-way) and redeveloping Wells Street (with its National Register-eligible old town hall, lower left), can stimulate interest in commercial and residential development on nearby properties. Such demand and improvements can enhance the property tax base, a good return on public investment, but it is necessary to plan for mitigating potential negative effects to small-scale historic buildings.*

potentially eligible as local landmarks and/or for listing in the National and Colorado Registers, either individually and as part of potential historic districts. (Colorado and National Register designations afford public recognition and tax benefits but no local regulation. See additional discussion in Chapter 5, where the same strategy appears as 5.3.1.) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

8.2.2 Publicize findings from the survey(s). (See Chapter 9, where the same strategy appears as 9.2.5) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

8.2.3 Continue to encourage property owners to pursue voluntary recognition of individual buildings as local landmarks and/or through the Colorado and National Registers. (See Chapter 5 – surveying is needed for this. Same as 5.3.4.) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

8.2.4 Participate as a Certified Local Government in any National Register nomination proceedings.

8.2.5 If surveying reveals that one or more districts in Old Town might be eligible for listing in the National and/ or Colorado Registers, begin (a) reaching out to owners and community leaders and (b) preparing nomination documentation. Seek actual listing once community support is secure;

documentation is valuable with or without achieving actual listing.

8.2.6 Create local incentives for owners of designated local Historic Landmarks, such as property tax breaks, reduced building fees for approved rehab projects, or grants, as appropriate. (Same as 5.4.2.) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

8.2.7 Participate as a Certified Local Government in any environmental review proceedings related to properties listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National and/or Colorado Registers.

### 8.3 Local Action to Protect Old Town Erie's Character and Historic Resources

Erie can take three basic kinds of action to protect the character and historic resources of Old Town, and is already pursuing the first two of these:

- First, Erie can **recognize individually significant historic structures and sites, called "landmarking,"** as discussed in Chapter 5.
- Second, Erie can take action through its **longstanding Unified Development Code (UDC)**, which governs the use, density, pattern, and design of development throughout the town, varying by district or zone.
- Finally, under the same general process and criteria for landmarking, the **EHPAB may recommend designation of a local historic district to the Board of Trustees (but has not done so).**

Each of these ideas is discussed in detail below.



### **Designating Local Landmarks**

Local landmarking is currently a way forward in applying local protection to historic properties. It is, of course, a technique already in use in Old Town (see sidebars, p. 76). This is the most direct way to provide local protection for historic properties in areas where development pressure is most likely, principally the Downtown (DT) and Neighborhood Mixed Use-Old Town (NMU-Old Town) zones. It is piecemeal, however, as it depends on the willingness of property owners to enter the nomination process. As discussed in Chapter 5, it may be possible to strengthen this tool by adding local incentives to encourage more owners to participate.

The process of designating local landmarks operates much like the process of listing individual properties in the National and Colorado Registers described in Chapter 3. Individual owners voluntarily agree to this recognition, and are responsible for making the application (sometimes the EHPAB assists). Once a historic structure is landmarked by the Board of Trustees (acting on recommendation of the EHPAB), additional restrictions apply to an owner's decisions to alter, move, or demolish. The EHPAB and current owner are notified by the Building Division when the owner or the owner's representative requests a permit or permits for a landmarked building. The owner must also apply for a "certificate of appropriateness" (COA). The Board of Trustees has the final say on COA issuance after EHPAB review and recommendation. The process and criteria for both landmark designation and COA issuance are spelled out in Erie's historic preservation ordinance.

### **Strengthening the Unified Development Code in Old Town Erie**

This section suggests strengthening UDC rules that help to shape the use, density, pattern, and design of new construction in the three Old Town zones (DT, NMU-Old Town, and Old Town Residential (OTR); however, there are no design guidelines for the Old Town Residential zone). This approach will not prevent adverse demolitions or incompatible design of either new construction or changes to historic structures. It will, however, ask those planning to make changes to consider existing conditions in the process.

Boundaries of these zones are drawn to insure orderly development with shared or complementary characteristics. The system is implemented through a process of permitting operated by the Building Division within the Community Development Department.

In development review affecting historic preservation, there are two important areas to consider: (1) how to influence development through a review process based on **standards for use, density, and dimensions**; and (2) how to influence development through **design standards**.

### **Existing Conditions for Protecting the Character of Old Town Erie**

In already-built Old Town, under the town's Unified Development Code (UDC, <http://www.erieco.gov/documentcenter/view/351>), Erie's controls over land uses, including controls over density, and the configuration of new development will be important to guide and review proposals for redevelopment.

Redevelopment can be expected to affect historic resources in Old Town Erie. It is a statement of the obvious to say it must be assumed, in the context of the booming growth of the Front Range and Erie's proximity to Boulder and Denver, that Old Town has become an increasingly desirable location for residential and commercial uses, a trend that can be expected to continue, including multi-family residential development.

Respect for Old Town's character and distinctiveness is already reflected in statements in the UDC. The purposes of all residential zoning include the intention that

district and development standards ensure that mixed use development will maintain and improve the function and appearance of surrounding development and traffic flow; provide the opportunity to protect sensitive environmental and cultural resources; [and] protect the scale and character of existing residential neighborhoods and community character. (UDC, p. 10, paragraphing altered)

Similarly, the downtown (DT) zone's purpose is "to provide for and encourage development and redevelopment that preserves and enhances the unique character and vitality of Old Town Erie." (UDC, p. 10)

In addition, neighborhood mixed-use (NMU-Old Town) zoning's purpose includes the statement that it is "to provide for small, compact commercial centers within or surrounded by residential areas, compatible in scale and character with surrounding residential uses." (UDC, p. 10)

Mixed-use development (commercial and residential uses generally designed and built together) is allowed along Briggs, Wells, and Cheesman in blocks



*A critical step for protecting the character of Old Town Erie is to deliberate on the need for development standards in greater sympathy to Old Town's existing patterns, dealing with such scale-related issues as lot coverage and height of existing structures. In the Old Town Residential zone (see Map 8-1, p. 78), buildings up to 35 feet in height and three stories are allowed where one-story cottages typically predominate on many streets. In this photo, the house at right is an early cottage; the two buildings to its rear are recent construction.*

surrounding the current (and small) downtown area (Neighborhood Mixed Use – NMU-Old Town). (See UDC excerpts, Appendix H and zoning map, p. vii.)

“Redevelopment” is defined in the UDC as “the intensification of use of existing underutilized buildings or development sites, building rehabilitation, or removal or demolition of existing buildings, followed promptly by construction of replacement buildings.” (p. 302) It is important to note that wherever this term is to be applied, existing buildings – historic or not – are seen as undervalued and demolition is implied (though not mandated, as “building rehabilitation” in the definition does imply the alternative of re-use).

Even unbuilt areas within or adjacent to Old Town may affect existing neighborhoods. Under discussion as this plan is being written are two projects in the vicinity of Main Street<sup>5</sup> where zoning allows dense multi-family development within an existing pattern of less-dense, small-scale single-family housing.

Without strong guidance to those seeking to locate in Old Town – guidance that discourages projects which would not fit well there – some applicants proposing new development may not expect to adapt their business needs or residential tastes to existing structures and patterns.

Development proposals presenting challenges to current conditions in Old Town could occur anywhere: on small parcels suitable only for single-

family residential use or on larger parcels anywhere throughout Old Town in the OTR district; or on small or large parcels; or on assembled multiple parcels in the Old Town areas zoned DT and NMU-Old Town. Such redevelopment can be expected to involve demolition unless (or even if) a building is landmarked.<sup>6</sup>

A mismatch between current development patterns and underlying zoning that would allow more-intensive development or redevelopment can readily increase pressures for change to historic buildings and neighborhoods – **whether or not community leaders seeking greater historic preservation in Old Town Erie were to pursue one or more local historic districts for selected areas.**

Regardless of the historic qualities of Old Town Erie's neighborhoods, many Old Town neighborhoods clearly are distinctive in terms of their pattern.

This plan encourages establishment of procedures and policies that will encourage redevelopment in Old Town Erie in a way that reflects the current pattern of development and which may reduce the threat of demolition.

### **Protecting the Character of Old Town Erie through Regulation of Density and Dimensions of Development**

A critical step for protecting the character of Old Town Erie is to deliberate on whether, how, and where to encourage, more strongly, standards for

development patterns in greater sympathy to existing patterns in Old Town, dealing with such scale-related issues as lot coverage and height of existing structures (generally the two together are called the “building envelope”).

For example, in the Old Town residential zone, buildings up to 35 feet in height and three stories (UDC Table 4-1, page 78) are allowed where one-story cottages typically predominate on many streets. In such locations, depending on such factors as topography, setback, and the context of neighboring structures, a two-story residence might be more sympathetic than a three-story one. As another example, redevelopment in the OTR district is permitted at a density of 16 units per acre (UDC Table 4-1, page 78). While this density is quite close to what the original pattern of 25’x100’ lots in Old Town would yield, today few single-family residences occupy single lots of that size in Old Town. This density standard may be more likely to encourage multi-family residential development on multiple lots, if other factors are favorable to the ultimate profitability of such projects.

In order to achieve the basic goal of protecting existing neighborhood character, these and other UDC rules should be re-examined for their ability to reinforce existing patterns rather than continue rules that could allow those patterns to be eroded by out-of-scale development. To achieve such a critical step on a comprehensive basis for selected neighborhoods, a technique called the “neighborhood conservation overlay district” would allow willing neighborhoods within Old Town to “custom design” selected requirements to protect their critical qualities without relying on their historic character. Boulder County, in fact, has one of the acknowledged national models for this technique (see Appendix I and Boulder County’s Zoning Code, Article 4, Section 4-118, Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District).

**The less the alignment between what the UDC allows and the existing conditions and historical pattern of development, in any of the three zones, the greater the incentive for intensive, incompatible development, which may also result in undesirable demolitions.** Now is the time to consider these possibilities, before further redevelopment is encouraged through added (and desirable) investment in ideas encompassed by the Downtown Development Framework Plan, as discussed further below.

Finally, reflecting an idea developed in the preceding chapter on protecting Erie’s historic landscape

features, Erie could produce a “User’s Guide for Historic Preservation in Old Town Erie under the UDC” that shows how the protection and incorporation of historic resources into the current development process in the three Old Town Erie zones is expected to work.

### **Protecting the Character of Old Town Erie through Design Review**

Design review of new construction in Old Town Erie is a different matter. Use and dimensional requirements as recommended in the preceding section can create a certain amount of restraint, and if made to match the basic historic pattern of a neighborhood where preservation is a generalized goal, development pressures on smaller buildings can be reduced. Such action will not, however, necessarily insure that modern construction will be designed in sympathy to historic structures.<sup>7</sup>

Again, goals cited above and in the UDC excerpts provided in Appendix H, concerning the protection of community character in the OTR, DT, and NMU-Old Town zones, would apply to the concern about compatible design in those zones. Beyond this, design standards for construction in the Old Town Residential (OTR) zone are found within the UDC in Sections 10.6.4 (Landscaping, Screening, and Fencing), 10.6.6 (Parking and Loading), 10.6.11 (Operational Standards – to prevent “dangerous, injurious, noxious, or otherwise objectionable conditions”), and 10.6.12 (Signs). Such design standards would ensure that new construction in the OTR meets minimums needed to prevent objectionable conditions but not necessarily architecturally sympathetic or compatible development.

There are design standards for the Downtown (DT) and Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU-Old Town) zoning districts. Section 10.6.8 states that the purpose of these standards is

to provide guidance for all mixed-use, commercial and public/institutional infill and redevelopment within the DT and NMU (Old Town) and to ensure that new development **respects the small-town scale and historic context of the area.** The standards will assist investors in making design choices that will have a positive impact on both the historic and future character of the DT and NMU (Old Town). Development in the DT and NMU (Old Town) should **respect the historic character and reinforce the image of the DT and NMU (Old**





*Smaller scale buildings in Old Town's Downtown (DT) zone (see Map 8-1, p. 78) provide models for the highly valued "historic character" or "small town character" of Old Town Erie – illustrating what is intended in the design guidelines for new development under Erie's Unified Development Code. Under the same code, however, existing buildings of any age in this zone may be replaced by their owners.*

**Town) as an attractive, pedestrian-oriented district."** (p. 158, emphasis added)

The UDC standards for DT and NMU-Old Town should receive further consideration to ensure that the intention or purpose as stated in the UDC (as explained under the "existing conditions" segment above) will indeed achieve the desired result to the maximum degree feasible. There is a saying among code-writers and planners, that regulation can prevent "the worst," but not necessarily obtain "the best." This is because it is difficult to prescribe design quality, although some jurisdictions have proven more successful than others and would provide valuable models for further work on this issue in Erie.

Erie's UDC leans toward the code-writing philosophy of saying less rather than more, with enough guidance to signal developers what is expected and trusting the development review process to work out the details. For architectural design in the NMU-Old Town district, for example, the UDC simply states that

New designs shall draw upon the common elements of historic buildings in the community (without copying them). Examples of common elements include similar fenestration, cornice lines, building widths, and other exterior features. This will allow new structures to be seen as products of their own time, yet compatible with their historic neighbors. (p. 160)

The UDC also provides that

A single, large, dominant building mass on a building front shall be avoided. Buildings wider than 25 feet along a street shall design the building to appear as an aggregation of the historical design patterning for building widths found in Old Town that also integrate variation in height, texture, color and façade depth. All building facades shall have similar levels of architectural detailing. (p. 160)

Such design standards may indeed be workable. They require the community to be comfortable with the proposition that it is possible to hold firm in the negotiations and employ the power to "say no" to specific proposals on this basis to gain the best possible outcome in review of any given development proposal. Furthermore, the community must be comfortable with the density increases allowed by right as found in the zoning districts' underlying standards for use and scale (or dimension). Close review of these design standards is needed to ensure that they will enable the community to meet its stated goals for preserving community character.

In reviewing existing design standards for the DT and NMU-Old Town zones, and/or in implementing the recommendation in the preceding section to adopt neighborhood conservation overlay districts, design standards for new construction in the OTR zone should also be considered, at a minimum for multi-unit developments. For the OTR district, where there

are no architectural standards (it is the only zone in Erie where this is the case), there is no standard to prevent, for example, what Erie's UDC states is *not* desired in new subdivisions, "bleak, 'barracks-type' appearance associated with large concentrations of identical or very similar structures." (p. 156)

Adopting language similar to or replicating standards in the DT and NMU-Old Town zones may be simplest. This would achieve the goal discussed in the preceding section of reinforcing the existing pattern of development without necessarily moving into more stringent architectural review standards like those typically applied historic districts. Given that all other development in Erie must conform to architectural standards, it seems only fair to apply them, at minimum, in the same way to the Old Town Residential area.

### Strategies for Local Action to Protect the Character of Old Town Erie

8.3.1 Produce a "User's Guide for Historic Preservation in Old Town Erie under the UDC" that shows how the protection and incorporation of historic resources into procedures for development and redevelopment in the three Old Town zones is expected to work. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

8.3.2 In Old Town Erie's OTR zone, encourage UDC rules that will encourage redevelopment or the development of vacant parcels to reflect the current distinctive pattern of historical development as described in Section 8.3. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

8.3.3 Adopt design standards for the OTR district reflecting the same or similar goals as already expressed in the UDC for other zones.

8.3.4 Enlist neighborhoods in the process of re-examining rules for development in the OTR district under Strategies 8.3.2 and 8.3.3, with the possibility of adopting neighborhood conservation overlay districts where sufficient interest exists. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

8.3.5 Tune up existing design standards if and as appropriate for the DT and NMU-OT districts, sufficient to achieve the UDC's stated goals of respecting "the small-town scale and historic context" and "the historic character" and reinforcing "the image of the DT and NMU (Old Town) as an attractive, pedestrian-oriented district."

### Potential for Local Historic District Designation

Historic districts are a way to influence development specifically to protect the historic character of selected areas. Historic districts work in concert with local development standards, by functioning as "overlay districts" that implement special rules over and above the "underlying" development standards and restrictions. They add further restrictions on alterations to and demolition of historic structures and development of undeveloped parcels within delineated historic areas. This is to protect the unique character of selected groupings of historic resources.

Erie currently lacks complete information about the significance, quality, and extent of the historic resources in Old Town. A top priority of this plan is to address this lack of information. Establishment of one or more historic districts, therefore, is viewed only as a longer-term possibility. Without thorough survey information, it is difficult to state whether, and where, local historic district designation would be appropriate if residents were supportive.

The idea of designating locally regulated historic districts is contemplated by Erie's historic preservation ordinance but would need more written policies or procedures for designation. As with historic districts under federal and state rules for owner consent, it is assumed that at least 51 percent of owners within a proposed district would have to agree; some Colorado communities require a larger percentage.

Erie residents and leaders need time to consider the need and potential effects of the additional requirements possible under local historic regulation. Just how to implement a local historic district should be thoroughly discussed, based on complete analyses of Old Town's historic character from survey data and of the threats and opportunities to be addressed.

It is difficult if not impossible for Erie to prevent demolition of existing buildings, newer ones as well as older ones, except through landmarking. Only a handful are currently landmarked, and even landmarked buildings may be demolished after review by the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board and a decision by the Board of Trustees. This would also be true in a historic district.

Some local property owners have indicated they are not supportive of historic district designation, because it would lead to stronger review of owners' decisions to alter, move, or demolish, stronger than what is already practiced under the UDC. Many who are less exposed to the details of historic district





*Beautifully maintained smaller cottages in Erle have survived into a new era of appreciation for the simple life in “tiny houses.” Note the 1940s trim on the door and windows of the home in the lower photo. Buildings from all eras, no matter how simple, can exhibit clues to their ages through such details. For lovers of history, Old Town is a treasure trove of authentic buildings representing a particular place and time that may never again be constructed. In their own way, they are as unique as plants and animals identified in inventories of threatened and endangered species.*

review at the local level are sometimes surprised to learn there can be considerable variation in the level of historic district design review. For example, depending on the community, choice of paint color – a concern for many property owners – may be ignored altogether in designing the standards for such reviews.

Thus, more study and analysis, more education of local leaders, and more public outreach by EHPAB and advocates will be needed before a local historic district could be deemed an appropriate protection measure – ultimately by the Board of Trustees with consent of at least a majority of property owners.

## **8.4 Supporting Downtown Growth and Change**

Old Town Erie’s downtown core is an important economic resource, and its success is important to its preservation. Prosperous businesses invest in their unique buildings, and successful businesses that are conscious of the downtown’s identity will seek ways to preserve the historic character that is central to that identity. The downtown is also the way that Erie residents most often experience the town’s heritage.

Improvement of the downtown has been a focus of town and business leaders for at least a decade, with positive results ranging from landscaping and public art to new businesses. Public and private investment



in building rehabilitation, new construction, and streetscaping, plus advancing a thoughtful calendar of events, has built the downtown's reputation as a great place for community gatherings as well as a destination for good meals and other entertainment. Recent creation of an arts and entertainment district is designed to help that progress continue.

There is an obvious mismatch, however, between Erie's population and its traditional commercial core. That area, originally only one block in size, was built to serve at most a population of about a thousand – less than roughly one-twentieth of the population in Erie today. Modern traffic and parking, especially during events, are challenges undreamed-of when Erie was first laid out in 1874. A key gathering place is Coal Creek Park, beside the downtown and in need of upgrades to serve the growing community's needs for space to hold gatherings and sports activities.

Moreover, Erie's leaders are recognizing the "economic leakage" (spending that helps other communities, not Erie) plus the inconvenience to residents and extra traffic that all result from the town's residents spending beyond Erie. A strong commercial tax base is also important to the town's long-term fiscal health. The downtown is recognized as one of the key places in Erie where it is desirable to permit more commercial development to address these issues.

Clearly, for all these reasons, the downtown needs to grow and change. The UDC addresses this need by permitting greater density, multi-family housing, and commercial redevelopment on Briggs, Wells and Cheesman.

As described in Chapter 3, the upgrading of Coal Creek Park is the highlight of the Downtown Development Framework Plan, just completed at the end of 2016. That plan also seeks to address parking and circulation challenges comprehensively in the downtown, from the park outward (including added bicycle access to encourage more residents to use bikes rather than cars to visit both the park and the downtown).

The Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan (2013, also described in Chapter 3) is also a tool that can help the town invest in implementing the Framework Plan and other projects to support downtown's growth and change.

The Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan does not provide details on intended projects. It does, however, set up the town's ability to implement specific projects identified in – for a major example –

the Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan. The Framework Plan addresses development needs within DT and NMU-Old Town districts and consequently could affect adjacent OTR neighborhoods; it summarizes but does not change the design standards already present in the UDC as discussed in a section above.

The Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan also affirms a Comprehensive Plan "key principle" that includes this statement: "The Town will work to **maintain the quality and character of established neighborhoods** and ensure that infill and redevelopment is designed in a manner that **minimizes impacts on existing neighborhoods.**" (Section 5.2, pdf p. 15, emphasis added)

These two plans offer the promise of economic development in which the town is to be an active partner.

The plans also highlight, however, potential for collisions between development and preservation that need to be addressed strategically. Potentially significant historic buildings are present in the DT and NMU-Old Town districts most affected by the Framework Plan. Indeed, some individually significant buildings have already been identified among the 36 that have been surveyed under History Colorado's standards for intensive surveys (see sidebar, p. 76; Map 8-2 on page 79, and Appendix F); others may have the potential to be judged contributing buildings in a historic district. As stated previously, an analysis as to the eligibility of groups of buildings as districts (or multiple resources) has yet to be undertaken in Old Town.

The likelihood of effects of both the Framework Plan and the Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan on historic resources – potentially both positive and negative – suggests that it would be wise to assess those resources sooner rather than later, starting with surveying described above and in Chapter 5. If funding for surveying is so limited that phasing is required, the first phase should focus on the DT and NMU-Old Town districts and adjoining streets, where it is most probable that intensive development and use changes will occur. The sooner the potential for both positive and negative effects is known, the simpler it will be to plan for avoidance, mitigation, and (where positive effects are forecast) positive measures for preservation. Funding for this work may be available from History Colorado, or it may be possible to justify funding through monies made available thanks to the Old Town Erie Urban Renewal Plan, or both.



*The survival of so many buildings over more than a century has endowed Erie with a remarkable, layered historical environment. Many of the buildings have changed, but with every change, there's a story. A false-front commercial building built in 1908 (545 Briggs Street) now is covered with half-log siding from 1948, now old enough to be historic in its own right. What made that owner renovate the building, soon after World War II? There are countless hidden stories like this everywhere.*

From a fair and careful look at the town's need for both more intensive development/redevelopment of an enlarged, more active commercial core of Old Town *and* the preservation of Old Town's character, it should be possible to design a strategy to support both goals – while recognizing the needs of creative private owners, investors, and businesses that need flexibility to help make this entire enterprise a success. Positive steps in designing such a strategy include:

1. Study historic resources in and surrounding Old Town's commercial core to characterize important qualities and features to be retained as much as possible;
2. Study goals for planned and desired development and infrastructure in the commercial core;
3. Identify opportunities and constraints for both preservation and development in the area; and
4. Articulate principles for town investment, changes to UDC rules, and other measures (based as appropriate on ideas offered in this chapter) that will reinforce both preservation and high-quality development.

### **Strategy for Reinforcing Downtown Planning and the Character of Old Town Erie's Core**

8.4.1 Articulate a strategy and principles for guiding more intense growth in the Downtown (DT) and Neighborhood Mixed Use-Old Town (NMU-Old Town) areas, and adjacent blocks of the Old Town Residential (OTR) district while retaining important

qualities and features contributing to the character of Old Town Erie's core. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

## **8.5 Comprehensive Planning to Support Old Town Erie**

As noted in Chapter 3, Erie's Comprehensive Plan provides sufficient guidance for historic preservation and it is at least touched upon in other town plans. As the Board of Trustees, Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board, the Community Development Department, and others pursue ideas in this historic preservation master plan, it would be advisable to monitor progress in achieving historic preservation and reflect on whether and how the Comprehensive Plan should reflect evolving needs. While this applies somewhat to the entirety of Erie, including its planning area, highest priority is to consider whether and how to address historic preservation in Old Town Erie during the next update of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Strategy for Comprehensive Planning**

8.5.1 Track historic preservation among evolving town needs to be addressed in the next Comprehensive Plan.

## **8.5 Conclusion**

As recognized repeatedly at various points in Erie's Comprehensive Plan the distinctive character of Old Town Erie – both its residential neighborhoods and its commercial core – relies in good measure on its historic qualities and features. These include more than a century's worth of buildings that testify to

Erie’s evolution as a Front Range coal-mining, railroading, and farming town.

Moreover, Erie’s unique sense of place derives from such qualities as the pattern of streets, the rhythm of buildings along those streets, the town’s relationship to the river, and even the street trees and the layout of front yards and gardens. Its very walkability harks back to its beginnings. We do not know nearly enough about these qualities and Erie’s historic structures. It is urgent to learn more in order to encourage their protection.

There are many ways to achieve such protection. In seven years, Erie will celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding. Will it be possible to point to real places that illustrate the town’s history, or will its unique qualities be lost? Will it be celebrated as the region’s undiscovered jewel that has found clever ways to prosper from its heritage and identity? Erie’s modern planning has made a great community possible. It now remains to ensure that Old Town and its historic character can thrive as the town continues working to meet the needs of its growing population.

## End Notes for Chapter 8:

<sup>1</sup> Erie, Colorado, Town Code, Title 3, Chapter 3, Sections 3-3-1 through 3-3-26.

<sup>2</sup> Whether the rising home prices in particular are tracking or exceeding the rising cost of housing across the Front Range outside Denver and Boulder cannot be known without further study beyond the scope of this plan. As one indicator for measuring the value of historic preservation activities in Erie over time, it would be useful to obtain baseline data and begin to track Old Town Erie housing prices in comparison to similar housing elsewhere. See *Preservation for a Changing Colorado* (2017), pp. 21-22, re the economic benefits of historic preservation, <https://www.preservationbenefitscolorado.com/>.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/1412a.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/1412a.pdf) provides a detailed description of various kinds of surveys.

<sup>4</sup> The properties were selected by the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board for surveying in the years predating each survey. The 2009 application for the 2009-2010 survey states that selection of historic resources for survey project was based on age (at least 75 years old, most over 100 years old) and relation to the “creation and early years of Erie, either because of how they were used or because the people that lived and worked in them were very prominent in Erie life.” (The 2015 application for the survey finished in 2016 simply referred back to this statement.) With at least 45 percent eligible for the Colorado Register, it is apparent that useful knowledge of the town’s general history was successfully applied in the process. Application of the town’s broader criteria for local recognition (“outstanding elements of the town’s cultural, artistic, social, ethnic, economic, political, architectural, historic, technological, institutional, or other heritage” – Title 3, Chapter 3, Section 2.A) plus further consultation with History Colorado concerning final assessment, might boost this percentage further – as would consideration of groupings in the form of districts or multiple properties. Neither of the latter possibilities was considered for the 36 properties surveyed. The 2009-10 survey is available at [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Programs/SHF\\_Survey\\_Erie2009-10.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Programs/SHF_Survey_Erie2009-10.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> For non-residents reading this plan, it should be noted that Main Street is a residential-only street (no commercial uses) reflecting the existing small-scale single-family pattern throughout Old Town Erie’s residential areas. The sites proposed for development, however, were originally industrial sites (one was once a railyard and another was a masonry factory), reflecting earlier patterns of mixed-use town development before the development of exclusive-use zoning, which became common across the United States after the 1920s.

<sup>6</sup> Under procedures described in Erie’s historic preservation ordinance for review of proposals for alteration, moving or demolishing a landmarked structure, the Board of Trustees, as advised by the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board, is empowered to review and deny (or permit) proposals for demolition – see Chapter 5 for further discussion.

<sup>7</sup> The experience of historic districts in dealing with new construction is extensive. Most do not seek, and some even prohibit, the replication of historic designs. Standard 9 of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation suggests a direction: “The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property [read: neighborhood] and its environment.”





(<https://www.preservationbenefitscolorado.com/>; see Chapter 1 of this master plan for excerpts and an info-graphic on pp. 4-5). There is no shortage of enthusiasm and experience from which to draw ideas and help.

Public outreach and engagement require skills in **communications and marketing** – to hone preservation messages appropriate to each audience, to identify those audiences, to figure out how to reach those audiences (and how often).

There are also differing reasons for pursuing public outreach and engaging audiences. First, as implied in the opening here, various audiences simply need to know **what historic preservation is** – and what the resources are that need preserving, and how, by whom. This is an ongoing task: **cultivating the constituency** for preservation in Erie.

Second, some of these same audiences need **technical knowledge**. What are preservation tax credits? How do the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation play out for homeowners considering upgrading their historic houses? How does an owner get a property listed in the National Register or Colorado Register? The training and technical assistance involved in imparting technical knowledge are important services that **reach people one-on-one**, helping them get to know the people behind the programs and building allegiances and networks that also cultivate the local constituency.

Third, truly engaging people who enjoy history and historic buildings means **connecting Erie’s history to the places in Erie where it is possible to experience stories**. What are Erie’s themes and stories? How can they be told well in Erie, that is, how can they be *interpreted*? Interpretation moves preservation advocates from the simple task of telling interested folks about the architectural styles of Erie’s residences or commercial buildings (itself a delightful learning opportunity for the right audience, of course), to finding many creative ways to **bring history alive and see Erie anew**.

Fourth, successful interpretation quite naturally serves not only residents, but visitors. **Heritage tourism** is centered on helping visitors see and experience a community that its residents may know well, but which to visitors is an entirely new place. This process of “putting our best foot forward” and “telling our stories” can energize a community’s interpretive efforts, spur additional preservation, or add impetus to efforts to link various community points of interest in thought-provoking new ways.

Heritage tourism also connects people who are visiting a community with time and funds and good will, to businesses who need customers. Most communities with lively, preserved downtowns need visitors’ dollars to help their businesses make ends meet – even if those visitors simply come from communities next door.

Finally, there is **education for school-based audiences**, K-12 and higher education, and **tour groups**. This is a specialized area that is different in key ways from “public education” (by which here we mean public outreach). There are such things as learning objectives, group process (and travel), teachers (or guides), and limits to learning experiences depending on age. A dose of school-based learning programs is helpful in seeing how to take the teaching/learning model into engagement programs for other audiences – individual visitors or tour groups, for example. Schools struggle sometimes to take advantage of the learning offered by place-based programs, and may need a knowledgeable coordinator on the community side to help make the students’ experience worthwhile. Tour groups have some similarity to this kind of audience. For Erie, which is just beginning to think about heritage tourism, school and tour group educational experiences are best left to such historic sites as the Wise Homestead Complex. In beginning stages, focusing instead on heritage tourism offers greater advantages in terms of developing products for both residents and visitors.

Another component of public outreach and engagement would be the creation of a museum and archive, a major new idea. Such an initiative would provide a lasting platform for the research needed by EHPAB and scholars, but is in need of greater exploration than what is possible under this historic preservation master plan.

This historic preservation master plan has made the point repeatedly that while the Town of Erie may have an official advisory board, the EHPAB, Board of Trustees, and town staff will need help to accomplish the aims of this plan. This point is especially true when it comes to engaging the public in the various ways described here. The EHPAB has certain responsibilities – telling the public about progress on this plan and various tasks within it, such as the top-priority survey of Old Town Erie, for example; or offering technical training. Luckily, there are other organizations, as described in Chapter 3, who can help carry the load for other tasks discussed in Chapter 9.





## 9.2 Public Outreach

As discussed in Chapter 5, EHPAB must carefully define its role and tasks in public outreach, working with the Board of Trustees and town staff. As called for in Chapter 5, the EHPAB should create and execute annual work plans, focusing especially on (1) informing Erie residents about its work (cultivate constituency) and (2) offering information, technical assistance, and training to property owners (impart technical knowledge; reach people one-on-one). Primary topics for the latter would be (A) the maintenance and appropriate treatment of historic buildings and landscapes, and (B) training on tax credits.

The EHPAB's information management and communications are critical tasks related to public outreach. In terms of information management, residents should be able to gain on-demand access to information related to its work, from minutes and agendas of monthly meetings to web-based information assembled from the ongoing work to survey, research, and map Erie's historic resources.

In terms of communications, notices in the town's periodic newsletter may be a helpful and simple way

for the EHPAB's goals and findings to stay in the public eye – as are the biannual reports that it is required by ordinance to make to the Board of Trustees. The latter activity may have the added benefit of gaining routine news coverage.

Outreach to and coordination with other organizations with responsibility for reaching the public – in part to persuade them to undertake outreach with preservation messages to reduce the load on EHPAB – would also be useful. This general task could include attending meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, senior groups, and other organizations whose members are part of the audience for EHPAB's work. Special events are also part of this task, such as organizing public ceremonies with the Board of Trustees and property owners for landmark plaque installations.

*(Above) A playful sculptural installation on Cheesman Street commemorates another side of life in Old Town Erie during the coal mining era.*



## Strategies for Public Outreach

9.2.1 Develop a special section on “public outreach, communications, and information management” for the EHPAB annual work program.

9.2.2 Offer workshops to property owners and property owners’ advisors (real estate agents, contractors, accountants, etc.) to educate them about methods for maintaining Old Town Erie properties and on the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. The EHPAB has already created a PowerPoint presentation that would support such training, and experts from around Colorado are available to help design, and sometimes even present, such programs. **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

9.2.3 Maintain communications and coordination with other organizations in Erie with responsibility for reaching the public with messages that might include historic preservation.

9.2.4 Continue to hold public ceremonies with the Board of Trustees to recognize newly named local historic landmarks and install special plaques.

9.2.5 Publicize findings from survey(s) as described in Chapters 5 and 8. (Same as 8.2.2.) **[HIGHEST PRIORITY]**

## 9.3 Special Interpretive Projects

Erie’s historic preservation ordinance clearly expects the EHPAB to engage the public in Erie’s history. The ordinance specifies<sup>1</sup> that the EHPAB should:

- Foster civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past.
- Promote the use of outstanding historical or architectural sites, structures, and objects for the education, stimulation and welfare of the people of the town.
- Develop and assist in public education programs including, but not limited to, walking tours, brochures, a marker program for historic properties, lectures, and conferences.

The first two points are rather general, more goals that can be embedded in messages developed for general public outreach, or justifying specific activities that will help to reach those goals. Simply reporting on the findings of more surveys, for example, can be expected to help “foster civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past.”

The third point, however, is a large expectation, and EHPAB should manage its resources carefully to be

sure of focusing on priorities, with the help of an annual work program.

In working on this plan, EHPAB members have pointed out that they are becoming experts in Erie’s historic resources and that they would enjoy developing tours and training docents to conduct them, including such topics as photography, mining, and architecture. Possible tours include walking, cycling, and driving routes. The EHPAB has at least one tour currently under development, with the expectation of improving it in a second phase with an application for mobile devices. This is the current priority within this responsibility, but due to limited resources and the importance of other responsibilities outlined in the preceding section, it has a lower priority than public outreach, communications, and information management. Creating a tour is one thing, coordinating docents and marketing the tour (to make sure the tour is well used by its audiences) is another.

Otherwise, EHPAB should lend its interest, expertise, and ability to “call a meeting” to the cause of encouraging others to undertake special projects. For example, an interpretive signage project is currently in planning stages for approximately eight sites around Erie, under the leadership of the Parks and Recreation Department. Given the research that EHPAB has undertaken and must continue to sponsor for historic resource surveys, EHPAB will be able to offer a wealth of research for future phases of a system of interpretive signs.

EHPAB and others should create opportunities for ongoing dialogue to explore possibilities, identify resources and ideas, and in general simply encourage one another to take the lead as appropriate. Target collaborators include the Erie Historical Society, the Erie Branch of the High Plains Regional Library, operators of nearby interpretive sites and programs in Greeley, Weld County, Lafayette, Louisville, and Boulder County, the Town of Erie’s Communications and Marketing Coordinator, and a representative of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Following are ideas for other interpretive projects, including events. Like stimulating ongoing development of a system of interpretive signs for Erie’s trail system as called for in Chapter 7 (lead agency would be the Department of Parks and Recreation), each is a good idea, where various actors (not necessarily EHPAB alone) might collaborate to make one or more of these happen:

- The Town of Erie’s development concept planning for Schofield Farm (see Chapter 6).



*Dr. Sarah A. Wise, working with her nephew Alan (pictured) and other members of the Erie Historical Society, preserved her family's ranch home (pictured on p. 15). In one room is this lovely display of artifacts and papers.*

- Laying plans for the celebration of Erie's 150th anniversary in 2024.
- Participating in selected events led by others (including the Erie Historical Society's Biscuit Day; the Tree Board's Arbor Day; Erie's fair and balloon day, and other town events).
- Holding an Old House Fair (this falls within the "technical assistance" category enough that it could be an EHPAB lead, but it would need other town leadership, and it may be useful to make this a regional event in collaboration with such other nearby towns as Louisville and Lafayette).
- Collaborating with the Boulder County Historic Preservation Advisory Board, Weld County, Erie Historical Society, and others in interpretation and programming in Boulder and Weld Counties, undertaking research, producing publications, and sponsoring programs related to the history of Erie and the surrounding region.

### Strategies for Special Projects

9.3.1 Develop experiential walking/cycling tours for Old Town Erie focusing on selected topics. Identify partners for ongoing development, production, and management.

9.3.2 Convene an informal "interpreters' roundtable" to share information about current activities, goals for additional initiatives or events, and identify opportunities for collaboration.

9.3.3 Expand Erie's current planning for wayside interpretive signs to further phases with signs and art installations that would continue to enrich Erie's trail system and the experience in Erie's parks and along Old Town streets.

9.3.4 EHPAB and the Town of Erie should continue to sponsor the High Plains Regional Library's fall history lectures.

### 9.4 Consider How to Preserve Erie-related Archives and Collections

Front Range Research Associates, in concluding the recommendations contained in the 2016 survey, stated that

Much historical information about Erie may be privately held by local citizens. It is important that this information be copied whenever possible and placed in a public repository so that future generations will have access to it. Historical materials could be donated to the Historic Preservation Advisory Board or the Erie Historical Society for storage in the Wise Homestead Museum. The Boulder Carnegie Branch Library includes several oral history interviews with Erie residents. Such oral histories of longtime residents should continue to be conducted to ensure that their recollections are preserved. Official records of the Town and institutions such as local churches should also be preserved in a secure location for future generations.<sup>2</sup>

Currently, the Erie Historical Society has some papers associated with Erie. It also possesses objects on display as part of a collection relating to the Wise Homestead Complex in the ranch house museum, described in Chapter 3. The papers are not organized, catalogued, or accessible to researchers, but they are at least "collected." There is no space for housing a larger collection. For both papers and objects, professional curation and space are issues.



A closeup of the card used by the Wise family ("Dealer 137" appears above the word "Standard") to advertise their coal: "We make clean coal a specialty." The ledger beneath the card is a record of sales of such grocery items as pickles and mustard. Both are on display at the Erie Historical Society's museum in the Wise ranch house preserved near Canfield. Archived materials such as these can provide fascinating insights into lives long past and will be a treasure trove for researchers long into the future.

Erie's heritage is so special it is worth considering how to deal with this obligation to posterity – how to enlist the help of volunteers, and how to encourage families with close ties to the community, both within and beyond, to become donors and supporters. Such an initiative would further support the research needs emphasized in Chapter 5 in support of surveys, and would form the basis for research needed for special interpretive initiatives. It would also serve independent researchers.

Different communities deal with this challenge in different ways. Certainly, the Town of Erie could participate in and/or encourage such stewardship, by offering space, grants, staff assistance, or other support. An additional local governmental partner, especially in pursuing the archival side of this idea, would be the Erie Branch of the High Plains Regional Library (also described in Chapter 3).

The Town of Erie could lead the initiative; or, as an alternative, it might choose instead to stimulate the formation of a new partner organization or a new initiative led by the historical society in response to town requirements. A few community archives exist across the country that are either independent or partially or wholly supported by local government; a good example not far from Erie is the Butte-Silver Bow Public Archive, a local government initiative (<https://buttearchives.org/Organization.aspx>). The American Association for State and Local History is a good national resource for advice and locating other models (<http://www.aaslh.org/>).

Inaugurating a new history museum or archive (or both) is not for the fainthearted, and such a possibility needs thorough investigation in a way that will enlist as much community support as possible, no matter which organization or organizations wind up in the lead.

## Strategies for Archives and Collections

9.4.1 Launch an *ad hoc* exploratory committee to advise the Board of Trustees on how it might be possible to address the need to preserve Erie-related papers and objects, within the town or beyond, and whether to undertake an Erie Archive or an "Erie History Collection" (either or both). Develop a charge and a deadline, and offer modest staff assistance. Consult with History Colorado, which itself has a history museum and archival function.

9.4.2 As part of the *ad hoc* committee's exploration, sponsor an Erie Memories event planned and run by the exploratory committee. Include Story-Corps-like oral history opportunities, scanners for papers, and photography of objects, to create a record that would be valuable even if the committee's recommendations do not result in permanent, locally led efforts to preserve (and display) papers and objects.

## 9.5 Conclusion

This chapter has offered ideas for reaching out to the public to cultivate an enthusiastic constituency of property owners, business owners, residents, and neighbors. It may be the last chapter, but it is just as





important as all other chapters in this plan – if not more so.

Erie is a town that has been lived in, and loved, for a long time. To walk or drive Erie's streets and see the rhythm of its buildings, the layout of the town, the variety of buildings built by miners themselves, and catch glimpses of remaining railroad rights of way in town and beyond, where the mining actually took place, is to enter into a place with a powerful identity. Its stories – the topic of this chapter – deserve to be told.

*(Above) This simple miner's cottage is a rarity, almost completely unaltered, and thus deemed individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Studied in the 2016 survey of 13 selected buildings in Old Town by Front Range Research Associates, their report tells us, "The Baileys, one of these early families of British heritage, came to Erie during 1882-83. William and Sarah Bailey erected a one-story frame house [in 1890] for their family at 300 Holbrook Street (5WL.7990) after purchasing the land in 1885. William was a farmer and coal miner born in 1854 in England who married Sarah Wotherspoon Grimson, a Scottish widow born in 1844. Their first child, daughter Harriet, was born in Durham, England, followed by James, Mary Jane, and Alexander. William's wife and family, including children born in Scotland during Sarah's first marriage, moved to America seeking a better life. Historic buildings throughout Erie are associated with such memories.*

In conclusion for this entire plan, if Erie is successful in achieving visibility and educating the public as it works through the many priorities in this plan, the town will make much progress in achieving the vision laid out at the beginning of this plan:

In the coming years, the Town of Erie will become **widely recognized** for its historic role in coal mining and Colorado's development, the quality of its resources that express that history, and its programs to achieve experience of local history and enthusiastic historic preservation. Historic character will help to **distinguish Erie's identity** among the Front Range's many growing communities and **add to residents' quality of life**. The preservation of historic buildings and landscapes will **contribute measurably to the Town's programs** for economic development, recreation and open space, and community events and education.

### End Notes for Chapter 9:

<sup>1</sup> Citations are in this plan's Table 5-1.

<sup>2</sup> "Erie, Colorado, Historic Buildings Survey 2016: Final Survey Report," by Front Range Research Associates, Inc. (Denver, CO), p. 46. Observations by these researchers are important because they made use of as much archival material as possible to create this report and their report from 2009-2010.

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APPENDIX A: All Strategies, by Chapter and Topic					
Page #	Strat #	Strategy	Top Priority?	On-going?	Lead/Participant(s)/ (Notes)
		<b>Chapter 5 • Erie's Historic Preservation Program</b>			
		<i>Survey and Documentation</i>			
54	5.3.1	Undertake survey(s) of existing properties within Old Town Erie to identify those that are potentially eligible as local landmarks and/or for listing in the National and Colorado Registers, either individually or as part of potential historic districts.	Yes		EHPAB/ (History Colorado grant; NR and CO designations afford public recognition and tax benefits but no local regulation; repeated as 8.2.1)
54	5.3.2	As part of the surveying recommended in 5.3.1, identify properties that are of local historical significance but may not fully meet the criteria for designation as either National/Colorado Register or local Historic Landmarks due to issues related to integrity.			EHPAB/ (History Colorado grant; this enables the EHPAB to encourage property owners to consider appropriate changes in future work)
54	5.3.3	Undertake surveys of historic resources related to agriculture, coal mining, and railroading in areas outside Old Town, within Erie's municipal boundary and planning area.	Yes		EHPAB/ Parks and Recreation Department (History Colorado grant; repeated as 7.3.1)
		<i>Designation of Historic Resources</i>			
55	5.3.4	Continue to encourage property owners to pursue voluntary recognition of individual structures as local landmarks and/or through the Colorado and National Registers.	Yes	Yes	EHPAB/ property owners (repeated as 8.2.3)
55	5.3.5	Notify property owners of individually eligible properties to encourage appropriate designation. For local Historic Landmarks, ask property owners to take the lead in nomination.			EHPAB with Board of Trustees and property owners
55	5.3.6	Over the long term, work with property owners toward designation of one or more local historic districts, identifying and including any recognized National or Colorado Register properties or local Historic Landmarks.			EHPAB with Board of Trustees and property owners (partially repeated as 8.2.5)
		<i>Assisting Private Property Owners</i>			
55	5.4.1	Publicize the availability of Colorado tax credits for locally designated Historic Landmarks as well as properties listed in the National and Colorado Registers.		Yes	EHPAB
55	5.4.2	Create local incentives for owners of designated local Historic Landmarks, such as property tax breaks, reduced building fees for approved rehab projects, or grants, as appropriate.	Yes		Board of Trustees/ EHPAB, Community Development Department (repeated as 8.2.6)
55	5.4.3	Offer workshops to property owners and property owners' advisors (real estate agents, contractors, accountants, etc.) to educate them about methods for maintaining Old Town Erie properties and about the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.	Yes	Yes	EHPAB/ History Colorado/ Colorado Preservation, Inc./ (Repeated as 9.2.2)



APPENDIX A: All Strategies, by Chapter and Topic, cont'd					
Page #	Strat #	Strategy	Top Priority?	On-going?	Lead/Participant(s)/ (Notes)
55	5.4.4	Maintain a well-designed, well-communicated procedure for review of proposed demolitions, moves, and alterations to locally recognized historic resources.	Yes	Yes	EHPAB with Board of Trustees
		<i>Communications with the Board of Trustees</i>			
56	5.5.1	Prepare biannual reports for the Board of Trustee reviewing the condition of historic resources.		Yes	EHPAB (Maximize EHPAB's obligation report to the Board of Trustees twice a year, to point out progress in plan implementation, educate the Board of Trustees on discoveries about resources, provide observations on community and private property owners' needs and trends, and to continue to discuss resources needed by the EHPAB to accomplish its priorities.)
56	5.5.2	Share information concerning resources identified in surveys not only with property owners, but also the relevant town departments and boards, including the Planning Commission, Open Space Board, and Tree Board.		Yes	EHPAB
56	5.5.3	Participate in updates to existing and new plans (and related inventories), undertaken by other boards and the Planning Commission. This includes such newly established programs as the Entertainment District and the ad hoc Sustainability Committee.		Yes	EHPAB
		<i>Operations of the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board</i>			
57	5.6.1	Adopt an annual work program based on this historic preservation master plan.	Yes	Yes	EHPAB with Board of Trustees
57	5.6.2	Work toward additional staffing resources, whether part-time staff or consulting arrangements with qualified providers.			Board of Trustees with Town Administrator, EHPAB
57	5.6.3	Upgrade technical support for EHPAB activities, especially web interface and GIS capability.	Yes	Yes	EHPAB with Town Administrator, Town Clerk, Board of Trustees
57	5.6.4	Identify and apply for grant assistance to undertake individual tasks or locate operational support for initiatives.		Yes	EHPAB
57	5.6.5	Maintain an ongoing awareness of activities that are being undertaken throughout Erie that affect the preservation and integrity of historic resources (positive or negative).		Yes	EHPAB
57	5.6.6	Undertake a systematic, long-term program of monitoring the condition of historic resources throughout Erie.		Yes	EHPAB

**APPENDIX A: All Strategies, by Chapter and Topic, cont'd**

Page #	Strat #	Strategy	Top Priority?	On-going?	Lead/Participant(s)/ (Notes)
57	5.6.7	Once History Colorado issues a promised model for a local historic preservation ordinance, undertake a close analysis of Erie's ordinance and experience; revise as appropriate.		Yes	Board of Trustees with EHPAB/ Community Development Department
		<i>Outreach to Other Governmental Agencies</i>			
58	5.7.1	Maintain an ongoing relationship with History Colorado; take advantage of available grant programs and other financial and technical assistance.		Yes	EHPAB/ History Colorado
58	5.7.2	Attend statewide training opportunities for local historic preservation commissions.		Yes	EHPAB/ History Colorado and Colorado Preservation, Inc.
58	5.7.3	Maintain an ongoing relationship with the Historic Preservation Advisory Board of Boulder County <sup>3</sup> ; meet at least once a year to review issues and programs within the Erie Planning Area.		Yes	EHPAB/ Boulder County HPAB/ (Weld County does not have historic preservation as a planning function, only Greeley)
58	5.7.4	Seek opportunities to exchange ideas and experiences with other localities in Colorado		Yes	EHPAB/ Colorado localities
		<b>Chapter 6 • Town of Erie Stewardship</b>			
		<i>Town Stewardship of Public-Trust Historic Properties and the Public Domain</i>			
64	6.4.1	In the surveys recommended for "new town" Erie and Old Town Erie in Chapters 7 and 8, include all town-owned properties not yet surveyed.			EHPAB/ (History Colorado grant)
64	6.4.2	Include consideration of the historic character of public domain resources (streetscapes, roads, trails) in capital improvement, recreation, and transportation plans.		Yes	Board of Trustees with Community Development, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works Departments
64	6.4.3	Plan upgrades to the linear park in Old Town Erie to reflect and interpret the right-of-way's original use for railroading.			Board of Trustees with Parks and Recreation Department
64	6.4.4	Pursue National Register listing for Mount Pleasant Cemetery.	Yes		Town Clerk/EHPAB, History Colorado
64	6.4.5	Include an assessment of the characteristics and needs of historic features and resources on properties proposed for open space acquisition during the "due diligence" phase prior to acquisition by the Town of Erie.		Yes	Board of Trustees with Parks and Recreation Department
64	6.4.6	Follow Erie's historic preservation ordinance in the management of town-owned historic properties. (That is, use the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and follow the Certificate of Appropriateness process with the Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board for landmarked		Yes	Board of Trustees with EHPAB and Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments

**APPENDIX A: All Strategies, by Chapter and Topic, cont'd**

Page #	Strat #	Strategy	Top Priority?	On-going?	Lead/Participant(s)/ (Notes)
		<b>Chapter 7 • Erie's Historic Landscape</b>			
		<i>Historic Landscape Contexts</i>			
68	7.2.1	Prepare a detailed historic context for coal mining for the landscape within the Erie planning area.	Yes		EHPAB/ (History Colorado grant)
68	7.2.2	Prepare a detailed historic context for railroading in Erie and its planning area.	Yes		EHPAB/ (History Colorado grant)
68	7.2.3	Assess other theme possibilities in consultation with History Colorado and in coordination with thematic research conducted for surveying Old Town Erie; pursue as needed.			EHPAB/ (History Colorado grant)
		<i>Surveying Landscape Resources and Sites</i>			
72	7.3.1	Undertake a survey of historic resources related to agriculture, coal mining, and railroading in areas outside Old Town, within Erie's municipal boundary and planning area.	Yes		EHPAB/ Parks and Recreation Department (History Colorado grant; repeated as 5.3.3)
72	7.3.2	Consider undertaking such a survey jointly with Boulder County, at least in the northwest portion of the Erie Planning Area where both jurisdictions already cooperate.			EHPAB/ Parks and Recreation Department
		<i>Preserving Significant Landscape Resources</i>			
73	7.4.1	Incorporate the inventory data that results from the survey recommended in the previous section into Erie's Geographic Information System; make the information publicly available as appropriate (archeological sites should not be		Yes	Erie IT Staff/ EHPAB
73	7.4.2	Incorporate the inventory data that results from the survey recommended in the previous section into Erie's ongoing planning and plan updates for open space protection and trail development.		Yes	Parks and Recreation Department
73	7.4.3	Produce a "User's Guide for Historic Preservation in the Town of Erie Planning Area under the Unified Development Code" that shows how the protection and incorporation of historic resources into the land development process is expected to work.	Yes		Community Development Department/ EHPAB
73	7.4.5	For sites where the required existing condition analysis raises concern about impacts on historic resources, require developers to prepare a historic resource impact study.		Yes	Community Development Department
73	7.4.6	For any resources in Boulder County identified in the survey that are eligible for listing in the National Register, undertake to add these to the existing Multiple Property Documentation Form.			EHPAB/ (History Colorado grant)
74	7.4.7	Undertake an interpretive plan to help plan for and enhance Erie's open space and trail system.	Yes		Parks and Recreation Department/ EHPAB



**APPENDIX A: All Strategies, by Chapter and Topic, cont'd**

Page #	Strat #	Strategy	Top Priority?	On-going?	Lead/Participant(s)/ (Notes)
		<b>Chapter 8 • Preserving Historic Resources in Old Town Erie</b>			
		<i>Research and Recognition</i>			
80	8.2.1	Undertake survey(s) of existing properties within Old Town Erie to identify those that are potentially eligible as local landmarks and/or for listing in the National and Colorado Registers, either individually and as part of potential historic districts.	Yes		EHPAB/(History Colorado grant; NR and CO designations afford public recognition and tax benefits but no local regulation; repeated as 5.3.1)
81	8.2.2	Publicize findings from the survey(s).	Yes	Yes	EHPAB (repeated as 9.2.5)
81	8.2.3	Continue to encourage property owners to pursue voluntary recognition of individual buildings as local landmarks and/or through the Colorado and National Registers.	Yes	Yes	EHPAB/ property owners (repeated as 5.3.4)
81	8.2.4	Participate as a Certified Local Government in any National Register nomination proceedings.		Yes	EHPAB
81	8.2.5	If surveying reveals that one or more districts in Old Town might be eligible for listing in the National and/ or Colorado Registers, begin (a) reaching out to owners and community leaders and (b) preparing nomination documentation. Seek actual listing once community support is secure; documentation is valuable with or without achieving actual listing.			EHPAB with Board of Trustees and property owners
81	8.2.6	Create local incentives for owners of designated local Historic Landmarks, such as property tax breaks, reduced building fees for approved rehab projects, or grants, as appropriate.	Yes		Board of Trustees/ EHPAB, Community Development Department (repeated as 5.4.2)
81	8.2.7	Participate as a Certified Local Government in any environmental review proceedings related to properties listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National and/or Colorado Registers.		Yes	
		<i>Local Action to Protect the Character of Old Town Erie</i>			
86	8.3.1	Produce a "User's Guide for Historic Preservation in Old Town Erie under the UDC" that shows how the protection and incorporation of historic resources into procedures for development and redevelopment in the three Old Town zones is expected to work.	Yes		Community Development Department/ EHPAB
86	8.3.2	In Old Town Erie's OTR zone, encourage UDC rules that will encourage redevelopment or the development of vacant parcels to reflect the current distinctive pattern of historical development as described in Section 8.3.	Yes		Board of Trustees and Planning Commission/ Community Development Dept.
86	8.3.3	Adopt design standards for the OTR district reflecting the same or similar goals as already expressed in the UDC for other zones.			Board of Trustees and Planning Commission/ Community Dev. Dept.

**APPENDIX A: All Strategies, by Chapter and Topic, cont'd**

Page #	Strat #	Strategy	Top Priority?	On-going?	Lead/Participant(s)/ (Notes)
86	8.3.4	Enlist neighborhoods in the process of re-examining rules for development in the OTR district under Strategies 8.3.2 and 8.3.3, with the possibility of adopting neighborhood conservation overlay districts where sufficient interest exists.	Yes		Board of Trustees and Planning Commission/ Community Development Department
86	8.3.5	Tune up existing design standards if and as appropriate for the DT and NMU-OT districts, sufficient to achieve the UDC's stated goals of respecting "the small-town scale and historic context" and "the historic character" and reinforcing "the image of the DT and NMU (Old Town) as an attractive, pedestrian-oriented district."			Board of Trustees and Planning Commission/ Community Development Department
		<i>Strategy for Reinforcing Downtown Planning and the Character of Old Town Erie's Core</i>			
89	8.4.1	Articulate a strategy and principles for guiding more intense growth in the Downtown (DT) and Neighborhood Mixed Use-Old Town (NMU-Old Town) areas, and adjacent blocks of the Old Town Residential (OTR) district while retaining important qualities and features contributing to the character of Old Town Erie's core.	Yes		Board of Trustees and Planning Commission/ EHPAB, Community Development Department
		<i>Strategy for Comprehensive Planning</i>			
89	8.5.1	Track historic preservation among evolving town needs to be addressed in the next Comprehensive Plan.			Planning Commission, Community Development Department, EHPAB, Board of Trustees
		<b>Chapter 9 • Public Outreach and Engagement</b>			
		<i>Public Outreach</i>			
94	9.2.1	Develop a special section on "public outreach, communications, and information management" for the EHPAB annual work program.		Yes	EHPAB/ City Manager and IT Staff
94	9.2.2	Offer workshops to property owners and property owners' advisors (real estate agents, contractors, accountants, etc.) to educate them about methods for maintaining Old Town Erie properties and about the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.	Yes	Yes	EHPAB/ History Colorado/ Colorado Pres., Inc./ (EHPAB has created a PowerPoint presentation for such training; CO experts are available to help design and present programs. Repeated as 5.4.3)
94	9.2.3	Maintain communications and coordination with other organizations in Erie with responsibility for reaching the public with messages that might include historic preservation.		Yes	EHPAB
94	9.2.4	Continue to hold public ceremonies with the Board of Trustees to recognize newly named local historic landmarks and install special plaques.		Yes	Board of Trustees with EHPAB
94	9.2.5	Publicize findings from survey(s) as described in Chapters 5 and 8.	Yes	Yes	EHPAB (repeated as 8.2.2)

**APPENDIX A: All Strategies, by Chapter and Topic, cont'd**

Page #	Strat #	Strategy	Top Priority?	On-going?	Lead/Participant(s)/ (Notes)
		<i>Special Projects</i>			
95	9.3.1	Develop experiential walking/cycling tours for Old Town Erie focusing on selected topics. Identify partners for ongoing development, production, and management.			EHPAB
95	9.3.2	Convene an informal "interpreters' roundtable" to share information about current activities, goals for additional initiatives or events, and identify opportunities for collaboration.			EHPAB and Parks and Recreation Department with interpreting organizations
95	9.3.3	Expand Erie's current planning for wayside interpretive signs to further phases with signs and art installations that would continue to enrich Erie's trail system and the experience in Erie's parks and along Old Town streets.			EHPAB and Parks and Recreation Department with interpreting organizations
95	9.3.4	EHPAB and the Town of Erie should continue to sponsor the High Plains Regional Library's fall history lectures.		Yes	Board of Trustees with EHPAB
		<i>Archives and Collections</i>			
96	9.4.1	Launch an <i>ad hoc</i> exploratory committee to advise the Board of Trustees on how it might be possible to address the need to preserve Erie-related papers and objects, within the town or beyond, and whether to undertake an Erie Archive or an "Erie History Collection" (either or both).			Board of Trustees, interested citizens/ History Colorado (develop a charge and a deadline, and offer modest staff assistance)
96	9.4.2	As part of the <i>ad hoc</i> committee's exploration, sponsor an Erie Memories event planned and run by the exploratory committee. Include Story-Corps-like oral history opportunities, scanners for papers, and photography of objects, to create a record that would be valuable even if the committee's recommendations do not result in permanent, locally led efforts to preserve (and display) papers and objects.			Ad hoc exploratory committee described in 9.4.1



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## APPENDIX B: REQUEST FOR CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT STATUS FORM

### REQUEST FOR CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT STATUS

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Steve W. Turner, AIA., *State Historic Preservation Officer*  
History Colorado  
1200 Broadway  
Denver CO 80203

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Chief Elected Official of the Local Government)*

In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and "Procedures for the Certification of Local Governments in Colorado," I hereby request Certified Local Government Status for the:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Town, City, or County of)*

Enclosed are:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. A copy of the local historic preservation or landmarks ordinance, including any amendments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. A copy of the standards, criteria and procedures used for the review of alterations, demolition and new construction affecting historic properties.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A listing of building, sites, structures and districts, including addresses, designated under the local ordinance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A list of the members of the historic preservation commission with qualifications of all commission members.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. A copy of the local preservation plan, if extant, or a statement describing the local preservation plan.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. A sample copy of the minutes of a commission meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. A sample notice of a public meeting of the commission.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. A sample notice to an applicant of the decision of the commission.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. A description of any other delegated responsibilities which the local government wishes to assume.

The requirements for certification of local governments, as described in Section III of "Procedures for the certification of Local Governments in Colorado" are currently fulfilled by \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(City, Town or County of)*

(OR, with the exception(s) as described below. Indicate the appropriate item and provide the requested information if there are exceptions to the requirements.)

1. The historic preservation commission does not include professional member(s) from the disciplines of: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

However, a reasonable effort to appoint such member(s) was made as follows (include a brief statement describing the efforts to appoint such professionals): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In the absence of such professionals on the commission, the local commission proposes to obtain such professional expertise, when required, as follows (include a brief statement describing the proposal): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other exceptions to the requirements of Section III include (briefly explain the exceptions and describe plans to fulfill the requirements): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Description of other delegated responsibilities the local government wishes to assume: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Name and address of CLG representative who will be responsible for carrying out program responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that, if certified, a written certification agreement specifying the responsibilities of the local government will be required and that the \_\_\_\_\_ will be eligible to apply for special Certified Local

*(City, Town or County of)*

Government grants to be used for eligible local historic preservation projects.

Signed, Chief Elected Official: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CEO (type or print): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix C – Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

The philosophy that guides the implementation of recommendations included in this Historic Preservation Plan is based on a set of guidelines entitled *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, commonly called the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards” or simply the “Standards.”

The *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards* were created by historic preservation professionals to provide guidance in the appropriate treatment of historic resources. The *Standards* were first established by the federal government in 1966 to provide guidelines for the appropriate treatment of buildings and resources impacted by federal projects. Because of their usefulness, they have been adopted throughout the field of historic preservation.

All federally funded and permitted activities affecting historic resources are evaluated with respect to these standards, including the use of rehabilitation tax credits. The *Standards* were developed specifically to prevent unintended damage to or loss of historic resources by federal actions, such as those that occurred as the result of the wholesale demolition of historic neighborhoods through urban renewal.

An individual set of standards was developed for each of the four preservation treatments explained in Appendix E. Just as the treatment of Rehabilitation is appropriate for most projects, the *Standards for Rehabilitation* are applicable to most projects being undertaken for historic buildings and landscapes in Erie.

In the language of community planners, *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards* are a list of “best practices” for historic preservation. They are a touchstone for all activities affecting historic buildings and landscapes and help ensure that important issues about the care of historic buildings and landscapes are not forgotten in the process of making decisions about other issues.

When the *Standards* are used in the context of a new construction project involving an historic building, they provide a starting point for the discussion of proposed changes to the building’s historic character and fabric. They were developed to ensure that policies toward historic resources were applied uniformly, even if the end result may be different in every case. All preservation activities, whether publicly or privately funded, can be informed by understanding the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards*.

Because the *Standards* outline a sensitive approach for assessing changes to historic properties, they are often included in design guidelines, preservation plans, ordinances, and regulations that govern activities affecting local historic districts.

These *Standards* articulate basic principles that are fundamental to historic preservation. Although they have been modified over the years to accommodate changing views of historical significance and treatment options, their basic message has remained the same. The durability of the *Standards* is testimony not only to their soundness, but also to the flexibility of their language. They provide a philosophy and approach to problem solving for those involved in managing the treatment of historic buildings, rather than a set of solutions to specific design issues.

Following a balanced, reasonable, and disciplined process is often more important than the exact nature of the treatment option that is chosen. Instead of predetermining an outcome in favor of retaining or recreating historic features, the *Standards* help ensure that the critical issues are considered.

For federal projects and federal agencies, the language of *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* is codified in 36 CFR Part 68 (the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, *Parks, Forests and Public Property*, Chapter 1 *National Park Service, Department of the Interior*, Part 68). A related federal regulation, 36 CFR Part 67, addresses the use of the *Standards* in the certification of

projects receiving federal rehabilitation tax credits. The *Standards* are published by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and are available online, including definitions for the four preservation treatments discussed above (National Park Service 2015).

*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* are particularly useful in consideration of the appropriate maintenance of historic buildings; the alteration of older buildings as necessary for reuse, safety, and accessibility; and the construction of new buildings in an historic context. The ten standards that comprise the *Standards for Rehabilitation* are quoted below followed by a brief discussion of the implications of each.

### **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**

**STANDARD 1 – *A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.*** Standard 1 recommends compatible use in the context of adaptive reuse and changes to historic buildings and landscapes. This standard encourages property owners to find uses that retain and enhance historic character, not detract from it. The work involved in reuse projects should be carefully planned to minimize impacts on historic features, materials, and spaces. The destruction of character--- defining features should be avoided.

**STANDARD 2 –*The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*** Standard 2 recommends the retention and preservation of character-defining features. It emphasizes the importance of preserving integrity and as much existing historic fabric as possible. Alterations that repair or modify existing historic fabric are preferable to those that require total removal.

**STANDARD 3 – *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*** Standard 3 focuses on authenticity and discourages the conjectural restoration of an entire property, feature, or design. It also discourages combining and/or grafting historic features and elements from different properties, and constructing new buildings that appear to be historic. Literal restoration to an historic appearance should only be undertaken when detailed documentation is available and when the significance of the resource warrants restoration. Reconstruction of lost features should not be attempted without adequate documentation.

**STANDARD 4 – *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*** Standard 4 recognizes that buildings change, and that many of these changes contribute to a building's historical significance. Understanding a building's history and development is just as important as understanding its original design, appearance, and function. This point should be kept in mind when considering treatments for buildings that have undergone many changes. Most historic buildings contain a visual record of their own evolution. This evolution can be identified, and changes that are significant to the history of the building should be retained. The opportunity to compare multiple periods of time in the same building lends interest to the structure and helps communicate changes that have occurred within the larger landscape and community context.

**STANDARD 5 – *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*** Standard 5 recommends preserving the distinctive historic components of a building or landscape that represent its historic character.

Workmanship, materials, methods of construction, floor plans, and both ornate and typical details should be identified prior to undertaking work.

**STANDARD 6 – *Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*** Standard 6 encourages property owners to repair historic character-defining features instead of replacing them when historic features are deteriorated or even missing. In cases where deterioration makes replacement necessary, new features should closely match historic conditions in all respects. Before any features are altered or removed, property owners are urged to document existing conditions with photography and notes. These records assist future choices that are appropriate to the property's historic character.

**STANDARD 7 – *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*** Standard 7 warns against using chemical and physical treatments that can permanently damage historic features. Many commercially available treatments are irreversibly damaging. Sandblasting and harsh chemical cleaning, in particular, are extremely harmful to wood and masonry surfaces because they destroy the material's basic physical properties and speed deterioration.

**STANDARD 8 – *Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*** Standard 8 addresses the importance of below-ground prehistoric and historic features. This issue is of most importance when a construction project involves excavation. An assessment of a site's archaeological potential prior to work is recommended. If archaeological resources are present, some type of mitigation should be considered. Solutions should be developed that minimize the need for excavation of previously unexcavated sites.

**STANDARD 9 – *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.***

**STANDARD 10 – *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*** Standards 9 and 10 are linked by issues of the compatibility and reversibility of additions, alterations, and new construction. Both standards are intended to 1) minimize the damage to historic fabric caused by building additions, and 2) ensure that new work will be different from, but compatible with, existing historic conditions. Following these standards will help to protect a building's historic integrity.

In conclusion, the basis for the Standards is the premise that historic resources are more than objects of aesthetic merit; they are repositories of historical information. It is important to reiterate that the Standards provide a framework for evaluating preservation activities and emphasize preservation of historic fabric, honesty of historical expression, and reversibility. All decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis. The level of craftsmanship, detailing, and quality of materials should be appropriate to the significance of the resource.

For more information, please see [https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch\\_stnds\\_8\\_2.htm](https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_8_2.htm) and <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf>.



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## Appendix D – Erie’s Comprehensive Plan RE: Historic Preservation

Erie’s 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update (<https://www.erieco.gov/DocumentCenter/View/369>) is an important guide for historic preservation. The vision statement (page 2-1) strongly supports Erie’s “historic small town character”:

Erie is a community which recognizes the importance of conserving and enhancing its historic small town character, the roots from which it grew, preserving the natural environment in which it resides; a caring community which offers its residents an environment in which to seek a high quality of life; a balanced community with a diverse range of housing, employment, educational, shopping and recreational opportunities; and a vital community which provides financial and social support for quality of life programs.

A clear goal in Chapter 13 of the Comprehensive Plan, “Community Character and Design,” is Goal #1: “Maintain and Enhance Erie’s Character: Guide the appearance, scale, and location of development to enhance and maintain Erie’s unique character.” The “background and intent” statement introducing this chapter is important (p. 13-1):

Erie’s citizens take pride in the attractiveness and livability of their community. The Town will promote a high standard of design for all new development as well as for renovation and rehabilitation in the Old Town area to reinforce and maintain the established visual character of the community and the quality of life of its residents. In addition, the Town will promote the preservation of the community’s natural character by encouraging the retention of open space in all new development.

The Old Town area’s “unique character” or “visual character” (or “distinct neighborhood character,” all terms used on p. 13-1) clearly derives from the area’s historic resources and historic development pattern, which provide context from which to derive clear standards and guidelines for design. As noted in Chapter 4 of this preservation plan, further study of the Old Town area would provide detailed knowledge of the elements of this context.

Several policies enumerated in Chapter 13 are important background for this Historic Preservation Plan, but the one most central to the establishment of the town’s historic preservation programs is this:

- “The Town will support the **preservation of structures and districts with historic and cultural significance**, encouraging the preservation and enhancement of historic resources in the community.” (p. 13-2; *detail amplifying Town Community Character and Design Policy CCD 1.4 — “Preserve historic and cultural resources.”; note also Cultural Resources Goal #5 from this chapter, on p. 13-6, concerning promoting community heritage and a broad mix of cultural opportunities, which is addressed in Chapter 9.*)

Other policy statements and key points made by the Comprehensive Plan include the following (emphasis added):

- Chapter 4 (Land Use): “The **Downtown District** incorporates Erie’s historic commercial downtown, and is largely focused on **ensuring the compatibility of infill and redevelopment** within the area’s **historic context**.” (p. 4-5; *Downtown District policies are enumerated on p. 4-6*)
- Chapter 4 (Land Use): “Encourage a transition towards a **more mixed-use pattern of development along the Briggs and Cheesman Street Corridors** outside of the Downtown District in order to strengthen visual and physical linkages to the surrounding community. Mixed-use development

in these locations should maintain a more residential character and scale that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods. The **conversion of existing residences to lower intensity non-residential uses** such as small offices and live/work units will be encouraged, as these uses typically have reduced parking requirements and generate less traffic. **Infill and redevelopment may occur at higher densities than exist today, but should be designed to be compatible** with existing front setbacks, average building heights, etc. (p. 4-7)<sup>1</sup>

- Chapter 8 (Open Space): The Comprehensive Plan (and the UDC, and the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan, “PROST Plan,” both described in Chapter 3) devotes considerable space to open space protection and a system for acquiring and providing public access to that open space, defined to include cultural, archaeological, and historic resources.<sup>2</sup> Goal #1 of that chapter is to “Establish an Open Space Program [in order to] conserve and maintain important open space lands in and around Erie.” (p. 8-1) In general, the Comprehensive Plan (and the UDC and PROST Plan) acknowledges that the rural landscape in Erie’s planning boundary will change with new development. The town has worked over the long term, through vigorous open space planning and policies, to encourage the evolution of a pattern of new neighborhoods threaded and linked with generous open space that recalls the rural character that once prevailed and offers residents throughout Erie opportunities to experience the outdoors.<sup>3</sup>
- Chapter 12 (Housing and Neighborhoods): Goal #2 for this chapter is to “protect existing neighborhoods” – “foster the stabilization and enhancement of Erie’s established and older core neighborhoods.” A policy statement on “Old Town residential infill” states that “the Town will **encourage the improvement and revitalization of Old Town neighborhoods**. The Town will **encourage residential infill and redevelopment that preserves key characteristics and historic**

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 3 (Community Building Blocks) amplifies on goals and policies with principles, in this case for “transitions from and connections to surrounding areas” where one principle is that “**in the Old Town area, mixed-use developments should be used to help revitalize major corridors into the downtown core (Briggs Street and Cheesman)** and should provide transitions to surrounding neighborhoods.” Not specifically related to Old Town, a second principle for transitions is that larger mixed-use developments should be designed in conjunction with surrounding neighborhoods where possible, providing direct connections and strong development relationships.” (p. 3-4)

<sup>2</sup> For example, policy OS 1.2, implementing Goal #1, states, “Focus the purpose of the Town of Erie’s open space program on the protection, maintenance and management of open space that has significant value: Protect open space that fits the classifications and standards that are adopted by the Town. Only accept ownership and/or maintenance of open space properties that function as important community resources, or that preserve **significant historic, cultural, archaeological, natural or agricultural lands or other features.**” (p. 8-2, emphasis added)

<sup>3</sup> From the introduction to Chapter 8: “The benefits of preserving and enhancing open space areas are many. Maintaining functioning ecological systems, protecting scarce natural or **cultural resources** and providing high quality experiences within a natural environment are accomplished through protection of open space areas. Breaks between urban environments may also form edges to neighborhoods or communities, provide **places for local agriculture to continue**, preserve long distance views and **Erie’s rural character**. This land will ensure Erie’s open and rural intent, set forth in this document for the near and distant future. Interactions with other people, physical activity, **understanding history and culture**, and experiences in the outdoor natural environment are essential to human health and well-being. Open space (along with parks, trails and recreational facilities, which are addressed in the previous Chapter) provide critical settings for these experiences to occur.” (p. 8-1, paragraph break omitted)



**features of Old Town neighborhoods and preserves existing housing stock** where appropriate. Development standards for infill and redevelopment projects, remodeling, and additions to existing structures will be established to ensure new residences are compatible with existing neighborhood scale and character.” (p. 12-2; Town Housing and Neighborhoods Policy HN 2.1)

The Comprehensive Plan also includes these “issues summaries” related to historic preservation, which were a part of the original 2005 plan:

- **Housing and Neighborhood Issue #1, Preservation of Old Town Neighborhoods:** “Old Town Erie is home to the town’s earliest residential neighborhoods, which in addition to containing many historic single-family homes contain a wide variety of housing types, including apartments, duplexes, and mobile homes. Reinvestment has been occurring within Old Town’s neighborhoods at both public and private levels, with many historic homes undergoing renovation and with the recent implementation of a streetscape improvement plan that included the addition of sidewalks and tree lawns on all of Old Town’s streets. On the flip side, however, private reinvestment has not been evenly distributed and properties on some blocks remain in various states of disrepair, detracting from the community’s image. **The preservation of and continued improvement of Old Town’s neighborhoods is a priority for the community as it continues to grow outward.**” (p. B-4, Appendix B, emphasis added)
- **Economic Development Issue #1, Downtown (Old Town) Vitality:** “In recent years a significant amount of reinvestment has occurred in Old Town Erie. Streetscape improvements, façade renovations have improved its appearance and new restaurants have brought an increased activity to the area. **The community acknowledges that its desire for new commercial development cannot be achieved solely within downtown due to a lack of available land and the established character of the area. A balance will need to be sought between the maintenance and enhancement of Old Town’s vitality and the identification of opportunities for commercial development in emerging market areas** such as the south, where several major housing developments are being developed and the east, where the presence of the I-25 corridor presents numerous opportunities. Also, **the limits and boundary of the core area will need to be defined and described.**” (p. B-6, Appendix B, emphasis added)
- **Community Character and Design Issue #1, Maintaining Character Unique to Erie:** “Erie’s character is often described as being comprised of ‘a little of everything’ meaning that in its most established areas, such as Old Town, neighborhoods feature homes representing a broad spectrum of architectural styles, sizes, types, and ages. Many residents have emphasized the need to value and protect this diversity as the community grows by incorporating its key features into newly developing areas and have expressed concern regarding the uniformity and segregation of much of the housing developed in recent years. (p. B-7, Appendix B, emphasis added)

An issue summary provided for the 2015 update adds a factor in community trends for growth worth noting:

- **Urban Center Designation:** MetroVision 2035 is a plan prepared by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) that serves as a foundation for protecting the region’s quality of life, and provides an agenda for action that integrates regional growth, development, transportation, and environmental management into one comprehensive framework. MetroVision 2035 envisions unique urban centers throughout the region – centers that are active, transit-friendly places that are denser and more mixed in use than surrounding areas; allow people of all ages,

incomes and abilities to access a range of housing, employment, and service opportunities without sole reliance on having to drive; promote regional sustainability; and respect and support existing neighborhoods. Currently MetroVision does not identify any future urban centers in Erie's planning area. However, a future commuter rail line has been proposed Erie's planning area as part of the North I-25 EIS. Located north of Erie Parkway along I-25, the proposed station presents an opportunity for a potential urban center surrounding the transit station. If pursuit of urban center designation is desired in the future, it will be essential for land uses in this area to align with the DRCOG vision. This would include transit-oriented development featuring higher residential densities and a mix of uses. (p. B-9, paragraph break omitted)

## **Appendix E - Preservation Treatments**

The historic preservation field uses a variety of terms to describe the treatments that may be applied to historic building and landscapes. Although sometimes these terms are used loosely in discussion, they have specific meanings that are important to distinguish. The four key preservation treatments are *preservation*, *rehabilitation*, *restoration*, and *reconstruction*.

### **Preservation**

*Preservation* is defined as the process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize features, generally focuses on the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features. Removals, extensive replacement, alterations, and new additions are not appropriate. Preservation stresses protection, repair, and maintenance, and is a baseline approach for all historic resources. As the exclusive treatment for a historic property, preservation implies minimal or no change. It is therefore strictly applied only to buildings and resources of extraordinary significance that should not be altered.

### **Rehabilitation**

*Rehabilitation* is defined as the process of creating a compatible use in a historic property through carefully planned minimal alterations and compatible additions. Often referred to as adaptive reuse, rehabilitation protects and preserves the historic features, materials, elements, and spatial relationships that convey historical, cultural, and architectural values. Rehabilitation acknowledges the need to alter or add to a property to meet continuing or new uses while retaining historic character. New, expanded, or upgraded facilities should be designed to avoid impacts to historic elements. They should also be constructed of compatible materials.

Retention of original historic fabric from all eras should be a primary consideration in undertaking a program of rehabilitation and adaptive reuse. Rehabilitation is perhaps the most important and widely used treatment in the field of historic preservation, particularly in communities that are revitalizing and adapting to new uses. *Rehabilitation is the appropriate treatment for most historic residential and commercial buildings throughout Erie.*

### **Restoration**

*Restoration* refers to returning a resource to its appearance at a specific previous period of its history. Restoration is the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular time by means of removal of features from other periods in its history and the reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. In restoring a property to its appearance in a previous era, historic plans, documents, and photographs should be used to guide the work. Limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, as well as code-related work, to make a property functional, are all appropriate within a restoration project.

### **Reconstruction**

*Reconstruction* is defined as the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a non-surviving, historic property using new construction for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its original location. A reconstruction is a new resource made to replace an



historic resource that has been lost. Reconstruction is a rarely used preservation treatment applicable primarily in educational and interpretive contexts.

Of these four terms, *Preservation* requires retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric, features, and materials. *Rehabilitation* acknowledges the need to alter or add to a property to meet continuing or new uses while retaining historic character. *Restoration* allows for an accurate depiction of the property's appearance at a particular time in its history. *Reconstruction* establishes a framework for re-creating vanished historic elements with new materials.

*Preservation and Rehabilitation are the most appropriate and applicable treatments for most historic buildings and landscapes in Erie.*

For more information, please see <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm> and Appendix C.

**Appendix F – Surveyed Historic Resources in Erie and Vicinity Maintained by History Colorado in the Compass Database**

<b>Site ID</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Resource Type*<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Location (County)</b>	<b>Year Assessed<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Organization (Client&gt;Consultant; or Consultant/Assessor)</b>
5WL.848	Erie	H, HA	Erie (Weld)	1976	No Organization Given on Form
5BL.517	Gooding School	H	115th St, Erie Vicinity (Boulder)	1980	Boulder County Historical Society
5WL.216	Lincoln School - Erie Town Hall	H	645 Holbrook, Erie (Weld)	1981	Town of Erie>Midyette Architects, P.C.
5BL.5041.2	Erie Water Supply, Boulder Canyon Ditch	HA, H	Erie (Boulder)	1990	Town of Erie>Colorado Department of Highways
5WL.1696	Sean Sullivan House	H	345 Main St., Erie (Weld)	1991	Weld County Housing Authority
5WL.1697	David Jagers House	H	580 Pierce St., Erie (Weld)	1991	Weld County Housing Authority
5WL.1784	Lois Joyce Residence	H	514 Balcomb, Erie (Weld)	1991	Weld County Housing Authority
5WL.1785	James Cook Residence	H	140 Pierce, Erie (Weld)	1991	Weld County Housing Authority
5WL.1786	Barbara Lawley Residence	H	475 Main St., Erie (Weld)	1991	Weld County Housing Authority
5WL.1787	Slaughter Residence	H	590 Pierce, Erie (Weld)	1991	Weld County Housing Authority
5WL.1788	Samuel Quesada Residence	H	100 Pierce, Erie (Weld)	1991	Weld County Housing Authority
5WL.1824		H	285 Pierce St., Erie (Weld)	1991	
5BL.463	Gerosa Barn - Jerosa Barn	H	11975 Kenosha Rd, Erie (Boulder)	1994	Cultural Resource Historians>Boulder County Historical Society
5BL.5804	Groot Farm	H	4620 N. 119th St., Erie (Boulder)	1994	Tatanka Research, Inc.>Cultural Resource Historians
5BL.5558	Riley Property	H	4612 N. 119th St., Erie (Boulder)	1994	Tatanka Research, Inc.>Cultural Resource Historians
5BL.5599	Kobobel Property	H	4375 E. County Line Rd., Erie Vicinity (Boulder)	1994	Cultural Resource Historians>Tatanka Research, Inc.
5BL.6888	Meadow Sweet Farms Parcel	HA	NE County Line Rd., Erie Vicinity (Boulder)	1996	Native Cultural Services

<sup>1</sup> Key to resource type: H=Historic; HA=Historical Archaeology

<sup>2</sup> Dates shown in this column are approximate; please consult the database directly for various dates that may be recorded.

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Site ID	Site Name	Resource Type* <sup>1</sup>	Location (County)	Year Assessed <sup>2</sup>	Organization (Client>Consultant; or Consultant/Assessor)
5WL.3230	Fannie Boettcher Cottage <sup>3</sup>	H	635 Pierce St., Erie (Weld)	1996	Front Range Research Associates
5WL.3229	Oamek House	H	585 Evans, Erie (Weld)	2000	Western Cultural Resource Management, Inc. (WCRM)
5BL.8718	Zaltin House - Gomez Residence	H	3993 N 107th St., Erie Vicinity (Boulder)	2002	Cultural Resource Historians
5WL.3170	Single Hand Ranch Hand's House	H	4150 Weld County Rd. 1 (Northeast County Line Rd 1), Erie (Weld)	2002	Centennial Archaeology, Inc.>WCRM
5WL.2248.9	Erie-Coal Creek Ditch (Segment) - Cottonwood Extension Ditch	HA, H	Erie (Weld)	2003	URS Corporation (Consultants)
5WL.4310.1	Leyner Cottonwood Ditch - Segment	H, HA	Erie (Weld)	2003	URS Corporation (Consultants)
5BL.7098	Duffy Pigeon Barn	HA	North of Intersection of Kenosha Rd. And 119th St., Erie Vicinity (Boulder)	2005	Boulder County Parks & Open Space Department>Native Cultural Services
5WL.5190	Foos Residence	H	3912 - 3922 County Road 16, Erie (Weld)	2007	Hermesen Consultants
5WL.5259	Mcguire Residence	H	4223 County Rd. 7, Erie (Weld)	2007	Hermesen Consultants
5WL.5262	Shonrock Residence	H	6823 County Rd. 7, Erie (Weld)	2007	Hermesen Consultants
5WL.5267	Mock Farm	H	4453 County Rd. 7, Erie (Weld)	2007	Hermesen Consultants
5WL.5269	Favela Residence	H	4471 County Rd. 7, Erie (Weld)	2007	Hermesen Consultants
5BL.7406	Nephi Homestead - Wheeler Ranch	HA	5909 - 5911 E. County Line Rd., Erie (Boulder)	2008	CDOT>Cultural Resource Historians
5WL.6186	Powell House - Egnew Hotel - Cadwell Residence	H	370 Briggs St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>Front Range Research Associates, Inc. (FRRA)
5WL.6188	IOOF Hall (Lodge No. 46) - Lockwood Trading Co. <sup>4</sup>	H	500 Briggs St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6193	Nicholson House - McGinnis Residence	H	604 High St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6194	Vaughn House - Hunter House - Troy Residence	H	405 Holbrook St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA

<sup>3</sup> Also known as: -Marisol Imports - Pasta Jay's - Children's Library-Erie

<sup>4</sup> Also known as: State Mercantile Co. - Hunter Mercantile Co. - Wilson Larson Store - Davis Building - Kabbu Bar.



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5WL.6195	Williams House - Bixler House - Mcdonald Residence	H	485 Holbrook St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.1698	Lawley House - Milanovich Residence <sup>5</sup>	H	575 Holbrook St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA (also Weld County Housing Authority)
5WL.6196	Erie Methodist Episcopal Church - Erie United Methodist Church	H	602 - 604 Holbrook St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6198	Morrison House <sup>6</sup>	H	675 Holbrook St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6201	Morgan House - Carter House	H	704 Main St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6206	Erie Town Hall - Erie Chamber of Commerce	H	235 Wells St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6187	Angove House - Wood Residence	H	455 Briggs St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6189	Winslow & Smith - W.W. Smith Drugstore <sup>7</sup>	H	502 Briggs St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6190	Morgan's Bar	H	545 Briggs St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6191	Williams House - Probert House - James Residence	H	475 Cheesman St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6192	Walker House - Cohen Residence	H	574 High St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6197	Richards House - Wilson Residence	H	664 Holbrook St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6199	Phennah House - Brennan House	H	684 Holbrook St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6200	Wilson House	H	724 Holbrook St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6202	Harris House - Brennan-Oakley House	H	405 Pierce St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA

<sup>5</sup> Also known as: James Farnsworth House

<sup>6</sup> Also known as: Charlesworth Residence - Woods Residence

<sup>7</sup> Also known as: - Elzi Drugstore - Zupa European Café

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<b>Site ID</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Resource Type*<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Location (County)</b>	<b>Year Assessed<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Organization (Client&gt;Consultant; or Consultant/Assessor)</b>
5WL.6203	Van Valkenburg Undertaking <sup>8</sup>	H	525 Pierce St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6204	Stevens House - Taylor House	H	555 Pierce St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6205	Taylor House - Barr Residence	H	575 Pierce St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.6207	St. Scholastica Catholic Church	H	575 Wells St., Erie (Weld)	2010	Archdiocese of Denver>Town of Erie>FRRA
5BL.12664	Eddy Privy	H	0 N 111th St, Erie Vicinity (Boulder)	2013	Boulder County Parks & Open Space Department
5WL.7439	Hulstrom Dairy Farm	H, HA	2714 County Rd 7, Erie Vicinity (Weld)	2013	Centennial Archaeology, Inc.
5BL.786	Schofield Farm - Distel Farm	H, HA	2203 N 111th St, Erie (Boulder)	2015	Cultural Resource Historians>Boulder County Historical Society
5WL.5263	Hingley Farm - Carmel Residence	H	7523 County Rd. 7, Erie (Weld)	2016	Hermesen Consultants
5BL.13124	Wise Homestead Complex	H	11580-11611 Jasper Road, Erie (Boulder)	2016	
5WL.7979	Vinovich House (1936)	H	305 Briggs Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7980	Winslow Store (1940)	H	526 Briggs Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7981	A. Seidler Dry Goods and Clothing (1887)	H	578 Briggs Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7982	Konantz Meat Market (1880)	H	584 Briggs Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7983	Elzi House (1930)	H	504 Holbrook Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7984	McKenna/Heaton House (1891)	H	404 Holbrook Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7985	Woolley/Padfield/ Swallow House (1922)	H	785 Main Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7986	Unknown (1927)	H	585 Evans Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7987	Thomas P. Morgan House (1899)	H	784 Main Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA

<sup>8</sup> Also known as: Bracegirdle House - Leinweber Residence

**Appendix F – Surveyed Historic Resources in Erie and Vicinity Maintained by History Colorado in the Compass Database**

<b>Site ID</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Resource Type*<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Location (County)</b>	<b>Year Assessed<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Organization (Client&gt;Consultant; or Consultant/Assessor)</b>
5WL.7988	Ross House (1928)	H	585 Main Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7989	Pearl Winslow Property (1931)	H	365 Main Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7990	Bailey House (1890)	H	300 Holbrook Street, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA
5WL.7991	Erie Cemetery/ Mount Pleasant Cemetery (1871)	H	520 Colliers Boulevard, Erie (Weld)	2016	Town of Erie>FRRA

*SOURCE: History Colorado’s Compass database, accessed May 2017, and Front Range Research Associates, Inc., Erie, Colorado, Historic Buildings Survey, 2016 (for 5WL.7979-5WL.7991); table created by Heritage Strategies, LLC, June 2017. Consult the survey data directly for assessors’ and/or History Colorado opinions as to condition and individual eligibility for the Colorado and National Registers; some properties are not considered eligible (assessment of eligibility for historic district or Erie local landmark status is not included in the database). Many other resources have yet to be surveyed in both Old Town and beyond – for Old Town possibilities, please see map on p. xv or p. 79, “Identified and Potential Historic Resources in Old Town Erie (Survey Needed).” A map of some resources identified beyond Old Town is provided on p. xvi or p. 70, “Historic Resources in the Erie Planning Area (Survey Needed).”*



## Appendix G: Colorado's Historic Preservation Tax Credit

# Colorado's Historic Preservation Tax Credit for Commercial Properties

## WHAT IS A TAX CREDIT?

A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the amount of tax owed to the government. Tax credit projects create jobs and provide financial incentives to revitalize historic buildings. Federal and state tax laws offer tax credits for historic preservation projects that follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties. The federal government offers a tax credit between 10 and 20 percent, which can be paired with the state tax credit.

Preservation tax credits for commercial properties are managed jointly by the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) and History Colorado.

## WHAT TYPE OF PROPERTY IS ELIGIBLE?

Property must be:	
Pre-2015 state tax credit*	» At least 50 years old » Locally landmarked or listed on the State Register
New state tax credit for residential properties	» At least 50 years old » Locally landmarked or listed on the State Register
New state tax credit for commercial properties	» Locally landmarked or listed on the State Register » Income-producing

\*Applicants may apply for pre-2015 tax credits with Certified Local Governments or History Colorado in lieu of the new credit. Both cannot be used for the same project.

## HOW CAN THE TAX CREDITS HELP ME?

- » Colorado's state historic preservation tax credits for commercial properties are transferable: you can sell them upon completion of your project. Selling credits can bring in additional funds for your project, for a cash match for a grant, or for a loan.
- » Using preservation tax credits gives you access to additional federal and state funding pools, grant programs, and further tax credits.
- » Historic preservation tax credits lower your tax bill, which can increase your tax refund.

## WHEN CAN I APPLY?

Applications for the new commercial state preservation tax credit are accepted year-round on a rolling basis.







## RESERVATION LIMITS PER YEAR

Expenditures	2016	2017	2018	2019
Estimated rehab expenditures of \$2 million or less	\$2.5 million	\$5 million	\$5 million	\$5 million
Estimated rehab expenditures over \$2 million	\$2.5 million	\$5 million	\$5 million	\$5 million

» Each building is limited to \$1 million in credit in any one calendar year. Owners may apply for credits on multiple properties.

## HOW DO I RESERVE A TAX CREDIT?

[www.advancecolorado.com/hptc](http://www.advancecolorado.com/hptc)

-  Register with OEDIT on their tax credit website
-  Submit a Tax Credit Application (TCA) and rehab plan. Use OEDIT's project checklist to make sure you've turned in all requested materials, such as photographs and drawings.
-  History Colorado and OEDIT will conduct a preliminary review of project materials and respond to your request.
-  If the project materials you submitted meet the requirements, OEDIT will reserve a preliminary tax credit on your behalf, pending available funding.
-  History Colorado will conduct a detailed review and ensure your project follows the Standards for Rehabilitation. Upon History Colorado's approval of project, OEDIT will officially reserve the tax credits for the applicant (90 days).
-  You will claim your tax credit upon completion of your project and approved proof of rehabilitation.

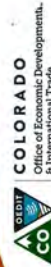
*All applications are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis.*

[www.historycolorado.org/oaHP/available-programs](http://www.historycolorado.org/oaHP/available-programs)

**HISTORY Colorado**  
PRESERVATION PROGRAMS



**Want to learn more? Visit [h-co.org/statetaxcredit](http://h-co.org/statetaxcredit)**  
**Ken Jensen (OEDIT)** at [ken.jensen@state.co.us](mailto:ken.jensen@state.co.us) or 303/892-3743  
**Joseph Saldibar (History Colorado)** at [joseph.saldibar@state.co.us](mailto:joseph.saldibar@state.co.us) or 303/866-3741





## Appendix G: Colorado's Historic Preservation Tax Credit

	NEW CREDIT <b>COMMERCIAL</b>	PRE-2015 CREDIT
<b>Eligible properties</b>	 <p>Property must be designated individually, or it must be part of a historical contributing district, at the national, state, or local level. Listed on State Register of Historic Properties or landmarked by a Certified Local Government (CLG)</p>	<p>More than 50 years old, <b>and</b> Listed on State Register of Historic Properties or landmarked by a Certified Local Government (CLG)</p>
<b>Eligible applicants</b>	<p>Property Owner, <b>or</b> Tenant with lease of <b>at least 39 years</b>, <b>or</b> Holders and those with property under contract</p>	<p>Property Owner, <b>or</b> Tenant with lease of at least 5 years</p>
<b>Eligible projects</b>	<p><b>Costs must exceed adjusted basis</b> (25% of the purchase price minus current value of land) Project must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards</p>	<p>Costs must exceed \$5,000 Project must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards</p>
<b>Time limits</b>	<p>1) Applicant must start work within 12 months of allocation, and 2) Applicant must be at least 20% finished within 18 months of allocation.</p>	<p>Project must be completed within 24 months (or 48 with a one-time extension)</p>
<b>Completed work</b>	<p>Can be claimed if completed <b>within 60 days</b> and documented</p>	<p>Can be claimed if within 24-month period and documented</p>
<b>Extent of tax savings</b>	<p><b>25%</b> of Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs) for projects less than \$2 million. <b>20%</b> of Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs) for projects more than \$2 million Additional <b>5% credit</b> for properties located in areas that have been designated as disaster areas within past 6 years The maximum amount of tax credit available to any commercial property is <b>\$1 million per year</b></p>	<p>20% of Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs)</p>
<b>Disaster relief</b>	<p>Additional <b>5% credit</b> for properties located in areas that have been designated as disaster areas within past 6 years</p>	<p>None</p>
<b>Project cap</b>	<p>The maximum amount of tax credit available to any commercial property is <b>\$1 million per year</b></p>	<p>\$50,000 per property</p>
<b>Credit availability</b>	<p>See Reservation Limits Per Year chart on opposite page</p>	<p>Subject to yearly budget estimates</p>
<b>Credit length</b>	<p>Can be used for up to 10 years</p>	<p>Can be used for up to 10 years</p>
<b>Allowable costs</b>	<p>Any expenditures allowed by federal tax credit (IRS code 47(c)(1)(A))</p>	<p>Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs)</p>
<b>Fees</b>	<p>\$500 Part 1 fee Issuance fee of 3% of tax credit amount</p>	<p>\$250 Part 1 fee (may be waived for projects under \$15,000) \$750 Part 2 fee</p>
<b>Recapture</b>	<p>No recapture of credits under the new law</p>	<p>Recapture plan if property sold within 5 years</p>
<b>Transferability &amp; saleability</b>	<p>Owners, including nonprofit organizations, may <b>use, transfer</b> or <b>sell credits</b> to other taxpayers; these other taxpayers may in turn transfer credits to additional taxpayers, using the OEDT website</p>	<p>None; credits stay with owner</p>
<p><b>Learn more or apply at:</b> <a href="http://b-co.org/statetaxcredit">b-co.org/statetaxcredit</a></p>		<p>August 2016</p>

Source: [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Programs/ITC\\_Commercial.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Programs/ITC_Commercial.pdf)



## Appendix G: Colorado's Historic Preservation Tax Credit

# Colorado's Historic Preservation Tax Credit for Residential Properties

### WHAT IS A TAX CREDIT?

A tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the amount of tax owed to the government. Tax credit projects create jobs and provide financial incentives to revitalize historic buildings. Federal and state tax laws offer tax credits for historic preservation projects that follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties. The federal government offers a tax credit between 10 and 20 percent, which can be paired with the state tax credit. Preservation tax credits for residential properties are managed by History Colorado or your Certified Local Government (CLG). \*\*

### WHAT TYPE OF PROPERTY IS ELIGIBLE?

Property must be:	
Pre-2015 state tax credit*	» At least 50 years old » Locally landmarked or listed on the State Register
New state tax credit for residential properties	» At least 50 years old » Locally landmarked or listed on the State Register
New state tax credit for commercial properties	» Locally landmarked or listed on the State Register » Income-producing

\* Applicants may apply for pre-2015 tax credits in lieu of the new credit. Both cannot be used for the same project.

### HOW CAN THE TAX CREDITS HELP ME?

- » Historic preservation tax credits lower your tax bill, which can increase your tax refund.
- » Preservation tax credits can be used to offset the cost of rehabilitating and restoring historic buildings.

### WHEN CAN I APPLY?

Applications for the new residential state preservation tax credit are accepted year-round on a rolling basis. Applicants may apply at any time. Applicants are encouraged to apply before starting work or in the early stages of the rehabilitation project.



**Note:** Each building is limited to \$50,000 in credits over a ten-year period unless the building is sold to a new owner.

### Want to learn more?

Visit [h-co.org/statetaxcredit](http://h-co.org/statetaxcredit) or Contact Joseph Saldibar at: [joseph.saldibar@state.co.us](mailto:joseph.saldibar@state.co.us) or 303/866-3741



\*\*For a list of approved CLGs, please see application at: [www.historycolorado.org/oshp/application-forms](http://www.historycolorado.org/oshp/application-forms)

### HOW DO I CLAIM A TAX CREDIT?

- Submit Part 1 of the tax credit application to History Colorado or your CLG. \*\*
- History Colorado or your CLG will conduct a preliminary review of project materials and respond to your request.
- If your submitted Part 1 meets the requirements, History Colorado or your CLG will approve the proposed work.
- Submit Part 2 of the tax credit application.
- History Colorado or your CLG will conduct a detailed review and ensure your project follows the Standards for Rehabilitation.
- If your submitted Part 2 meets the requirements, History Colorado or your CLG will approve the work and you will receive your tax credit.

*All applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.*

[www.historycolorado.org/oshp/available-programs](http://www.historycolorado.org/oshp/available-programs)



## Appendix G: Colorado's Historic Preservation Tax Credit

	NEW CREDIT <b>RESIDENTIAL</b>	PRE-2015 CREDIT
<b>Eligible properties</b>	More than 50 years old, <i>and</i> Listed on State Register of Historic Properties or landmarked by a Certified Local Government (CLG)	More than 50 years old, <i>and</i> Listed on State Register of Historic Properties or landmarked by a Certified Local Government (CLG)
<b>Eligible applicants</b>	Property Owner, <i>or</i> Tenant with lease of at least 5 years	Property Owner, <i>or</i> Tenant with lease of at least 5 years
<b>Eligible projects</b>	Costs must exceed \$5,000 Project must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards	Costs must exceed \$5,000 Project must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards
<b>Time limits</b>	<b>No time limit</b> Can be claimed if completed <b>within past 24 months*</b> and documented (* or 7/1/15, whichever is later)	Project must be completed within 24 months (or 48 with a one-time extension) Can be claimed if within 24 month period and documented
<b>Extent of tax savings</b>	<b>20%</b> of Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs)	20% of Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs)
<b>Disaster relief</b>	Additional <b>5% credit</b> for properties located in areas that have been designated as disaster areas within past 6 years	None
<b>Project cap</b>	<b>\$50,000</b> per property; but resets upon new ownership or after 10 years	\$50,000 per property
<b>Credit availability</b>	No credit availability constraints	Subject to yearly budget estimates
<b>Credit length</b>	Can be used for up to 10 years	Can be used for up to 10 years
<b>Allowable costs</b>	List of allowable expenditures (interior and exterior)	Qualified Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs)
<b>Fees</b>	"Reasonable" Part 1 fee (may be <b>waived for projects under \$15,000</b> ); No Part 2 fee	\$250 Part 1 fee (may be waived for projects under \$15,000) \$0-\$750 Part 2 fee
<b>Recapture</b>	No recapture of credits under the new law	Recapture plan if property sold within 5 years
<b>Transferability</b>	None; credits stay with owner	None; credits stay with owner
<b>Learn more or apply at:</b> <a href="http://b-ca.org/statetaxcredit">b-ca.org/statetaxcredit</a>		August 2016

Source: [http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Programs/ITC\\_Residential.pdf](http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/Programs/ITC_Residential.pdf)

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## **Appendix H – Excerpts from the Unified Development Code as It Affects Old Town Erie**

### **A. General Purposes of Residential Districts [Section 10.2.2.A]**

The residential zoning districts contained in this Section are intended to:

1. Provide appropriately located areas for residential development that are substantially consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Master Plan and with standards for public health, safety, morals, and general welfare;
2. Allow for a variety of housing types that meet the diverse economic and social needs of residents;
3. Allow mixed-density residential development in certain districts where district and development standards ensure that mixed use development will maintain and improve the function and appearance of surrounding development and traffic flow;
4. Provide the opportunity to protect sensitive environmental and cultural resources;
5. Protect the scale and character of existing residential neighborhoods and community character;
6. Ensure adequate light, air, privacy, and open space for each residential dwelling unit, and protect residents from the potentially harmful effects of excessive noise, glare and light pollution, traffic congestion, and other significant adverse environmental effects."

[Items 7-9 omitted for length]

### **H. Old Town Residential (OTR) [Section 10.2.2.H]**

#### **1. Purpose**

To ensure the preservation of the unique character and quality of life in the historic residential area of the Town by encouraging compatible redevelopment and infill development.

#### **2. District-Specific Standards**

##### **a. Single-Family Detached**

Single-family residential development of up to 5 dwelling units per acre.

##### **b. Multi-Family Development**

Multi-family residential development of up to 16 dwelling units per acre is permitted throughout OTR.

### **A. General Purposes of Mixed-Use Districts [Section 10.2.4.A.]**

Mixed-use districts define the uses of land and the siting and character of the improvements and structures to promote compatibility between uses. Buildings are typically oriented to maximize visibility and provide high quality open space, landscaping, and architectural features. The districts are also intended to encourage redevelopment of underutilized parcels and infill development of vacant parcels.

The mixed-use districts specifically are intended to:

1. Concentrate higher-density residential, commercial and office land uses efficiently in and around major employment centers, town centers, and other designated centers of community activity;
2. Encourage mixed-use and higher-density redevelopment, conversion, and reuse of aging or underutilized areas, and increase the efficient use of available commercial land in the Town;
3. Contain a transportation system network designed to ensure that residential areas will have direct access to adjacent non-residential portions of the proposed development or redevelopment;
4. Create compact and pedestrian-oriented environments that encourage transit use and pedestrian access;



5. Concentrate a variety of commercial and retail services and public facilities that serve the surrounding community;
6. Ensure that the appearance and function of development in mixed-use areas is appropriately compatible and appropriately integrated with surrounding neighborhoods;
7. Ensure that development in mixed-use areas is of high quality and provides pedestrian scale and interest through use of appropriately varied forms, materials, details, and colors, especially at the ground-floor;
8. Provide adequate light, air, privacy, and open space for each residential dwelling, and protect residents from the potentially undesirable effects of excessive noise, glare, light pollution, traffic congestion, and other potentially adverse environmental effects; and
9. Minimize potential negative impacts of development on stream corridors, wetlands, and other important natural resources.

#### B. Downtown District (DT) [Section 10.2.4.B]

##### 1. Purpose

To provide for and encourage development and redevelopment that preserves and enhances the unique character and vitality of Old Town Erie. Small-scale offices, retail, and residential uses are permitted. New development is encouraged to place residential above the ground floor. Design standards focus on creating a human-scaled, pedestrian-oriented and walkable downtown that invites commercial development and complementary residential opportunities. Continuous retail frontages, largely uninterrupted by driveways and parking, are encouraged.

#### C. Neighborhood Mixed-Use District (NMU) [Section 10.2.4.C]

##### 1. Purpose

To provide for small, compact commercial centers within or surrounded by residential areas, compatible in scale and character with surrounding residential uses, to primarily serve the convenience needs of generally the immediately surrounding neighborhood. NMU centers are typically up to approximately 5 acres in size. Continuous retail frontages, largely uninterrupted by driveways and parking, are encouraged.

##### 2. District-Specific Standards

###### a. Ground-Floor

Ground-floor retail is encouraged in all buildings in the NMU District.

###### i. NMU Districts Outside of Old Town

Residential uses shall only be permitted on floors above the ground floor. Small lobbies shall be permitted on the ground floor to provide for access to residential uses on upper floors. Office uses shall be permitted on any floor in the NMU District.

###### ii. NMU District Within Old Town

Uses permitted and shown in Table 3-1 shall be permitted on any floor. [Note: Table 3-1 is found starting on page 35]

###### b. Drive-Throughs Prohibited No drive-throughs shall be permitted in the NMU District.

SOURCE: Town of Erie Unified Development Code, January 2017, sections as identified by section number. For the full text, see <https://www.erieco.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/351>.

## Appendix I - Neighborhood Conservation Districts, Boulder, CO

## Sample Conservation District Ordinance Provisions

*Neighborhood conservation district programs have been established in many communities in the United States. These programs, often housed within a city or town's historic preservation or planning department, provide special protection for older neighborhoods that may not be able to qualify for historic designation. Typically enacted as overlays to underlying zoning restrictions, conservation district laws employ a variety of tools to preserve a neighborhood's character defining features such as design review and the application of development controls that address mass and scale, such as set-back, lot coverage, F.A.R. and height allowances. By tailoring the zoning and design restrictions to respond to the specific concerns of a neighborhood, local jurisdictions can protect the special characteristics that a neighborhood would like to preserve.*

*Set forth below are examples of conservation district ordinance provisions that have been adopted by communities around the United States. These ordinances provide authority to establish conservation districts and regulate physical changes within those areas. Specific guidelines are generally developed as part of a neighborhood conservation district plan. For detailed information on neighborhood conservation districts, see "Protecting Older Neighborhoods through Conservation District Programs," published at 21 PLR 1001 (Jan-Mar. 2002-03). Further information on these and other conservation district programs is located at the end of this report.*

<i>Boise, Idaho .....</i>	<i>1060</i>
<i>Boulder, Colorado .....</i>	<i>1066</i>
<i>Cambridge, Massachusetts .....</i>	<i>1072</i>
<i>Chapel Hill, North Carolina .....</i>	<i>1081</i>
<i>Dallas, Texas .....</i>	<i>1086</i>
<i>Knoxville, Tennessee .....</i>	<i>1092</i>
<i>Napa, California .....</i>	<i>1095</i>
<i>Phoenix, Arizona .....</i>	<i>1099</i>
<i>Raleigh, North Carolina .....</i>	<i>1103</i>
<i>Jurisdictions with Conservation District Programs .....</i>	<i>1108</i>

## **Boulder County, Colorado**

*Boulder County, Colorado places high emphasis on neighborhood consensus. Initiation of the designation process requires the consent of at least 50 percent of the owners within a proposed conservation district. Sixty percent approval is then required before the proposed district is adopted. As part of the designation process, the county's planning department staff works with the neighborhood to develop a "neighborhood conservation plan" that details the policies intended to protect the character and valued features of the proposed neighborhood conservation overlay district.*

### **Boulder County Land Use Code**

#### **Section 4-118 Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District**

##### **(A) Purpose**

- (1) To preserve and protect the character or valued features of established neighborhoods.
- (2) To recognize the diversity of issues and character in individual neighborhoods in the unincorporated parts of Boulder County.
- (3) To reduce conflicts between new construction and existing development in established neighborhoods.
- (4) To provide knowledge and reliance about the parameters of neighborhood character.
- (5) To allow neighborhoods to work together with the County to formulate a plan that defines their community of common interest and that fosters a defined community character consistent with County zoning, the Land Use Code, and the Comprehensive Plan.
- (6) To complement the County's Site Plan Review process in neighborhoods that have defined their community character pursuant to these regulations.

##### **(B) General Provisions**

- (1) Each Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District must be established by a separate resolution that shall include a map defining the overlay boundaries, and the Neighborhood Conservation Plan (as specified in this Article 4-118(F)), and shall become a part of the Boulder County Land Use Code.
- (2) An approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District does not replace the underlying zoning of the area, which remains as the source of minimum, applicable restrictions on structures, uses, and development. Any approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District may further appropriately limit, but may not expand, the uses and development allowed in the zoning districts in which the subject parcels are mapped.
- (3) All new development, additions, changes, and expansions to existing structures must comply with the regulations associated with the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District.
- (4) Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts must be consistent with the Boulder County Comprehensive Plan, applicable intergovernmental agreements,



and the Boulder County Land Use Code.

(5) Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts may contain requirements related to only the following issue areas: the location of proposed buildings or additions; uses; height; size; exterior materials; exterior color; exterior lighting; neighborhood character and compatibility; view preservation of or from specific locations, particularly from public lands and right of ways; visual impact on natural features or neighborhood character; compatibility with topography and vegetation; landscaping and screening; geologic hazards; wildfire mitigation; riparian areas, wetland areas, or drainage patterns; plant communities or wildlife habitat; migration corridors; geologic, geomorphic, paleontological, or pedologic features; agricultural lands; historic or archaeological resources; site disturbance; avoidance of development on visually exposed portions of the property; runoff, erosion, and sedimentation; and impact on Natural Landmarks or Natural Areas.

(6) Site Plan Review will not be required in an approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District to the extent that the approved Neighborhood Conservation Plan covers the relevant site plan review criteria of Article 4-806 of the Boulder County Land Use Code.

(7) The area of each Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District:

(a) shall include a minimum of 15 adjacent privately-owned parcels, unless the area proposed is an extension of the boundaries of an approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District.

(b) shall include privately-owned parcels that are closely settled and of similar size, and which are associated by common characteristics of geography, development, services, and interests.

(c) should consider other adjacent privately-owned parcels having shared distinguishing characteristics that could be found to comprise a logical neighborhood unit, when determining the boundaries of a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District.

(d) shall exempt privately-owned parcels of five acres or greater, unless the owner of the parcel agrees to inclusion of that parcel into the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District.

(8) Uses and structures legally existing at the time of adoption of a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District under these regulations, shall not become nonconforming solely by virtue of adoption of the district. Notwithstanding this provision, any changes or additions to uses or structures in the district that occur after the date of adoption of the district, shall comply with the provisions of the adopted district.

(a) In Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts creating a size limitation or floor area restriction, the Board of County Commissioners, through adoption of the NCOD, may allow an additional 10% of floor area for parcels near or above the designated size limitation.

#### **(C) Initiation of Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District**

(1) The establishment of a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District may be initiated by a group of 50% of the property owners within the proposed boundaries demonstrating interest in the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District.

(2) Neither the Board of County Commissioners nor the Planning Commission shall initiate the establishment of a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District.

#### **(D) Pre-application Conference**

A pre-application conference as defined in Article 3-201 of the Boulder County Land

Use Code shall be held prior to the submission of an application for a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District.

#### **(E) Application and Submittal Requirements**

An application for a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District must include the following:

- (1) Statement of Purpose that addresses the following issues:
  - (a) what the proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District wants to accomplish and why
  - (b) description of neighborhood character and valued features to be protected in the neighborhood
  - (c) why the proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District boundaries make sense as a defined "neighborhood" (for example: consider utility and services providers in area; school attendance; transportation links)
- (2) Map that indicates the boundaries of the proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District, and identifies the parcels within it
- (3) Description of the neighborhood, detailing land use, development, and distinguishing characteristics of neighborhood
- (4) Description of the history and evolution of the neighborhood
- (5) A petition that is (i) affirmatively signed by at least 50% of the property owners of parcels within the proposed district, indicating those owners' support for the County to proceed with processing of the application, and (ii) signed by all of the other owners of parcels in the proposed district indicating whether the property owner is AGAINST, UNDECIDED, or HAS NO COMMENT on the application, except that if the signature of such an owner cannot be obtained, the applicant may substitute a signed affidavit stating that the applicant has attempted in good faith to obtain the signature of such owner but has been unable to do so. Owners of record will be based on currently available Assessor's information.
- (6) The name and phone number of a designated representative for the neighborhood, who has the power to withdraw the application at any time
- (7) A list of all homeowner associations or other parties with an interest in the proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District. This list should include information as to the number of members and the officers' names, mailing addresses, and phone numbers

#### **(F) Neighborhood Conservation Plan Formulation**

The Neighborhood Conservation Plan shall detail the policies intended to protect the neighborhood character and valued features identified in the proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District. The Neighborhood Conservation Plan shall be drafted in cooperation with the neighborhood and County staff, based on the neighborhood application, land use analysis of the neighborhood, and input from neighborhood meetings.

- (1) County staff will conduct a land use analysis of the neighborhood and will present it at the neighborhood meetings. The land use analysis should include at least the following elements:
  - (a) zoning of area
  - (b) lot sizes and configuration
  - (c) land uses in the neighborhood
  - (d) description of housing and other uses: size, height, etc.
  - (e) previous Land Use reviews completed in the neighborhood
  - (f) subject to availability, aerial maps of neighborhood showing structure lo-

- cations or other applicable maps
- (2) Neighborhood Meetings
  - (a) At a minimum, two neighborhood meetings will be conducted in conjunction with County staff as part of the Neighborhood Conservation Plan formulation process:
    - (i) an initial meeting to discuss the land use analysis, the boundaries of the proposed overlay district, and what the neighborhood wants to accomplish with the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District
    - (ii) a final meeting to present and discuss the final proposed Neighborhood Conservation Plan
  - (b) All property owners within the proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District boundaries will be notified by the County of the meeting date and time, and will be sent information about the proposal.
- (3) Neighborhood Conservation Plan shall include:
  - (a) a map indicating the properties affected and the proposed boundaries of the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District. These boundaries may change from those initially submitted or proposed, based on land use analysis and input from neighborhood meetings
  - (b) the proposed land use standards and requirements for the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District
  - (c) other guidelines or background information related to the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District
  - (d) any pertinent items in the Development Report (Article 3-203(F) of Boulder County Land Use Code) not otherwise addressed in the Neighborhood Conservation Plan
  - (e) a statement indicating the extent to which the proposed Neighborhood Conservation Plan includes exemption from Site Plan Review

**(G) Standards and Conditions for Approval of a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District**

The Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District shall be approved only if the Board of County Commissioners finds that:

- (1) the proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District is an established area with shared distinguishing characteristics, which may include geography, development, services, and interests.
- (2) the proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District is a logical neighborhood unit with a closely settled development pattern on similar sized parcels.
- (3) the Neighborhood Conservation Plan complies with the standards and conditions specified by Article 4-1102 and Article 16 of the Boulder County Land Use Code.

**(H) Agency and Public Review**

Review of a Neighborhood Conservation Plan shall proceed through the following steps:

- (1) Referral Requirements and Agency Review as specified by Article 3-204 of the Boulder County Land Use Code
- (2) Planning Commission Review as specified by Article 3-205(B) of the Boulder County Land Use Code
- (3) The written consent of 60% of the owners of record of the parcels within the



proposed Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District, with each property not allowed more than one vote, must be obtained prior to review of the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District by the Board of County Commissioners. Owners of record will be based on currently available Assessor's information.

(4) Board of County Commissioners Review as specified by Article 3-205(C) of the Boulder County Land Use Code

(a) Resolution of Approval shall include the Neighborhood Conservation Plan, and the specific site plan review criteria covered by the Neighborhood Conservation Plan that are exempt from future Site Plan Review.

#### **(I) Amendments to an Approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District**

(1) Any proposal to add or subtract 15 or fewer parcels (without change to the text of the Neighborhood Conservation Plan) to an approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District shall be subject to the requirements of this Article 4-118(D), (E)(1)(b), (E)(1)(c), (E)(1)(e), (E)(1)(f), (E)(1)(g), (F)(1), (F)(3)(a), (G), and (H) of the Boulder County Land Use Code.

(2) Any proposal to add or subtract more than 15 parcels to an approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District, including the dissolution of the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District, or any proposed modification to an approved Neighborhood Conservation Plan, is subject to the requirements of this Article 4-118.

#### **(J) Waivers From the Terms of an Approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District**

Waivers from a specific term or terms of an approved Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District for a particular proposed development on a parcel included within the district, may be granted if 60% of the property owners of the parcels included within the district (excluding the owners of the parcel requesting the waiver) agree in accordance with the voting requirements of Section (H)(3) above, and if the BOCC subsequently decides at a public hearing that the waiver does not conflict with the stated conservation purposes of the district under the unique circumstances of the particular parcel in question (or reasonable mitigation measures can be imposed on the development such that a conflict does not result). The BOCC shall provide public notice of its hearing by mailing notice of the date, place, time, and subject of the hearing to all record owners of property within the district, and by publishing notice of the hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the County, at least 14 days prior to the scheduled public hearing date.

*Erie's Lincoln School, circa  
1920. (Records of the Town of  
Erie, courtesy Town Clerk's  
Office.)*



**Erie Historic Preservation Advisory Board**

**Town of Erie**

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