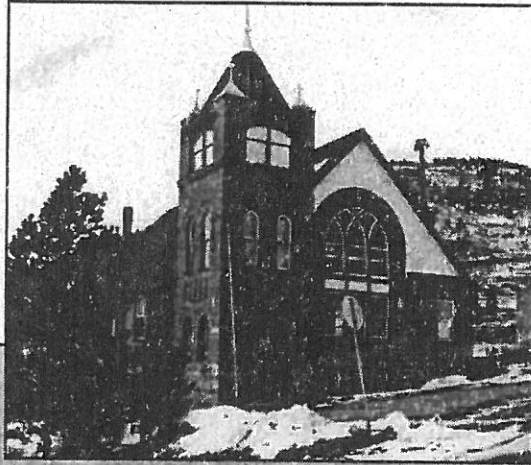


# A Preservation Master Plan

## Victor, Colorado

December, 1998



# **A Preservation Master Plan: Victor, Colorado**

**Project #97-01-059**

**"City of Victor Building Survey and Preservation Planning Project"**  
**Product 7G**



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## Preface

Preservation of historic buildings and sites is a widely recognized and growing concept in Colorado. While recognition of a unique heritage is important, it's only half the job: A preservation plan is necessary to assure that future development policies are congruent with the community's goals of preserving its heritage and promoting its historic resources. Although many communities do work hard to preserve the unique identities and characters that reflect their place in Colorado history and westward expansion, there are comparatively few Colorado communities with cohesive preservation plans for their historic treasures.

What follows in this document represents a progressive, proactive, and creative approach outlined by the citizens of Victor to preserving their heritage and summarized in this Preservation Plan. The plan builds on the strong foundation of existing preservation efforts and recent achievements, then it outlines the basic concepts of preservation and discusses methods of laying and building on these cornerstones in Victor.

What this Preservation Plan for Victor accomplishes is a set of goals, principals, program areas, and specific steps that the people of Victor have identified for themselves to ensure their heritage is protected and celebrated. The plan bespeaks a unified effort among the key players in Victor, including the City of Victor, the Victor Historic Preservation Commission, Victor's Preservation Resource Center, and the Victor residents and property owners to protect their historic buildings, sites, and heritage using the *Secretary of the*

*Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation* for projects. It underlines a willingness to work at obtaining adequate funding and professional technical assistance. It demonstrates an understanding of what it takes to accomplish historic preservation within the context of Victor's unique mining heritage. Finally, it offers a pioneering contribution to historic preservation in Colorado, an example of a preservation plan methodology unique to Colorado and adaptable to other cities and towns who wish to contribute to a unified effort to preserve the state's colorful heritage.



## Introduction

This document summarizes Victor's "Master Plan" for preserving its historic heritage. In its first parts (Chapters 1 and 2), it establishes an **historic framework** for Victor, describing both the social, economic, and geographic factors that shaped the city's history and the ensuing patterns of development. It also summarizes efforts that have been made over the last two decades to identify and protect historic resources.

In Chapters 3, 4, and 5, the document outlines recommended program areas for preservation efforts. **Policies and Regulations:** Steps that may be taken to identify, designate, and protect historic resources through planning, legal, and other institutional efforts. These include resource identification and designation, applicable comprehensive and other planning documents, and regulations such as zoning, local preservation ordinances, building codes, and design guidelines.

**Education:** Steps that may be taken to interpret the importance of these historic resources to Victor citizens and other interested people to understand Victor's unique past and ensure that its heritage is protected for future generations. Education programs may be broad-based, ranging from tours of historic areas, identification markers, through written, broadcast and other media, programs in schools and through special events, technical training, and the establishment of historic sites and museums.

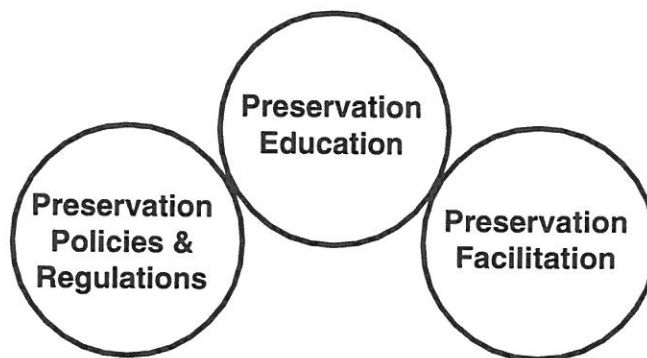
**Facilitation:** Steps that would help to implement a working preservation program for Victor and promote its use. These include offering financial incentives such as tax credits, reducing permit fees, and providing sales tax rebates, grants, low-interest loans, and rehabilitation programs.

Chapter 6 identifies the **Roles of the Preservation Players** in Victor and Teller County who can implement the preservation program, at government, citizen, and organizational levels. Finally,

Chapter 8 suggests the **Potential Implementation of the Plan**, outlining priorities from each program area, suggesting phasing, and identifying possible funding sources.

Ultimately, the actual route to preservation of its historic heritage lies with the citizenry of Victor. This document, written with the input of those citizens, along with professional preservationists, planners, educators, government members, and other informed professionals, outlines all the scenarios that can make that effort possible.

### Preservation Program Components



## Why preserve historic resources?

A community's historic buildings represent tangible links to its past and embody the unique character created by historic development patterns and events. Although historic preservation has long focused on saving buildings, preservation recently has been more broadly attractive for its economic benefits of community revitalization and tourism. The scale and texture in the detail of historic buildings is an important counterpoint to the anonymity of contemporary development. The sense of longevity and knowledge of the unfolding of community history fosters important civic pride that encourages citizen involvement in the community from improvement of personal property, to voluntarism, to charitable contributions, and to participation in decisions that shape the future of the community.

Communities now regard their historic downtowns as assets that attract tourists, shoppers, businesses, and residents back to the heart of the city. This results in rehabilitation of neighborhoods, renewed economic activity in the downtown, and the opportunity to expand the existing economic base through tourism. This can be true in Victor as well.

## Adaptability of historic buildings

Owners also recognize that the layouts of many historic buildings easily accommodate comfortable life-styles and support a diversity of populations. Rooms are frequently large, permitting a variety of uses while retaining the overall historic character of each structure and additional land often exists on a parcel to accommodate an addition, if needed.

## Environmental benefits

Sustainability, or the conservation of resources, is an issue that has gained increased support since the 1960s. Citizens have clearly demonstrated their individual and collective concern for the environment by their willingness to contribute to its preservation by recycling cans, paper, glass, and composting. On a larger scale, old buildings can be recycled. Tearing down an historic building to replace it with another makes a negative impact in several ways:

- It neglects buildings before their usefulness has ended,
- It uses today's resources to replace a building that doesn't need replacing, and
- It demands transporting resources to a building site from great distances and contributes to air and noise pollution.



Preserving a historic structure is also sound environmental conservation policy because "recycling" it saves energy and reduces the need for producing new construction materials. Three types of energy savings occur: First, energy is not consumed to de-



molish the existing building and dispose of the resulting debris. Second, energy is not used to create new building materials, transport them, and assemble them on site. Finally, the "embodied" energy that was used to create the original building and its components, is preserved.

By "reusing" older materials as a historic building, pressure is also reduced to harvest new lumber and other materials that also may have negative effects on the environment of other locales where these materials are produced. Because older buildings are often more energy-efficient than new construction, when properly used, heating and cooling needs are reduced as well.

#### **Economic benefits**

Historic resources are finite and cannot be replaced, making them precious commodities that many buyers seek. Therefore, preservation adds value to private property. Many studies across the nation document that, where historic districts are established, property values typically rise, or at least are stabilized. In this sense, designation of a historic district appears to help establish a climate for investment.

The condition of neighboring properties also affects the value of one's own property: People invest in a neighborhood as much as the individual structure itself and, in historic districts where investment is attracted, property owners recognize that each benefits from the commitment of their neighbors. An indication of the success of historic preservation is that the number of designated districts across the country has increased, due to local support, such that an estimated 1,000,000 properties, both as individual landmarks and in historic districts, are under local jurisdictions.

Preservation projects also contribute more to the local economy than do new building programs because each dollar spent on a preservation project has a higher percentage devoted to labor and to purchase of materials available locally. By contrast, new construction typically has a higher percentage of each dollar spent devoted to materials that are produced outside of the local economy and to special construction skills that may be imported as well.

Rehabilitating a historic building also can cost less than constructing a new one. In fact, design guidelines for rehabilitation of historic structures, typically employed, promote cost-saving measures: They encourage smaller and simpler solutions, which in themselves provide savings. Preserving building elements that are in good repair is preferred, for example, rather than replacing them. This typically is less expensive.



*In 1998, Colorado Preservation, Inc. listed the Christian Science Church in Victor as one of the seven most endangered historic properties in the state.*

## Goals for preservation

The goals for historic preservation in Victor are:

- To identify, preserve, and maintain historic sites and structures that are significant to the city's social and architectural heritage.
- To contribute to the economic development and vitality of the city by encouraging restoration work, the adaptive use of buildings and promoting the unique character of downtown.
- To preserve the character and livability of Victor's historic residential and commercial neighborhoods and strengthen civic pride through their conservation.
- To integrate historic preservation into the city's planning process.
- To enable citizens and visitors to enjoy and learn about local history through preservation efforts and the local built environment.

## Why Preserve in Victor?

While many of the virtues of preservation that are recognized nationally also apply to Victor, unique local reasons also exist. The residents and business owners of Victor, are searching for ways to preserve their historic town because it is an interesting place to live and work, and it links them to a past that they need to remember. In addition, this area contains a large inventory of buildings and building materials that are potentially sustainable. These historic properties are among Teller County's most interesting resources. They tell stories about Victor's past and reflect and illuminate the values of its residents. The presence of these properties, which display various architectural styles, different historic periods, and the contributions of the various ethnic groups, adds diversity and richness to Victor's urban and rural landscapes.

## Chapter 1: Historic Overview

By 1890 most people believed that Colorado's significant gold deposits had been mined. However, gold was found in a high-country cow pasture west of Pikes Peak and gold seekers poured into what became the Cripple Creek Mining District. The late timing of the Cripple Creek gold rush was due to the unusual mineral composition of the district's gold. Also, investors were reluctant to believe reports of gold because of the 1884 Mount Pisgah Gold Hoax that had drawn thousands of disgruntled prospectors to a site nearby several years earlier. Nevertheless, by 1892 hundreds of prospect holes and headframes dotted the mountainous mining district. The national Silver Panic of 1893 fueled the mining boom, and sent hundreds of out-of-work silver miners into the district. The Cripple Creek gold rush sparked national attention and helped pull Colorado's economy out of the depression. Many of the largest-producing mines were located on Battle Mountain—the Ajax, Cresson, Portland, Independence, Strong and Gold Coin, the latter of which operated within Victor city limits.

Mineral exploitation and commerce determined the site of Victor. The city was platted at the foot of gold-laden Battle Mountain, and its initial rapid growth was fueled by mining and by provision of goods and services to miners. It was originally platted as the Mount Rosa Placer in 1891 by James R. McKinnie, who owned several mines in the district. However, Warren, Frank and Harry Woods, who had grown rich in Leadville, Kokomo and Robinson at the start of the silver rush, purchased the townsite from McKinnie in 1893. The Woods actively promoted land sales, and incorporated the City of Victor in 1894. It is believed that the city was named for the Victor Gold Mine, owned by David Moffatt who was also constructing the railroad into the district from Florence. (Author Marshall Sprague claims the city was named after local rancher Victor Adams.)



*Mineral exploitation and commerce determined the site of Victor. The city was platted at the foot of gold-laden Battle Mountain, and its initial rapid growth was fueled by mining and by provision of goods and services to miners.*

An instant city, like many others throughout the Rocky Mountain west, Victor was hastily built of wood and at first lacked efficient municipal services. But, the burgeoning gold mines and the arrival of the three railroads in 1894, 1895 and 1901 propelled the city's growth. Victor quickly evolved from a crude camp into a bustling city, complete with electricity, telephone lines and water and sewer service. Historic photographs and the 1896 Sanborn map show that Victor's commercial district was densely built up with wooden, false-fronted buildings. The 1897 Colorado Business Directory described Victor as "a magnificent city of 8,000 people" and listed some 140 businesses. Nearly every local business depended on the mines and miners. Dozens of active gold mines earned Battle Mountain its reputation as Colorado's most productive mountain and Victor the title of "City of Mines."

Within a decade of the city's rebuilding, Victor's mining-dependent economy began to collapse. The Labor War of 1903-1904 threw hundreds of miners out of work and devastated the local economy and the entire mining district. "The City of Mines" never fully recovered from the eighteen-month-long strike. The Depression of 1907 followed soon after. The 1908 Sanborn map showed that several large buildings were already vacant. Gold production steadily declined, and by the onset of World War I, many of the district's mines were played out. By 1920 Victor's population had shrunk to 1,700. Except for a brief flurry of activity during the Great Depression, the gold mines lie dormant for 70 years. Victor's economy survived on an influx of summer tourists who came to view the "ghost towns," the dozen abandoned camps sprinkled throughout the mining district.

By the 1980s, Victor itself resembled a ghost town. Nearly half of its dwellings and buildings were vacant and its residents numbered 250. The city's decades-long economic slump was finally halted in the 1990s with the advent of legalized gambling in nearby Cripple Creek and a resurgence in local gold mining. The city's nearly 600 residents today are striving to maintain the historic integrity of Victor's nearly 400 houses and buildings. They are trying to strengthen the local economy by promoting on heritage tourism. It is hoped that by expanding the Downtown Victor Historic District to encompass the entire city, historic preservation may be furthered through State Historical fund grants, federal tax credits and other means. Establishing a local historic district comprised of the entire city is helping establish the controls necessary to maintain the city's historic fabric.

### **Native Americans (prehistory-1870s)**

The Pikes Peak region was inhabited by prehistoric Indians for thousands of years before European settlers arrived. The Ute tribe claimed the higher elevations, including the pine-clad slopes of Pikes Peak, while the plains-dwelling Cheyenne and Arapaho camped in the foothills and on the prairies below. An ancient trail preceded present-day Ute Pass, as a corridor between the lowlands and South Park where Utes, Cheyenne and Arapaho harvested buffalo. Juan Bautista de Anza ventured into the Pikes Peak region in the 1700s, chasing a band of the Comanche Indians. Anza and his troops battled the Comanche near Wetmore in what is now Fremont County, and perhaps camped near the present site of Cripple Creek. Greenhorn, the prominent peak south of Pikes Peak, commemorates the Spanish defeat of Green Horn (Cuerno Verde) and his Comanche raiders.

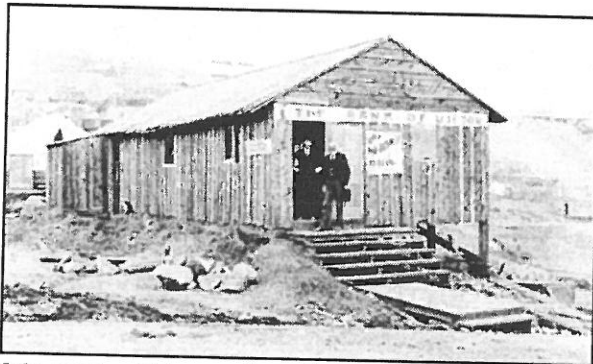
### **Agriculture (1870s-present)**

Cattle ranching, rather than mining, was the area's first industry. The southwestern slopes of Pikes Peak provided sunny exposure and natural grasses needed for cattle grazing. The Broken Box Ranch run by the Welty family occupied the present site of the city of Cripple Creek, seven miles north of Victor. When gold was first discovered in the district, there were "scattered homesteads, small in number." In 1888, Henry Rathke homesteaded the Turkey Track Ranch on Beaver Creek southeast of the city.

### Gold Mining (1891-present)

The Cripple Creek gold rush was the "last of the great Colorado gold rushes." The timing of the district's development had a strong effect on both the state and national economies, which were suffering from the Silver Panic of 1893. The gold camp drew out-of-work miners from mining districts across the country, and its capital-intensive mining and milling industries attracted financing from eastern investors as well as from England and France. The district's national significance is underscored by the fact that Theodore Roosevelt visited the area twice, once campaigning for his presidential running mate William McKinley in 1900, and again the following year as U.S. Vice-President.

Victor played a crucial role as the district's mining, industrial and transportation center. The area was actively mined upon the 1891 establishment of the Cripple Creek Mining District. Victor's nickname "City of Mines," reflects the importance of gold extraction to the city's economy and identity. Victor began as the 160-acre Mount Rosa Placer staked out by James Renwick McKinnie in September 1891. The settlement grew little, however, until the townsite was bought and promoted by the Woods Investment Company in 1893. Warren Woods and his sons Frank and Harry paid \$1,000 for a 136-acre tract on the steep, south-facing slope below Battle Mountain. They sold lots

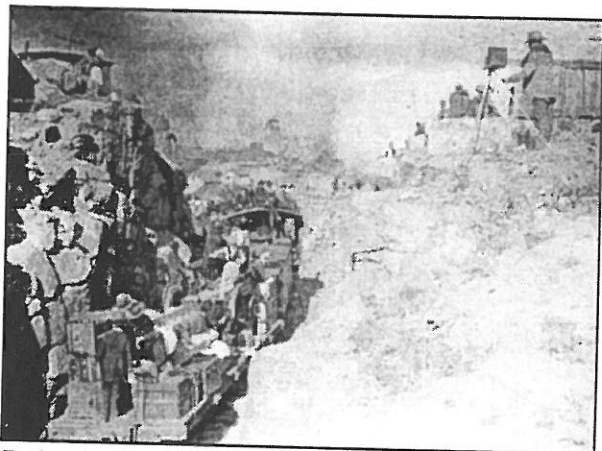


*Like most gold towns, the early structures in Victor were wood frame construction, thus illustrating the transient nature of gold mining.*

for \$25 apiece and offered financing to potential buyers. To establish a post office as quickly as possible, they only required a customer to sign a certificate of intent and make installment payments.

### Transportation (1892-1949)

Several factors contributed to Victor's early development as a transportation center. First, the city was located in close proximity to the gold mines on Battle Mountain. Second, railroads arrived in Cripple Creek via Victor because the steep elevation of Tenderfoot Hill northeast of Cripple Creek prevented construction of rail bed there. Third, Victor's location at the south end of the district meant that it was closer to the supply towns of Florence and Cañon City. Two historic roads entered Victor from the district south. The Florence & Cripple Creek Road was built with \$10,000 and volunteer labor along Eightmile Creek. This route was soon developed as the Florence & Cripple Creek Railway line.



*Railroad routes were cut through the mountainside to get supplies to the secluded mining towns of Victor and Cripple Creek.*



### **Milling and Smelting (1895-1903 & 1951-1961)**

For a brief time, Victor was the site of several of the district's mills, samplers and smelters due to its proximity to the gold mines. The Lawrence Gold Extraction Plant built by Ed De La Vergne south of Victor was the district's first smelter. It burned in 1895. The Woods Investment Company operated the Economic Gold Extraction Co., the tailings of which are still visible east of the city. The United States Refining and Reduction Company ran the Extraction Mill in Goldfield. The district's scarcity of coal and water hampered ore processing, and by 1903 most of the gold ore was treated outside the district, at facilities in Colorado City, Florence and Cañon City.

### **City Development (1893-1919)**

Like most boomtowns, Victor was platted rather than planned. A standard grid with a north-south axis was superimposed on a steep valley dotted with pine and aspen. The more level thoroughfare that ran east-west were named for gold mines \* the Black Diamond, Granite, Victor, Spicer, Portland and Anna Lee. Victor Avenue served as the commercial corridor. Cross-streets ran north-south over washboard topography and were numbered First through Eighth. City blocks were plotted in standard 25' by 125' rectangles with 32 lots per block.



*Victor Avenue served as the commercial corridor. Cross-streets ran north-south over washboard topography and were numbered First through Eighth.*

Victor's layout was determined by the gold mines at its northern edge. The city was also shaped by the three rail lines that served the mines. Railroad track ran directly to the mines on Battle Mountain so freight cars could be loaded with ore shipped to processing mills in low-lying towns. The commercial district was located near the mines and railroads and bounded by Granite and Portland Avenues and First and Fourth Streets.

### **Labor Union Disputes (1903-1904)**

Organized labor played a significant role in the political, economic and even social arenas. Labor unions were abundant. The 1900 city directory listed the Bakers and Confectioner's Union, Carpenters and Joiners' No. 584, White Cooks' and Waiters' No. 9, Excelsior Engineers' No. 80, Federal Labor No. 64, Hardware Clerk's Union, Retail Clerks' National Protective Association, Plasterers' and Lathers' No. 73, United Association of Plumbers, Steam Fitters and Gas Fitters No. 158, Victor Miners' No. 32, Victor Trades Assembly and Victory Typographical union No. 275. Labor Day was the city's largest holiday with an hour-long parades.



*Labor Day was the city's largest holiday with an hour-long parades.*

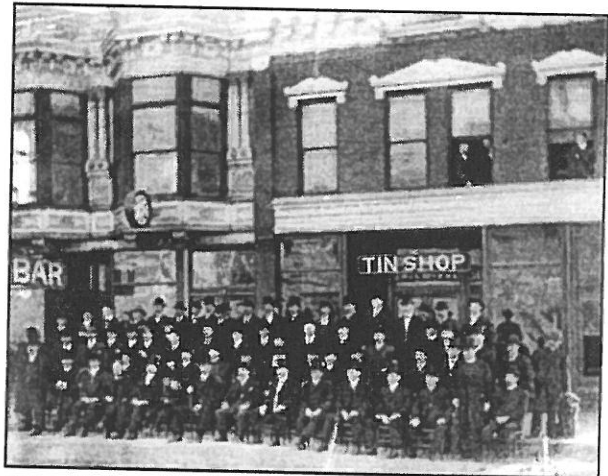
### Tourism (1899-Present)

Victor has attracted visitors and transient dwellers since its earliest days. The scenic Short-Line railroad capitalized on its scenic views and prompted Vice-President Theodore Roosevelt to exclaim "This is the ride that bankrupt the English language!" when he rode its rails to Victor. A local paper claimed, "Hundreds of excursionists came up on the F&CC from Pueblo Sunday and reveled in the cool mountain breezes. Although the trains went through to Cripple Creek most of the excursionists knew a good thing when they saw it and got off in Victor." [expanded from 1903-05 Cripple Creek Chamber of Commerce booklets]

### Victor Architecture

Gold mining activity rapidly propelled Victor from a crude mining camp to a sophisticated small city within five years. Many early residents and businesses were housed in canvas tents. Victor's first structures were log cabin homes and stores built from native pine and aspen. When the Florence and Cripple Creek Railway arrived in 1894, lumber was freighted into Victor from the cities of Cañon City and Florence, 35 miles distant. With the chief exception of the large, two-story, brick Hotel Victor, businesses such as hotels, stores, shops and offices, occupied false-fronted buildings of wood. Victor's 1896 Sanborn map and historic photographs show that the commercial district was densely concentrated with wooden structures. The residential neighborhoods in south Victor and those north and west of the business district consisted of simple woodframe dwellings, and throughout the city log cabins, wooden shacks and even small houses sprang up, facing the alleys.

In August 1899, fire consumed the business district and scores of surrounding houses. This fourteen-block area, bounded by Granite and Portland Avenues and First and Fifth Streets was entirely rebuilt. City aldermen passed an ordinance requiring that all structures must be built of brick or stone in the commercial district. Victor's reconstruction attracted several architects and scores of bricklayers, stone masons and carpenters. Dozens of handsome business "blocks" and impressive public buildings rose, stylish enough to evince pride from residents of the fifth largest city in the state.



*City aldermen passed an ordinance requiring that all structures must be built of brick or stone in the commercial district, as was the Victor Elk's Club.*

## Historic Overview

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## Chapter 2: Recent Achievements

The Victor community has been active on several fronts in achieving goals for preservation over the last couple of decades. The active preservation components: Identification, designation, protection, interpretation, and implementation, have manifested in the building "blocks" or achievements listed below, giving the City of Victor a solid foundation for the working preservation plan outlined in this document.

### Historic Preservation Commission

Recognizing growing interest in preservation, city council established a Historic Preservation Commission; charged with promoting preservation in the city through education and advocacy programs. It also has guided a resurvey of the city's historic resources and comments on proposals for alterations that come before the Planning Commission.

### Historic Resources Survey Update

In 1997, the city initiated an update of its inventory of historic resources. This survey includes an analysis of each property within the city limits to determine its potential historic significance. More than 400 historic structures were identified.

### Design Guidelines & Standards

As a supplement to criteria in the city's ordinances, the Historic Preservation Commission has guided the development of design guidelines and standards for building in Victor. These guidelines are custom-tailored to the community and provide criteria for determining the appropriateness of

proposed work requiring a building permit. In addition, the guidelines offer useful information about the history of the city, relevant building types and styles and practical rehabilitation tips.

### Victor Hotel Restoration

In 1993, private developers purchased the Victor Hotel and embarked on one of the most ambitious preservation projects in the region. Originally the First National Bank building and a major downtown landmark, the building anchors the western end of the main commercial block of Victor Avenue. It had lain vacant for decades and had suffered extensive damage. During the effort, the hotel was renovated extensively, with repairs to the exterior and substantial improvements to the interior.

### Showcase Block

Following the success of the Victor Hotel restoration, a group of private citizens initiated a program to rehabilitate the remainder of the main commercial block of Victor Avenue as a "preservation showcase."



*The "Showcase Block" of Victor Avenue*

### **City Hall Restoration**

In 1996, the City initiated restoration of the City Hall (1899). This work includes exterior stabilization and restoration, as well as updating the interior facilities.

### **Gold Coin Club Restoration Initiative**

The City has also sponsored efforts to restore the Gold Coin Club. The Historic Preservation Commission is currently developing strategies for determining the feasibility of restoring the building.

### **Post Office Restoration & Adaptive Reuse**

Built in 1899, the Post Office building now serves as the administrative offices for the Cripple Creek and Victor Gold Mining Company who recently gave it a major face lift. The quality of the restoration work earned a Statewide Preservation Award from Colorado Preservation, Inc., and a special commendation from the State of Colorado presented by State Representative Lola Spradley.

### **Lowell Thomas Museum**

Named after international radio personality, Cinerama film maker, and prolific author, Lowell Thomas. In 1998, for the first time in many years, the museum was cleaned and professional displays were organized and exhibited on the first floor. Much of the material in the museum was inventoried and sorted according to its relevance to Lowell Thomas and the Victor area. Victor residents of school age were employed to keep the museum open and this helped bring in a record number of visitors. A modest amount of electrical and interior repair was also accomplished.

The artifacts from the Cripple Creek and Victor sponsored field investigations were catalogued and placed in the museum for future display. The clean-up work was accomplished under the direction of the Victor Improvement Association and a private contractor—Denver Restoration, Inc. The initial funding has been provided by Cripple

Creek and Victor and an anonymous benefactor whom the Victor Improvement Association is most appreciative.

The summer of 1999 should bring sidewalk replacement and careful examination of the structure, heating, and overall building display layouts. The objective is to develop the Lowell Thomas Museum as (1) deserving of housing and displaying even more fascinating mementos of Lowell Thomas' illustrious career and (2) developing another reason for tourists and researchers to visit Victor and make it a destination.

### **VICCI Community Center**

Members of the Victor Initiative Consortium for Community Improvement have successfully obtained State Historical Fund Grants for the acquisition and development of an historic church in Victor and are in the process of opening a community center.

### **Strong Mine Restoration Initiative**

The Strong Mine, incorporated in 1892, was in continuous production until 1958 and ranked as number ten in gold production in the entire district. It is one of the few, if not the only, intact turn-of-the-century operating mines left in the camp. Currently, a restoration and refurbishment effort is under way to preserve this historical treasure.

### **Cresson Mine Headframe**

The Cresson Mine headframe was disassembled from the site of the new Cresson Surface Mine located between Cripple Creek and Victor near the Carlton Mill, refurbished, and reassembled in 1995 as a donation to the City of Victor—dedicated to district miners past, present and future. The Cresson Headframe stood over the Cresson mine for over 73 years prior to its move to this location. The headframe had been moved once before, in 1923, from the Golden Cycle Mine, located just west of Goldfield, to the Cresson Mine shaft, where it had replaced a wooden headframe.



You can learn more about the Cresson underground mine at the Lowell Thomas Museum. You may also learn more about the Cresson Surface Mine at the overlook at the Carlton Mill site, and you may view much of the operation (as well as a spectacular view to the west) from the American Eagles Mine north of Victor on Bull Hill off Rangeview Road.

### **The Southern Teller County Focus Group**

The Southern Teller County Focus Group has undertaken the following projects in 1998: 1) The Golden Loop Historic Parkway Driving Tour, where ten signs identifying district roads and historic structures were developed. Six of these signs were installed in 1998, and the remaining four will be installed sometime in 1999. A brochure which describes the history of the area and specific structures along the tour route has also been developed and may be used in conjunction with the roadside signs. Funds were raised locally for this project with a assistance from the Cripple Creek and Victor Gold Mining Company.

2) The Vindicator Trail System is a two (plus) mile historic interpretation trail through lower Vindicator Valley. The Focus Group developed a series of interpretive signs and a brochure for use along the trail. The trail is expected to be completed by the year 2000. Assistance from the Cripple Creek and Victor Gold Mining Company was provided.

3) The recreation of a portion of the Cresson Ore Sorting House and other interpretive displays are planned for completion by the year 2000 at the Independence Mine Site, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. A trail overlooking Victor will begin at the site. Assistance from the Cripple Creek and Victor Gold Mining Company was provided.

4) Historic displays at the Gold Coin Mine in Victor were developed with assistance from the Cripple Creek and Victor Gold Mining Company was provided.

The Focus Group received a \$37,500 grant from the State Historical Society for the above three interpretive projects.

### **Preservation Resource Center**

A recent addition to the City's preservation initiative is the establishment of a Preservation Resource Center. The Center is established to provide technical assistance and serve as an information clearing house on building rehabilitation and the city's history.

### **[www.victorhistory.org.com](http://www.victorhistory.org.com)**

Since its creation in March of 1998, the Victor Historic Preservation Commission's website has had over 33,000 hits. Designed and created by Ruth Zirkle it contains detailed information on Victor's history, a summary of the Historic Preservation Commission and a quarterly updated schedule of local historic preservation events.

## Recent Achievements

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## Chapter 3: Policies and Regulations

The foundation of a working preservation plan requires that a community identify its historic resources, designate them as such through national, state, and/or local listings, and take steps to protect the resources from future damage or inappropriate modification. This section establishes that foundation by first outlining the means of identifying the buildings through surveys, then discussing the status of surveys in Victor, and making recommendations for future survey action. Finally, it outlines potential community policies, legal steps, and regulations which would ensure that the identified and designated historic sites, buildings, and areas will be preserved.

### Resource Identification

Three key concepts—historic significance, historic integrity, and historic context—are used in evaluating a property for historic designation. Once a property has been evaluated as significant, either architecturally or historically, formal recognition of its historic value is accomplished through the designation (registration) process.

The primary means of designation are the National Register of Historic Places, State Register, and Local Register. In all cases, nomination forms are prepared under the direction of preservation staff, then examined by a review board, composed of experts and citizen members. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) comments on all state and national designations. Designation of properties at the various levels acknowledges and publicizes their significance. Their preservation is thereby promoted generally, while specific legal and procedural protections are created as well.

Historic resources such as Victor's need to be identified in a systematic manner in order to be protected, preserved, and/or adapted for current use. Several of the tools available for identifying resources include placing buildings within an historic context, taking a reconnaissance survey, or performing an in-depth, property-by-property survey.

*Historic contexts* are the framework within which surveys are taken and are a factor in identifying, evaluating, and prioritizing historic resources. Contexts are "the big picture;" in history, they are the combination of social, economic, and physical phases during which certain types of properties and buildings are established. The site itself reflects the context.

Many communities have completed a *reconnaissance survey* of their properties over 50 years old. Basically, these surveys require driving around a town and identifying and listing properties which are of the required age and seem to possess historic significance. While that effort usually revealed some identifiably important buildings, there was little historic information about the kinds of vernacular architecture common to western cities and about residents or businesses occupying the buildings.

#### Survey Activity in Victor:

In 1986, the City of Victor conducted a survey of historic properties.

In 1997, the Historic Preservation Commission initiated an update of the intensive survey of historic properties citywide.

By contrast, an *in-depth survey* is a method of identifying and gathering data on a community's historic resources in great detail. An inventory, one of the basic products of a survey, is an organized compilation of information on those properties that are evaluated as significant. Evaluation, the process of paring the survey data to produce an inventory, requires determining whether identified properties meet defined criteria of historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance.

These preservation tools are necessary parts in establishing a final preservation plan, as they enumerate what needs to be saved and begin the process of finding ways to identify means and agents for protection.

### Designation of Resources

The *National Register of Historic Places* is the official list of the nation's historic and archaeological resources worthy of preservation. The register is a national inventory to which public agencies as well as private citizens may refer. It contains buildings, districts, historic and prehistoric sites, structures, and objects significant on a national, state, or local level.

#### Resource Designation in Victor:

The Victor Historic District is included in the National Register of Historic Places.

The City of Victor designated the downtown commercial core as a local historic district.

The National Register is administered by the National Park Service under the Secretary of the Interior. In each state, a state preservation office, guided by a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), conducts the program and related preservation activities. In Colorado, the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP), a part of the Colorado Historical Society, administers these programs.

The National Register is intended primarily for use as a planning tool to encourage preservation without restraint upon private property interests. Listing of a property does not impose any responsibilities upon the private property owner for maintenance or restoration. A private owner may alter or demolish a National Register site without consultation with the OAHP or the National Park Service. However, the result of any such action that compromised the historic character of a site may cause the property to be removed from the register.

The National Register formally recognizes properties possessing a documented level of significance that contribute to the understanding and appreciation of the history and prehistory of a community, the state, or the nation. By honoring such important sites, the National Register:

- Increases pride of ownership and expands community interest and appreciation of its cultural resources.
- Stimulates local preservation planning.
- Develops local interest and support of neighborhood and commercial revitalization.
- Creates a body of information available for community promotion purposes by such local and state agencies as chambers of commerce and tourism departments.
- Encourages the renovation of income-producing properties and revitalization of historic commercial districts and residential neighborhoods through tax incentives. These incentives include investment tax credits toward approved renovation costs of listed commercial, industrial, or rental residential buildings.

- Qualifies a property to compete for grants from Colorado's State Historical Fund. These grants may be used for acquisition and development, education, and survey and planning projects.
- Permits easement donations. Buildings, structures, and open spaces listed on the National Register qualify under the Federal Income Tax Regulations and the Collard conservation easement statute as certified properties for the donation of a conservation easement. Such a donation enables the property owner to protect a property in perpetuity and allows for a charitable contribution deduction.
- Provides limited protection to listed or eligible sites from adverse actions by federal agencies or agencies using federal funds. Such agencies must request the comments of the SHPO as well as the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation before beginning projects affecting historic properties. The purpose of this consultation is not to impede or halt development, but rather to assure that the value of historic properties is given direct consideration in federal project planning decisions.
- Qualifies a property to receive federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available.

Uniform criteria for designation across the country apply to sites considered for listing on the National Register. Sites must be over 50 years old with their historic character well-preserved and the integrity of setting and materials retained. Sites must possess one or more of the following areas of significance:

- Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Victor history.
- Association with the lives of persons significant in Victor's past.
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction, such as a local historic district.
- Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years are generally not considered for the National Register unless they meet special criteria available from the National Park Service. Nomination procedures are available from the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation in Denver for Colorado sites and are applicable to Victor.

The *State Register of Historic Properties* is a listing of the state's significant cultural resources worthy of preservation for the future education and enjoyment of Colorado's residents and visitors. Properties listed in the State Register include individual buildings, structures, objects, districts, and historic and archaeological sites. The State Register program is also administered by the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation within the Colorado Historical Society. The Society maintains an official list of all properties included in the State Register. Properties that are listed in the National Register of historic Places are automatically placed in the State Register. Properties may also be nominated separately to the State Register without inclusion in the National Register. Information about the State nomination process is available from the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation in Denver and is applicable to Victor.

*Local designation* is established through the regulatory powers of a city's zoning ordinance. Under state legislation, cities, towns, and counties in Colorado may adopt local preservation ordinances. Most of these ordinances include a formal process whereby an individual historic property or district can be locally designated. The ordinance usually specifies criteria for designation.



It is important to distinguish the city's designation of historic districts through its local ordinance process from designation to the National Register. The National Register of Historic Places is a list of sites and properties of historic significance. Properties so listed may have national significance, but they may also may be listed if they are determined to have significance at a state or local level. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and nominations are submitted through the State Historic Preservation Officer, using criteria adopted by the Secretary of the Interior.

Properties listed on the National Register are eligible for federal and state income tax credit incentives and federal actions that may affect these properties must be reviewed for their potential impact. Alterations are not reviewed if the property owner is not seeking the income tax incentives or if no federal or state actions are involved.

### Regulations Supporting Preservation

One way to protect historic resources is to establish a *local preservation ordinance*. The purpose of the ordinance is to promote preservation of historic and cultural resources. At the community level, a city's historic preservation ordinance is usually established under the provisions of local zoning regulations. The ordinance may provide a process for designating historic properties as well as for the review of rehabilitation plans and designs for new construction and demolition. Other legal tools may include preservation easements, covenants, and sign codes.

Colorado's state legislature has passed legislation that authorizes towns, cities, and counties to enact historic district ordinances. Such ordinances serve two functions: They provide for the designation of significant historic districts and they also provide for the maintenance of a district's visual attributes by requiring that all development be reviewed by an appointed board (see design guidelines).

Usually, a preservation commission or committee is appointed to oversee the administration of the ordinance and to review specific historic properties applying for designation/protection. The committee may be composed of planners, lawyers, designers, preservationists, and other professionals who have knowledge of issues applying to historic properties. Terms of service for committee members, methods of selecting committee members, and meeting procedures should be established when the board is created.

#### Preservation Related Regulations in Victor:

The City of Victor amended its zoning ordinance, assigning design review authorities to the Planning Commission.

The City established a Historic Preservation Commission to advise the Planning Commission and City Council on matters related to preservation.

In reviewing properties considered for historic designation, the committee should use criteria similar to that established for national historic designation (see above). In most cases, a property is significant because it represents or is associated with a particular period of history. Frequently, this begins with the construction of the building and continues through the peak of its early occupation. Building fabric and features that date from the period of significance typically contribute to the character of the structure.

In addition to being historically significant, a property also must retain its integrity, in that a sufficient percentage of the structure must date from the period of significance. The majority of the building's structural system and materials should date from the period of significance and its character-defining features also should remain intact. These may include architectural details, such as dormers and porches, ornamental brackets and moldings and materials, as well as the overall mass and form of the building. These elements allow a building or district to be recognized as a product of its own time.

Many communities include design review procedures in their historic preservation ordinances. These powers have been upheld in numerous court decisions. Many of these decisions also hold that for an ordinance to be legally enforceable, reasonable standards must exist, on which the review board bases its decisions.

Some people are concerned that property rights may be infringed. To protect personal property rights, proper procedures, such as reasonable, quantifiable standards should exist, and guidelines must be written in the public interest.

Local preservation ordinances are often part of the *zoning code*. A community's zoning code has designated, legally enforceable functions:

- It establishes appropriate land uses, such as commercial, high or low density residential, industrial, etc.
- It delineates base site development patterns by outlining building setbacks, requirements for access or service, and for parking.
- It may establish maximum building sizes through height or floor-area-ratio (FAR) limits.

Zoning codes may have other requirements that also affect neighborhood character, such as screening or landscape requirements.

Depending on how the zoning code is written, there is a potential for either conflict with or support of preservation objectives. For example, zoning may allow greater building area than is compatible with an historic area, as most historic buildings have a smaller, more human scale and current technology and economic pressures often dictate much larger buildings. They may require increased parking on a site that is out of character with historic buildings. This is often the case when historic buildings are used as offices.

When establishing preservation ordinances for districts or individual sites, it is important to evaluate other zoning regulations to make sure that it is compatible with the historic character of the area. Codes should allow for the flexibility necessary to preserve the scale and integrity of historic districts.

*Building codes* also can have a measurable impact on historic preservation. In Colorado, the basic code used by most communities is the Uniform Building Code (UBC). The UBC includes a section that the city can adopt that gives the building official some flexibility in interpreting the standards when they are applied to a property that is officially designated as a historic resource. Generally, such a section provides that when work is proposed for an historic structure, it is not necessary to bring all portions of the building up to code. For example, an historic door might be too narrow to meet code requirements. Still, the work proposed must meet code, or at least must not cause a decline in code compliance from the existing condition. The philosophy behind this flexibility is that "it must be safer than it was." Basic life safety concerns must be addressed in any case.

In addition, a special companion codes, the Uniform Code for Building Conservation (UCBC) supplements the UBC and provides greater flexibility for designated buildings. For this reason, a local listing of historic properties is desirable so that they be granted the flexibility necessary.

Many "code problems" that property owners encounter may be associated with fire, electrical, and plumbing codes rather than the building code itself. These code problems usually occur with commercial uses and are less likely for residential properties that are owner inhabited.

*Design guidelines and standards* help preserve historic districts as records of our heritage in a consistent and fair manner. Design guidelines provide for unbiased and uniform review of proposed work in historic districts. They provide standards by which all projects are evaluated, minimizing the influence of individual tastes. Design guidelines do not, however, dictate design by formula. Instead, they identify key features of the historic resources that should be respected when planning any repairs, alterations, or new construction. Design guidelines therefore provide a context within which individual design solutions may be developed.

Design guidelines also can establish a climate for investment for businesses, residents, and property owners because the associated review process provides assurance that alterations and new construction by others will reinforce the preservation goals for the district. In a similar manner, where historic properties have been maintained, communities frequently adopt design guidelines to protect property values and their quality of life.

Design guidelines give local residents interested in retaining the distinct historic identity of the neighborhood a strong protection tool. Design guidelines provide a framework for insuring com-

patible new construction that enhances, rather than undermines, a community's unique character.

Guidelines also can serve as educational tools, providing useful information about rehabilitation procedures and design concepts that are appropriate for an historic district. They often provide practical guidance, helping property owners make well-informed design decisions.

The means by which reviews occur are established in a set of procedures that define a uniform due process for all applicants to be heard in a similar manner.

A weak link in many design review systems is in the enforcement of the approved designs. At the initial stage, regulations should clearly state that all relevant building permit applications require approval of the historic preservation commission. Ordinances should also clearly define the responsibility for monitoring construction to assure that it complies with the approved submittals. Finally, penalties for non-compliance must be prescribed. When planning the enforcement component, be realistic about the time commitments that may be required to monitor construction and determine if this will be handled by staff or if commission members will fulfill this role.

### Design Guidelines in Victor:

In 1997, the Historic Preservation Commission initiated development of design guidelines that are custom-tailored to the Victor context.



## Chapter 4: Education

Educating the residents of Victor is as important as the actual preservation effort. Methods for learning about a community's historic resources are diverse and creative. Educational tools, such as the tours, markers, workshops, and other methods described in this section, interpret the importance of the designated site or area to the community's history and make it possible for people to appreciate and protect their resources while building a stronger base of awareness through publications and educational programs.

### Tours of Historic Properties

Tours may take several formats. A *guided walking tour* focuses on a certain historic area, site, or building, and is usually led by paid or volunteer guides who are well-versed in an area under discussion. These tours are often supplemented by written materials and that require a cost to cover expenses, including written material, advertisement, staff cost, research, costumes, etc.

A *self-guided walking tour* with a brochure requires the same level of research and written communication but is formatted so that the tourist may obtain whatever information about the historic area is known by reading the information and following a map. This kind of tour saves costs and time in finding guides or scheduling specific times, and allows the tourist to take the tour at his or her convenience. The only disadvantage is that tour promoters cannot as easily field questions or suggestions.

*House tours* are usually one day or weekend events which allow tourists to enter houses and learn about the history of the homes and architecture, the original inhabitants, and how current owners have adapted the buildings to fit their modern lifestyles while maintaining the historic integrity of the home. House tours are often operated as fund-raisers and require a considerable amount of organization and promotion to be successful. They are effective educational tools because they demonstrate that it is possible to enjoy a high quality of life in an historic building without infringement on personal property rights or lifestyle.

### Markers

Markers may take any or all of several forms. *Permanent plaques* describing the significance of a structure may be attached to designated landmarks. Given that plaques are a relatively low-cost investment with a high return on visibility and education for present and future generations, a plaque program seems an integral part of an historic education program.

An *interpretive* or *historic marker* provides additional information about a site. A photograph or drawing may be included. Boundary or *district markers* also may be in a plaque program. These are most effective when they conform to a uniform design that falls within the guidelines of the district and reinforce to the visitor that the area is "special." Again, the intent of all markers is to educate and instill community pride and awareness at a low cost.



## General Education & Awareness

One of the most important tasks for preservationists is to take the initiative in portraying historic preservation in a positive light. Preservation efforts often labor in relative obscurity until a controversy arises, which can often create negative publicity. A proactive approach demands making creative use of the many types of media, programs, institutions, and other communication devices available to inform the community of the positive aspects of preservation in the community.

### Preservation Education in Victor:

In 1997, the Historic Preservation Commission staged a training workshop in Victor to enhance the skills of commissioners.

In 1998, member of the Historic Preservation Commission participated in a statewide training session conducted by Colorado Preservation, Inc.

Any preservation effort relies on reaching younger generations to continue the preservation effort. The Victor Historic Preservation Commission and the City of Victor, with input from the community and other "key players" identified in Chapter 8, could undertake an outreach program to grades K-12 in the local schools. The extent of this effort would be dependent on the cooperation of individual teachers, administrators, and special education experts such as librarians and media people. Special topics from Victor history could be identified and worked into existing curricula or special programs could be developed for National Preservation Week or Victor anniversary dates.

A computer database of historic information could provide user-friendly access to historic archives in Victor. Together with a reference shelf of technical and educational material, the database could be set up at Victor's Preservation Resource Center for use by local citizens, students, design professionals, and other people interested in learning more about preservation in Victor.

## Technical Training

A key segment of an education component is to provide training in technical restoration procedures. Property owners need information about renovation procedures and materials that are available to them, and they also need help in learning how to research the histories of their properties. Property owners, members of the design and construction industries and others interested in promoting preservation can participate in these training programs.

The community can provide technical training in the following ways:

### How-to renovate workshops

Participants learn renovation procedures through workshops and demonstrations. These may include case studies, in which a property in town is the laboratory for the renovation work. They may also include lectures and video presentations of projects elsewhere.

The print and broadcast media, including newspapers, radio, and television stations comprise an existing communication outlet whose purpose is to disseminate information. Media efforts should include:

- Public access cable television listings;
- Radio station public service calendar announcements;
- Newspaper community calendar listings;
- Press release for events of interest to the media, followed up with a telephone call to the appropriate editor or reporter;
- Letters to the editor;
- Invitations to the media for special events;
- An historic column in one of the local papers; or
- Interviews on the media with persons active in preservation efforts.

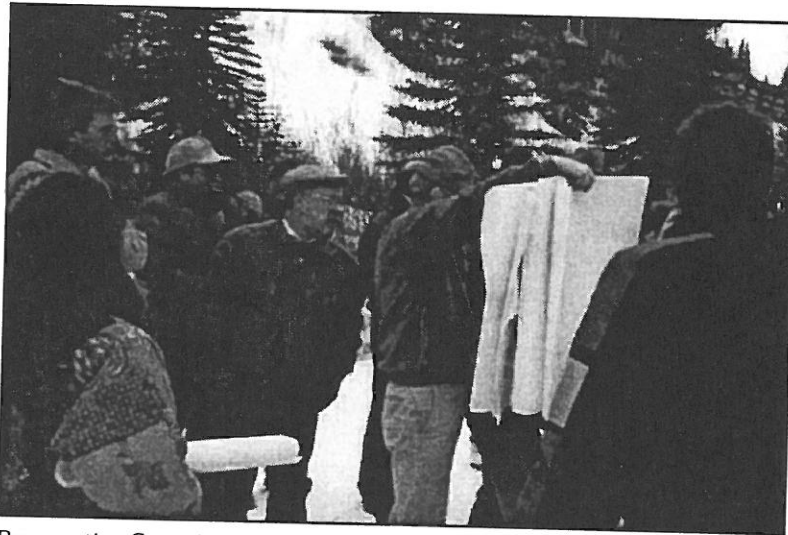


### How-to research workshops

In these classes, students learn techniques for discovering the history of ownership of their properties. They also learn methods of discovering the history of alterations to their buildings by learning how to read the evidence of changes that may have occurred.

### Hands-on renovation projects

In a variation of how-to renovation workshops, students "learn by doing," when actually helping with renovation work on a property in Victor. While this provides a very effective educational opportunity, it also may be a means of renovating a property at reduced costs.



*Preservation Commissions should engage in regular training sessions, including site visits to properties in the community, as a part of the preservation education component.*

### Historic Sites and Building Museums

Some historic buildings and sites in Victor could be restored and renovated to be used as public museums and interpretive displays of Victor history. The intent of these sites is to allow the public to view artifacts representative of the past and/or to provide interpretation of landscapes and buildings that have been restored or stabilized to show how they were originally used. This kind of "hands-on" preservation effort appeals to both adults and children who can see and experience old sites.

### Technical publications

In addition to live classes, the community can make publications available that provide technical renovation information. This may include distributing media produced through national organizations, such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation, as well as producing special publications locally that are custom-tailored to restoration issues in Victor.

## Education

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## Chapter 5: Facilitation

The community can help others execute preservation projects through a variety of facilitation initiatives. Some of these programs provide financial help while others assist with administrative needs.

### Financial Incentives

The community can offer a variety of financial incentives to assist property owners in executing preservation projects. These include:

#### Federal income tax credits

Federal income tax credits are available to owners of qualified income-producing properties that they renovate in compliance with the *Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties*. Typically, 20% of eligible costs may be taken as a credit. This is a significant incentive for rehabilitation of historic buildings. Many commercial properties, as well as some rental housing in Victor, may be eligible.

#### State income tax credits

The State of Colorado also offers credits on state income tax for historic properties that have been rehabilitated in compliance with accepted standards. This credit is available to a broader range of buildings than the federal income tax credit. Homeowners are eligible as well as owners of income producing properties. It is important that approval for proposed improvements be obtained before beginning the work, however.

#### Sales tax rebate

Some communities offer a rebate on the local sales tax collected on the purchase of construction materials that are used for approved rehabilitation work.

#### Permit fee waivers

Some communities waive certain construction fees for the rehabilitation of historic buildings. For example, the fee for a construction permit, or for a water tap, may be waived. This can be a notable incentive in some cases.



*The Victor Hotel made use of the Federal Investment Tax Credit program.*

#### State Historical Fund Grants

The Colorado Historical Society administers the State Historical Fund, which disburses grants for preservation projects statewide. Funded by taxes collected from gaming, the fund promotes preservation across Colorado. It provides the most significant general funding source for preservation in the state.

Preference is given to projects sponsored by public entities and to civic buildings. In some cases, a municipality may apply for a large grant and "re-grant" portions to private property owners. To qualify for this assistance, properties must be listed in a recognized historic register, which underlines the importance of updating the Victor historic property survey.

### **Colorado Historic Fund Activity in Victor:**

In 1997, the Colorado Historic Fund awarded a grant to the City to refine basic components of its preservation program, including an updated survey of historic properties, develop design guidelines, produce a preservation plan and revise its preservation ordinance.

### **Corporate donations**

Increasingly, private corporations are finding that it is good business to support preservation projects. Typically, corporations like to fund a specific publicly owned construction project, such as the rehabilitation of a historic buildings as an art museum.

Corporations active in the area are the best candidates for such contributions. These companies benefit directly from the quality of life the community offers its employees and therefore investing in the historic character of Victor makes sense. Some of the larger corporations have established giving policies and a set timetable for submitting proposals. Others are more informal and welcome proposals throughout the year.

### **Foundation grants**

Private foundations also will contribute to renovation projects, typically for publicly-owned properties, although they also have supported re-granting programs for main street rehabilitation projects. Major foundations in Colorado, including El Pomar and Gates, have contributed to historic building programs as have several smaller foundations.

In general, foundations award funds to match monies provided from other sources. They are particularly attracted to projects that have a clear product and distinct timetable for completion, as well as to projects in which the foundation's awards leverage substantial investment from other sources.

### **Certified Local Government grants**

The Colorado Historical Society administers a small grant program with funds provided from the National Park Service. These grants are available only to public entities that have local preservation commissions with ordinances that meet established criteria. Many of these grants go for conducting historic building surveys and developing planning tools that are used to promote historic preservation.

The city could consider budgeting funds each year for city-wide preservation efforts. In order to qualify, the city must receive certification from the Colorado Historical Society and the National Park Service. In order to be certified, the city must demonstrate that it operates a preservation program that meets standards of the Secretary of the Interior. This includes operating a preservation commission, administering a design review system and in maintaining a listing of historic properties.

## Chapter 6: Roles of the Preservation Players in Victor

If Victor is going to be a desirable place to live and do business in the future, then it will be because of the historic resources and community heritage. These need to be preserved. The organizations and groups discussed in this chapter have been identified as key supporters of the historic preservation efforts in Victor. They should commit to building on local initiatives and helping to preserve Victor through a series of organized grass-roots efforts.

### Victor Historic Preservation Commission

Collecting and analyzing information on the location and significance of archaeological and historic properties are important efforts for this organization. Some of the valuable results of these activities could include historic context studies, cultural resource inventories, and assessments of properties to determine their eligibility for local, state, and National Register of Historic Places designation.

#### Roles for the HPC:

- ☞ Provide educational materials regarding the history of downtown Victor.
- ☞ Serve as a funding source for preservation efforts (i.e. grant redistribution).
- ☞ Continue to promote historic preservation efforts and preservation workshops.
- ☞ Sponsor a special guided historical walking tour of Downtown Victor during National Historic Preservation Week.
- ☞ Sponsor a how-to research workshop.

### City of Victor

The ability to offer residents and business owners a variety of support programs that are sensitive to current local planning needs is the strength of the City of Victor. The City Clerk's Office and the Preservation Commission are best positioned to introduce and sustain historic preservation efforts in the historic district.

#### Roles for the City of Victor:

- ☞ Serve as a funding source for preservation efforts.
- ☞ Do exterior facade improvements on city owned buildings.
- ☞ Facilitate a historic building survey.
- ☞ Provide for the long-term preservation of the defining character of historic Victor.



## The Victor Preservation Resource Center

The Victor Preservation Resource Center's city-wide technical assistance program, should initiate projects that investigate and interpret Victor's historic architecture and landscapes. Projects should focus on historic building restoration and landmarking, resource planning to provide information and services crucial to the preservation of endangered structures and for a broad range of public education programs. A continuation of this "helper" role is perceived as a function for this organization in the future.

### Roles for the Resource Center:

- ☞ Provide technical assistance for historic preservation efforts in Victor.
- ☞ Provide educational materials regarding the history of Victor.
- ☞ Cosponsor individual preservation events and programs.
- ☞ Continue to promote historic preservation efforts and preservation workshops.

## Teller County

Victor is a potential affordable housing resource for the County as a whole. Teller County should therefore be actively involved in promoting the restoration and reuse of Victor's historic buildings as decent housing stock. Victor is also a key ingredient to the regional gambling/mining experience, and is therefore important to the county as a whole. Teller County foster a the "gambling experience" of going to both Cripple Creek and Victor.

### Roles for Teller County

- ☞ Promote the regional awareness of Victor and Cripple Creek's cultural heritage.
- ☞ Cosponsor individual preservation events and programs.
- ☞ Serve as a funding source for preservation efforts (i.e. grant redistribution).

## Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce is best positioned to create partnerships and coordinate efforts between the various preservation players and the community. Initiating and supporting the creation of historic preservation projects, analysis of current community needs, and proposing future strategies are the kinds of activities that can promote good communication with the various nonprofit organizations and regulatory agencies in the future.

### Roles for the Chamber of Commerce:

- ☞ Provide educational materials regarding the history of downtown Victor.
- ☞ Cosponsor individual preservation events and programs.
- ☞ Assist in promoting historic preservation efforts and preservation workshops.



## Chapter 7: Implementation of the Plan

Clearly, many opportunities exist to expand preservation activities in the community, but with so much to be done, how should initial energies be focused? This section recommends a series of actions that should receive high priority because they incorporate several preservation components. Several such "actions" were identified in a series of planning workshops. These range from the establishment of preservation programs to studies of historic resources to physical improvements to developing standards for design.

Within each of these actions are brief explanations and a list of priority projects and tasks which can help with the implementation of the program(s). The priority projects are marked with an "☑." Tasks that can help in the completion of these projects are marked with an "□" so they can be checked off when they are completed. Remember that these tasks are only recommendations, and the actual completion of the priority projects may vary. Also, potential players who would be well suited to assist in the completion of these projects are listed in parentheses after each priority project.

### Phasing Criteria

Realization of the plan is, of course, an ongoing process. Because of limited financial and human resources, priorities must be established. A list of criteria follows that should be used in determining priorities for implementation. Priority should be given to those projects that meet a significant number of these criteria.

1. **The project can be implemented for minimal cost, may be coordinated with other projects to share costs, and/or costs can be shared from other public or private sources.**

For example, if the City hires a professional consultant to develop an economic feasibility study and rehabilitation cost estimates for the Christian Science Church, this may be the appropriate time for the County to share these services for similar activities for affordable housing concepts.

2. **The project will accommodate a mix of user groups and/or will benefit the most people.**

Education programs that do market to certain organizations or interest groups, but are for the general public, would meet this criterion.

3. **The project will help to complete a project that is already well-established and/or it may be easily completed.**

Projects in the "showcase block," that already have the exposure, are an example.

4. **The project will provide an exceptional educational, aesthetic, and/or recreational experience.**

An opportunity to provide historical information at a street corner, for example, may have special merit and, therefore, be given priority.

5. **The project will prevent an imminent loss of downtown's character.**

Other projects in town, or lack of building maintenance, may eliminate an important cultural or historical feature of Victor, and emergency preservation projects would, therefore, have priority.

## Join the Certified Local Government Program

The *Certified Local Government (CLG) Program*, a cost-effective local, state, and Federal partnership, could serve as a major source of support and guidance. This national initiative provides valuable technical assistance and small grants to local governments seeking to preserve their communities. The program's primary goal is to integrate local government and historic preservation. Funds are appropriated annually by the U.S. Congress and distributed from the Historic Preservation Fund, which is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) in each state.

### Requirements for CLG status:

In order to participate in the program, a government must be "certified" as meeting certain standards of operation. While the National Historic Preservation Act establishes a framework of minimum Federal requirements for participation in the CLG program, National Park Service regulations encourage each SHPO to shape the program to the particular needs of its state.

#### CLG Requirements:

- ☛ Enforce appropriate legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties. (City)
- ☛ Adopt an adequate historic preservation ordinance that provides the basis for preservation activities in the city. (City)
- ☛ Establish and maintain a qualified historic preservation commission. (City)
- ☛ Maintain a system of identifying historic properties. (City)
- ☛ Provide for public participation in the local historic preservation program. (City)
- ☛ Perform other agreed-upon functions delegated to it by the SHPO. (City)

### Benefits of CLG status:

A local government receives many benefits from becoming certified in addition to eligibility to apply for CLG grants. The most significant benefit is the close working relationship that certification establishes between the local government and the SHPO. CLGs get to know the SHPO staff and call upon them for assistance. Similarly, SHPO staff become familiar with the strengths and needs of a CLG's preservation program and can direct appropriate assistance to the local government.

SHPOs are required to provide orientation and training to the CLGs; this often takes the form of an annual statewide CLG conference that allows local commission members and staff representatives to communicate. In addition, CLGs often are called upon to offer their views on the SHPOs programs. They have a special responsibility to help the SHPO shape the statewide historic preservation plan, which the National Park Service requires of all SHPOs.

In addition to the strong ties that certification fosters between local governments and the SHPO, CLG status gives local governments additional authority and responsibility regarding nomination of local properties to the National Register of Historic Places, State Register, and Local Registers. CLGs review the nominations and give an official opinion on the property's eligibility for the Register listing. CLGs with qualified professional staff have received authority from the SHPO to act in its place in reviewing federally funded local projects that affect historic properties.



Beyond this, joining the CLG program enables a local government and its historic preservation commission to become part of a statewide and national preservation network. CLGs receive statewide newsletters, National Park Service preservation conferences, workshops, and related event opportunities. Finally, in addition to these tangible benefits, many local governments view CLG status as an opportunity to enhance the image of their local preservation efforts. Certification by the SHPO with the concurrence of the National Park Service is seen by many, including state and Federal agencies, as recognition of a certain level of professionalism and expertise in the local preservation program.

To become certified under the program, Victor would apply to the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP). After certification, the city would be eligible to receive grants and technical assistance.

The OAHP is required to reserve at least ten percent of its Federal allocation solely for distribution to CLGs. While many CLG grants are small, they often have been used as seed money to attract additional funds.

## Expand Markers, Plaques, and Educational Programs

Victor citizens strongly encourage the development of walking tour brochures, guided walking tours, and plaques related to historic buildings and sites. Collaborative events, such as a one-day workshop on building restoration techniques, and video interviews of old time residents, also rated high on the priority list.

### Priority Projects:

- ☛ Develop a downtown walking tour brochure. (HPC, Chamber, PRC)
  - ☐ Identify buildings to be included in the walking tour.
  - ☐ Develop format for the walking tour brochure.
  - ☐ Seek funding for printing.
  - ☐ Print new walking tour brochure.
- ☛ Install plaques on the historical buildings featured in walking tour brochure. (HPC, City, PRC)
  - ☐ Seek funding for plaque program.
  - ☐ Develop design and acquire appropriate plaques.
  - ☐ Install plaques on buildings.
- ☛ Expand special preservation events during National Historic Preservation Week. (HPC, Chamber, PRC)
  - ☐ Identify events that could foster preservation awareness in Victor. Note what other communities do.
  - ☐ Identify who will be responsible for the varying events. Coordinating efforts between organizations should prove very successful.
  - ☐ Initiate events.
- ☛ Conduct a workshop about historical research. (HPC, PRC)
  - ☐ Identify a resource team (of professionals) who can conduct the workshop(s).
  - ☐ Publicize the event.
  - ☐ Conduct the workshop(s).

## Establish a Rehabilitation Assistance Program

Citizens agree that a program that advances the rehabilitation of historic buildings, including commercial and residential facades, is critical to Victor's revitalization. A "regranting" program (also discussed in *Phasing Plan Implementation section of this chapter*) combined with technical assistance could help with preservation and maintenance studies of historic buildings. The project could provide a thorough assessment of the current conditions and possible uses/needs of the community's most important structures and facilitate their rehabilitation. Combined with a preservation plan for systematic capital investment and maintenance, the project could establish a good blueprint for long-term conservation of properties. A highly visible project should be considered as an initial project.

With the understanding that the buildings themselves do, in some cases, need emergency stabilization, recent efforts to receive funding for such projects have failed. This is due in part to the lack of planning for the target properties. Funding agencies typically do not give money for bricks and mortar projects if no long-term user is identified to continue the upkeep of the structure—no matter what their condition is. Therefore, the priority for starting this rehabilitation assistance program lies in identifying the economic feasibility for building use(s). There exists a potential for many of these structures to serve the growing local community base. Victor is well positioned to serve as a "bedroom community" for Cripple Creek and its gaming related industry, by providing affordable housing, day care, health care, or social services.

### Priority Project:

- ☛ Economic feasibility study of historic resources (HPC, City, County, Chamber)
  - ☐ Retain professional assistance to develop feasibility study for the reuse and/or adaptive use of target properties (Church of Christ Scientist, Gold Coin Club, the Lowell Thomas Museum).
  - ☐ Identify uses and potential funding sources for building stabilization.
  - ☐ Proceed with stabilization/rehabilitation project(s).
- ☛ Stabilization and/or rehabilitation of target properties. (City, County)
  - ☐ Retain professional assistance to develop plans and cost estimates for the facade improvements.
  - ☐ Seek funding for the improvements.
  - ☐ Initiate improvements.

## Design Guidelines and Standards

The development of design guidelines and standards for Victor has been identified as the community's number one priority. Upon the document's completion, the Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission can use the guidelines and standards to review proposed character and architectural changes to the city. The guidelines and standards should address the conservation of the city's architectural heritage as well as the economic concerns of property owners. More information on what guidelines and standards can do for the historic city area can be found in the section on policies and regulations.

### Priority Project:

- Develop and implement design guidelines and standards for Victor. (HPC, City)
  - Conduct workshops to educate the community and gain consensus.
  - Develop draft(s) of guidelines for city staff and community review.
  - Adopt guidelines by City Council.
  - Conduct ongoing training for city staff and administrative review body.

## Phasing Plan Implementation

The actions proposed in this plan cannot be implemented in one phase. The funding sources available to the community will limit the scope of each phase. Therefore, priority is placed on developing a working set of design guidelines and standards and an interpretive marker program. All projects that are related to these efforts should also be given high priority. For example, the development of a walking tour brochure is needed before the historic buildings included in the tour can be marked with plaques.

The first phase of implementation focuses on organization, detailed design guidelines and standards, and an interpretive marker program. It also identifies the need for fund-raising for the bulk of the programs. The specific Phase One actions are:

### 1-1. Adopt the preservation plan as an official document to guide citywide policies and improvements.

The City Council should adopt the plan as the official guide for the preservation of Victor. It should be noted that adopting the plan does *not* commit the City to spending the funds required to implement the plan. Official adoption of the plan, however, signals to the community that the ideas presented in the plan are, in principal, goals to accomplish. Even small-scale, interim actions that occur by individual organizations and governmental agencies in the downtown can comply with the plan, even in advance of large-scale funding commitments to implement the more significant elements.

**1-2. Develop and adopt detailed design guidelines and standards that will guide the quality of development.**

The city should provide potential new development as well as rehabilitation projects with a set of design guidelines and standards that can clearly convey what the desired character is for Victor. Addressing issues such as building setback, mass and scale, solid-to-void ratio, and materials, as well as how the guidelines are administered should be developed in response to local development concerns. This is best accomplished with educational workshops where the public at large specifically defines these issues and goals for the city.

**1-3. Develop an interpretive marker program for the historic downtown.**

All of the local “preservation players” (the Heritage Preservation Commission, City of Victor, Chamber of Commerce, and the Preservation Resource Center) should cooperate in the development and implementation of an interpretive marker program. Such a program will need buildings identified, markers developed and installed, and funding. It is best if one organization plays the lead role and seeks assistance (staff time, funding, etc.) from the other players.

**1-4. Develop a downtown improvement regranting program.**

The City of Victor, in conjunction with the Heritage Preservation Commission and Teller County, should identify funding sources for many of the preservation efforts identified in this plan. Some of these sources might be granting agencies that could provide money for specific activities or for the development of a regranting program. In a regranting program, a local agency applies for monies to fund a preservation program, which then distributes the money for local preservation projects that have applied for special funding. Such projects could include the rehabilitation of a residence or storefront, a feasibility study for downtown buildings, or any of the projects identified in this plan.

After the successful completion of Phase One, the community should naturally move in to some Phase Two projects—usually as a continuation of Phase One projects. However, the specific identification of some quantifiable Phase Two projects is needed. Some of these projects could include:

**2-1. Provide a demonstration project which highlights easy, cost effective, and proper techniques when undergoing a preservation project.**

Several properties located in and around downtown Victor currently exist which could easily serve as a demonstration project. Such a project would involve the acquisition of a property in need of maintenance or rehabilitation (the city might already own several properties), the development of a rehabilitation program, and several weekend events in which participants work along side trade professionals. Some properties which might serve this purpose well are the Church of Christ Scientist, the Gold Coin Club, or the Lowell Thomas Museum.

These weekend workshops can also be continued beyond the completion of the subject property to include ongoing education of renovation procedures. These may include lectures and video presentations of projects elsewhere.

**2-2. Provide educational and certification programs to contractors, developers and Realtors.**

The City, County and Chamber of Commerce should seek to provide potential developers and contractors with an opportunity to learn more about construction activity within a historic town. These programs can include many of the training aspects discussed above, but focus on how the participants can successfully apply it to their work. Although cities cannot legally give preference to one firm over another, the certification the participants receive can be used as part of their own marketing strategy. Owners of historic properties will usually prefer that a knowledgeable contractor be responsible for their work. A certification program can provide this reassurance.

## Funding Preservation Programs

Funding can and should be sought from a number of sources. These include:

### State and local grants

State and local grants, such as the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District grants, the Colorado Historical Society/State Historical Fund grants, and other grants designated for community and preservation efforts. Potential uses for these grants include:

- An historical building survey
- A “regranting” program for the rehabilitation of historical facades
- An economic feasibility study
- A technical preservation assistance program for owners of historical buildings

### Private and matching grants

State and government grants often require matching resources from private sources to both finance a project and prove commitment on the community’s part, as well as completing a project. These sources are often private foundations and corporations, which in turn have a designated program area for community work. These sources should be researched and cultivated on an ongoing basis by the key players identified earlier in this document. The City of Victor could provide preservation assistance by investing in the rehabilitation of their own properties.

### Other sources of funds

Preservation organizations frequently combine a variety of projects to earn income. These include special events, product sales, auctions, tours, and publication sales that reflect the nature of the community. Such efforts require creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, and planning to succeed and are the backbone of any successful community preservation effort. These revenues typically apply to program operations but may supplement special project budgets as well.

## Responsibility for Implementation

Guiding a preservation plan to fruition takes time, money and hard work, but the benefits can be remarkable when the community consolidates its resources and forges ahead to achieve the goals it has established. Victor has a very special opportunity, because it provides one of the best examples of what a Colorado mining town was like at the turn-of-the-century and has a core of concerned residents who seek to improve the livability of their community. What is important in implementing the plan is to acknowledge that everyone’s help is needed, and that many new ideas can still enrich the plan as it evolves through the implementation phases.

The proposals for implementation put forth here are intended to help organize the project into smaller, more easily understood components to facilitate action, but variations in the implementation strategies will develop over time. Throughout the evolution of the process, it is important that each individual and organization recognize that *everyone* is responsible for implementation. Although some key individuals and agencies may be identified to take the lead for portions of the plan, everyone should continue to lend support and advocate continuing progress throughout the course of the plan’s implementation.



## Implementation of the Plan

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## **Appendix A: Where to Go for Further Information**

### **General Information:**

**City of Victor**  
500 Victor Avenue  
Victor, CO 80860  
Telephone: (719) 689-2284

**Colorado Historical Society**  
1300 Broadway  
Denver, Colorado 80203  
Telephone: (303) 866-2136

**Colorado Preservation, Inc.**  
910 16th Street  
Denver, Colorado 80202  
Telephone: (303) 893-4260

**National Park Service**  
P.O. Box 252877  
Denver, Colorado 80225  
Telephone: (303) 969-2000

**National Trust for Historic Preservation**  
511 16th Street  
Denver, Colorado 80202  
Telephone: (303) 623-1504

### **Research:**

**Colorado Historical Society**  
Stephen H. Hart Library  
1300 Broadway  
Denver, Colorado 80203  
Telephone: (303) 866-2305  
Non-circulating research library on Colorado

**Lowell Thomas Museum**  
302 South Third Street  
Victor, Colorado 80860

**University of Colorado at Boulder,  
Norlin Library**  
CU Campus  
Boulder, Colorado 80302  
Telephone: (303) 492-8705  
Non-circulating Western History Archives

## Appendices

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