



Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission

Draft Phase II: Themes Document for Cultural Landscapes Survey

“Our History, Our Future: An Updated Historic Context Report for the Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission (2020)”

Overview

The Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission (RCHPC) has engaged Vantage Point Historical Services, Inc. (VPHS) to assist with strategic planning and updating its Historic Context Report and Comprehensive Plan to inform the Commission’s work in the 2020s and beyond.

Phase I of this project produced a strategic planning retreat that created a revised mission document for the RCHPC, draft updates to the Historic Context Report and Comprehensive Plan, and community outreach sessions to engage and inform the community about this work and to solicit feedback from a diverse set of Rapid City’s residents. At the end of Phase I, the RCHPC approved VPHS to move forward with planning and executing a Cultural Landscapes Survey of Rapid City in conjunction with a cultural resource management specialist from Ethnoscience, Inc. Cultural Landscapes Surveys offer an innovative way to evaluate and understand the human, built, and natural elements that contribute to a community’s sense of place. With a Cultural Landscapes Survey in hand, the RCHPC will be well positioned to consider the diverse set of historic and cultural assets within Rapid City as it serves the community in coming years.

This document begins Phase II of the RCHPC’s updating project. It builds on the “Overview of Rapid City’s History” provided on pages 13–17 of the draft updated Historic Context Report dated June 15, 2019, which offered a brief, chronological overview of Rapid City’s development. This document explores the community’s history through five major themes. Together, these two pieces will enable VPHS and Ethnoscience to identify and survey historic and cultural resources that reflect major themes and transitions in Rapid City’s history.



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"The attempt to derive meaning from landscapes possesses overwhelming virtue. It keeps us constantly alert to the world around us, demanding that we pay attention not just to some of the things around us but to all of them—the whole visible world in all of its rich, glorious, messy, confusing, ugly, and beautiful complexity."

—**Peirce Fee Lewis, Geographer**



Themes

The themes below explore the history of Rapid City through a variety of lenses, all of which can help residents and visitors understand how and why the city has changed over time and how the past contributes to the city's current sense of place and identity. This document offers the broad foundation upon which the Cultural Landscapes Survey will be based.

Theme 1: Environment

Rapid City is located where the open prairie meets rocky hills and thick forests. Throughout its history, residents of Rapid City have shaped their lives in response to the opportunities and limitations presented by the surrounding environment. The creek and bluffs offered shelter to the area's first inhabitants. Wood, stone, and minerals long supported timber, mining, and quarry operations. The remoteness of Rapid City and the Black Hills from major American cities and global trading centers, as well as its centrality within a vast resource-rich and agricultural region shaped the city's economy and the social and cultural character of its residents. Other influences, including changes in technology, national politics and culture, and shifting social attitudes felt around the world have also played an enormous role in Rapid City's development. But the environment has always been important to the people who live, work and play in this community.

Landscape and the Built Environment

The intrinsic beauty of the Black Hills landscape, combined with the availability of resources in the region have attracted people for millennia. An island of forests, streams, and stone in a sea of open prairie, the unique rock formations and thick forests—along with their attachment to oral traditions and ceremonies—rendered the place sacred to Native Americans. Similarly, generations of immigrants and tourists have been attracted to the region by the power of the landscape.

In Rapid City, this appreciation for the landscape and its components is manifested in building styles and aesthetic preferences. Generations of locals have built their homes and gathering places from local materials and frequently emulated the designs they see in nature. Rough-cut sedimentary stones make up the foundations of many houses and retaining walls throughout the city. Granite rocks and thick logs give shape to park shelters and fireplaces and serve as accents on homes and buildings. Quartz, limestone, and slate pave floors, driveways, and walking paths. Tallgrass, sage, cedar, and juniper decorate buildings and yards across town. Many of the city's oldest buildings were built from locally quarried limestone blocks. These elements evoke a strong sense of history and connection to place that permeates Rapid City.

Residents of all backgrounds have good reason to value the landscape. For many Rapid Citians, spirituality, agricultural traditions, conservation ethics, and enjoyment of outdoor recreation are rooted in the mountain and prairie landscapes. Although the building styles through the community often reflect national or international design trends, many locals customize their homes by building or decorating with local materials and western motifs. Many midcentury homes, for



example, evidence the clean lines and color palettes of 1950s or 1960s architecture, but they are constructed of local limestone or adorned with rough-cut ranch fences. Restaurants, hotel lobbies, business conference rooms, and public art spaces contain photographs of bison, elk, pheasants, and other wildlife, as well as scenic landscapes from throughout the region. This gives them a distinctively local flavor emblematic of local pride in place.

Meanwhile, Rapid City's built environment includes a variety of structure types laid out and shaped by environmental factors. The topography of the Black Hills and challenging soil conditions informed the locations of subdivisions and increased building costs.¹ As the town grew, neighborhoods, schools, and businesses spread to both sides of the Gap. This development was imbued with social and cultural meaning. Developments established nearest to scenic forests and hillsides—whether along the base of Skyline Drive near West Boulevard or on the west side of the city—have tended to be more desirable and home to more affluent members of the community. Working and middle-class families, meanwhile, filled the more modest neighborhoods in the central, south, and northern parts of town closer to city's modest industrial centers and rail lines.

Building and development in and around Rapid City has exacted a toll on the regional environment. Silt and seepage from roads and residential developments, along with the leaching of mining chemicals and byproducts, have impacted the water quality, sometimes with effects on area wildlife, over the last 150 years. Meanwhile, historical photos and forest surveys demonstrate that, in their natural state, the Black Hills' forests were considerably less dense than they became in the 20th century, when overgrowth resulted from fire suppression techniques. Increased forest density has reduced groundwater flow and made the area susceptible to species like the mountain pine beetle, which has killed around 430,000 acres of trees since the mid-1990s.² Increasingly, the environment reflects human efforts to manage the landscape to improve water quality, prevent wildfires, and control wildlife and insect populations in ways that are conducive to human activities.

Climate and Weather

Rapid City has a relatively moderate and semiarid climate. Situated at an intermediate altitude and flanked by the central Black Hills, the city is more protected from the winds that blow off the northwestern prairies than towns in the Northern Hills. Rapid City experiences hot, dry summers interrupted by sudden, violent afternoon storms and winters that sway between deep cold and warm sunny days.

This unpredictability has brought several major weather events. A 1907 flood destroyed the first dam at Canyon Lake and slowed plans for residential developments along the creek. Rebuilt by the federal Works Progress Administration in the 1930s, the Canyon Lake Dam enabled the creation

¹ Jared McEntaffer, Callie Tysdal, and Rochelle Zens, "Rapid City Housing Affordability Study," Final Report Prepared for the John T. Vucurevich Foundation, June 26, 2018, 4.

² "Mountain Pine Beetle," Black Hills National Forest, USDA Forest Service, accessed January 21, 2020, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/blackhills/landmanagement/?cid=stelprdb5113978>; R. Keith Stewart and Carol A. Thilenius, "Black Hills Lakes and Streams: Stream and Lake Inventory and Classification in the Black Hills of South Dakota, 1964" Department of Game, Fish and Parks Lake and Stream Classification Report (1964), 50–52.



of a large recreation area and made the area a popular site for residences. Some four decades later, the devastating flood of 1972 broke the dam and killed 238 people. Water and debris ripped through the heart of the city, destroying many cars, homes, and businesses in its path. Between these floods, a historic blizzard left 14-foot drifts in downtown Rapid City in 1949. The snow buried automobiles and train cars, bringing local commerce to a halt for weeks. Officials blasted away the most stubborn drifts with dynamite.³ In 2013, Winter Storm Atlas left residents stuck indoors without power for hours or days, and the storm killed thousands of livestock.

These severe weather events have affected community dynamics for generations. Individuals, families, and social groups expect to be tested by the winters. Severe weather events inevitably lead to neighbors helping neighbors. News stories about heroic rescues and sacrifice during these crises reinforce values of altruism and persistence. Severe weather events like the 1972 flood led residents and city planners to reshape the pattern of development as the City rebuilt the Canyon Lake Dam for a third time, banned most construction in the flood plain, and preserved a wide swath of land as a greenway for recreation.

Water

Fed by runoff from winter snows, spring rains, and smaller tributaries like Castle Creek, Rapid Creek originates in limestone springs west of Rapid City. It flows east along a narrow bed that travels through the middle of town and connects to the Cheyenne River. Native peoples lived along its banks into the twentieth century, first in winter camps and later in informal communities. Settlers harnessed the water's industrial power, using it to mine for gold, create electricity, water livestock, and float logs to factories for processing.⁴ The state of South Dakota established the Cleghorn Springs fish hatchery in 1928, using it to grow and harvest fish that are released into lakes and streams throughout the Black Hills.⁵

Recognizing the beauty of creekside property, early developers planted towering poplar and cottonwood trees along its banks and established Canyon Lake in the 1890s, then Memorial Pond after the flood in the 1970s.⁶ The trees remained long after greenways and bike paths replaced neighborhoods and cabins.

Yet the waterway has also played a role in exposing some contradictions inherent to Rapid City's social and cultural environment. The banks of Rapid Creek have been home to both the most and least wealthy members of town. Before the 1972 flood, the picturesque area near Canyon Lake was a desirable location for residential homes and vacation cabins. A few miles downstream,

³ John Webb, *RB-36 Days at Rapid City, or Rapid City Freestyle: The People, the Airplanes, and the Times at Rapid City/Ellsworth Air Force Base, 1949 through 1957* (Rapid City, SD: Silver Wings Aviation, n.d.), 12.

⁴ See David F. Strain, *Black Hills Haycamp: Images and Perspectives of Early Rapid City* (Rapid City, SD: Fenske Printing, 1989); Eric John Abrahamson and Eric Steven Zimmer, *Expanding the Energy Horizon: A History of Black Hills Corporation Since 1883* (Rapid City, SD: Black Hills Corporation, 2018), 34–35; Martha Linde, *Sawmills of the Black Hills* (Rapid City, SD: Fenske Printing/Jessie Y. Sundstrom, 1984), 57–59.

⁵ "Cleghorn Springs State Fish Hatchery," South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks, accessed February 8, 2020, <https://gfp.sd.gov/cleghorn/>.

⁶ Strain, *Black Hills Haycamp*, 210–12.



however, communities of less affluent—and primarily, Native American or working-class non-Native—people lived in temporary homes along the creek between Sioux San and Founder’s Rock. After the flood, wealthier homes moved up onto ridges overlooking scenic vistas or set back into the forest. The creation of parks and greenways along the creek, however, displaced many of the less affluent families, relegating them to other parts of town that were, in some cases, far from basic services like water, sanitation, and electricity.

A Historic Passing Place

Transience has long been a part of Rapid City’s history. As they traveled through the Black Hills, untold generations of Indigenous peoples camped along the rocky bluffs in “the Gap,” where Rapid Creek passes through the Black Hills and meets the grasslands.⁷ The site offered protection from the elements and access to water. For the same reason, Rapid City’s first non-Native settlers chose that spot to set Hay Camp and plan what became downtown Rapid City.

Later, wagon trains, railroads, highways, and airports connected the Rapid City community to the outside world, and the community became known as the “Gate City” given its central location and its utility as an access point to the Black Hills. For generations, members of the military, students at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, the National Business College, and area vocational schools temporarily lived in Rapid City while they completed service assignments or earned an education. Dormitories, apartments, rentals, and truck stops have been part of the community’s architectural and lived history. Meanwhile, the community’s location on I-90, far from any other metropolitan area, has continued its function as a key place for exchanging goods, ideas, and culture.

As a geographically isolated crossroads with a strong tourism economy, Rapid City has long reflected a social combination of deeply rooted families and communities living alongside sojourners here for seasonal employment, military service at the base, or the pursuit of a college degree. At times, multi-generational residents and sojourners have moved in very different social environments.

Viewsheds

The development of Rapid City outward from its downtown corridor, along with efforts to highlight the natural beauty that surrounds the city, has led to the creation and maintenance of several viewsheds recognizable to long-time residents and visitors alike. Each of them is notable for the scenic vantage point it provides as well as the meaning it communicates about Rapid City’s history and character.

From Dinosaur Hill, the pullouts along Skyline Drive, or across the Gap on M Hill or Cowboy Hill, one can look up at a dark, starry sky free from the intense light pollution of major cities. Looking down upon the city, one sees its central core and the urban sprawl that has continued North past the interstate, East to Ellsworth Air Force Base, South to the Monument Health building

⁷ Linea Sundstrom & Wini Michael, “Archaeological Investigations in the Gap at Founders Park, Rapid City, South Dakota: A Report Prepared for the City of Rapid City, South Dakota, March 2009, 2, 7.



complex, or West towards the American Legion baseball fields and up the roads that have snaked their way towards Sheridan Lake and Pactola Reservoir over the course of 150 years. Similarly, the views up and down Mount Rushmore Road from atop Highway 16 or the Omaha Street I-90 exit reveal the many businesses along the central corridor into the heart of the city.

Looking upon Dinosaur Hill from any direction reminds many locals of family play days, school field trips to the learn about geology and paleontology, or countless visits to the dinosaur statues to show off one of Rapid City's most iconic parks and give out-of-town guests a sense for the city's layout. Views from the hogback ridges and of the radio towers above Rapid City might evoke a sense of relief, since the sight of the Black Hills horizon and the red, blinking towers mean the long drive from Denver, Gillette, Pierre, or Sioux Falls is almost over. Finally, the panoramic views of the city, the Black Hills, the Badlands, and the eastern prairies from Skyline Drive, Dinosaur Hill, or atop Highway 16, for example, emphasize the vast openness of the West River landscape. They remind Rapid Citians of the great distance between their community and the next major urban center, a fact that reminds them of the generations of people who worked and struggled to build the community they call home.



Theme 2: Government

The earliest inhabitants of what is now Rapid City organized themselves within complex networks shaped by bonds of kinship and tribal affiliation. When the first Euro-American settlers established Hay Camp in 1876, what became Rapid City was within tribal treaty land. They quickly imposed a legal framework and system of government that relied on notions of citizenship, private property, and administration that were starkly different from the systems of tribal governance they replaced. Within a year, Rapid City became a part of Pennington County in Dakota Territory, which was divided into North Dakota and South Dakota in 1889. Under federal, territorial and then state laws, government's role in managing civil society and regulating commerce became an important factor in the day-to-day life of the community. But to build a town in such an isolated place required neighborliness, civic cooperation, democratic decision making, and a sense of shared responsibility as well as the formal rules of law.

Throughout Rapid City's history, residents have capitalized on state and federal funding to support agriculture, forestry, highways, military bases, public parks and memorials and balanced the economic benefits of government support with entrepreneurial instincts and a prominent vein of libertarian conservatism that permeates the local culture. The legacies of the community's political and governmental history are evident in Rapid City's built environment.

City, County, and School Board

Over the course of history, Rapid Citians have experimented with a series of governmental arrangements, transitioning from an aldermanic form of government, to an elected commissioner system, to a city manager system. Then, in 1957, the City returned to the aldermanic system and has continued to operate in this fashion for more than sixty years, although recent discussions about adopting "home rule" are underway.⁸

During its nearly 150-year history, the City of Rapid City has developed and managed a variety of public buildings to house important municipal functions ranging from transportation to sanitation to recreation. In 1903, the first City Hall, a small, utilitarian office, was completed in the heart of downtown.⁹ After Rapid City became the seat of Pennington County in 1878, the commissioners met in downtown office buildings. Fire later destroyed a series of early courthouses. Then in 1922, the Pennington County Courthouse became the permanent home of county government.

Early on, law enforcement became an important function of county government, and the sheriff administered the jail. During the city's frontier days, however, the rule of law was often contested. In 1877, for example, two men and a boy were arrested for stealing horses. Before they

⁸ "Types of City Governments and Home Rule (Rapid City)," Black Hills Knowledge Network, accessed February 7, 2020, <https://www.blackhillsknowledgenetwork.org/issue-hub/types-of-city-governments-and-home-rule.html#.XjycrmhKi70>.

⁹ Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission, "City Hall," Pictures Rapid City's Past, accessed February 8, 2020, <https://www.picturercpast.com/item/6-city-hall.html>.



could be tried, however, vigilantes broke into the jail and hanged the men and the boy from a prominent tree near “Hangman’s Rock” in what is today’s Dinosaur Park.¹⁰ Gradually, the threat of incarceration served as an important element for keeping the peace and protecting the local citizenry. It also continued a pattern of social control of Native Americans that began in the 19th century with conflicts between the U.S. Army and tribes and extended into the 20th with the reservation system, boarding schools, and law enforcement. With the backing of sheriff’s deputies, Native Americans were barred from various public establishments.¹¹

For Euro-Americans, the city’s governance structures and the growth and centralization of county offices demonstrated the Rapid City community’s enduring commitment to finding ways to manage local affairs and promote a high quality of life throughout the city and the region. A conservative tradition anchored in social and religious traditions of the majority population ensured, however, that investments in public infrastructure and the expansion of public services would often be contested, especially when citizens were asked to pay more in taxes to fund these initiatives. This economizing instinct has often been reflected in the character and scope of public buildings past and present including the Rapid City Municipal Auditorium, the Carnegie Library, the courthouse complex, the City School Administration Building (CSAC), the Rapid City Regional Airport, local fire stations, the wastewater treatment plant, and the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center. These facilities are joined by community institutions born of public/private partnerships like the Rapid City Public Library, the Dahl Fine Arts Center, and the Journey Museum & Learning Center.¹² Yet taken together, these structures represent the bedrock of local governance and symbolize long-held values of local control and citizen-led decision making and stewardship.

Immigrants from other parts of the United States as well as foreign born residents who came primarily from Northern European countries placed a high value on literacy and education. The first schoolhouse opened downtown in 1876, and the first public high school was built seven years later, but these buildings did not last.¹³ As late as 1915, most residents of Rapid City and Pennington County had only a common school education. Just over one in ten had completed high school. In the entire county only 158 people had a college degree.¹⁴ But as part of a nationwide movement to provide universal public education, the people of Rapid City erected more permanent and imposing

¹⁰ “Two Legal Hangings in 18 Years,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 19, 1894, 11.

¹¹ “Municipal Parks,” City of Rapid City, accessed February 8, 2020, <https://www.rcgov.org/departments/parks-recreation/parks-division/municipal-parks/municipal-parks-322.html>; “Jail History,” Pennington County, South Dakota, accessed February 8, 2020, https://www.pennco.org/index.asp?SEC=BB76F889-2C7A-4D0E-85C8-BD2639C13E60&Type=B_BASIC.

¹² Kayla Gahagan, “Crowded School District Administration Seeks an Exit from CSAC,” *Rapid City Journal*, May 5, 2009, accessed February 8, 2020, https://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/top-stories/crowded-school-district-administration-seeks-an-exit-from-csac/article_7e348570-940d-5fe3-9005-d49139b9d3ad.html.

¹³ “Timeline,” *Rapid City Journal*, July 4, 2020, accessed February 7, 2020, https://rapidcityjournal.com/timeline/article_19cd2236-87df-11df-95fe-001cc4c03286.html.

¹⁴ State of South Dakota, *Third Census* (1915), Table XIII “Showing Extent of Education, Eighteen Years and Over, By County, 1915,” 48-49.



schools including Rapid City High School (1923) and Wilson Elementary (1929).¹⁵ North, South, and West middle schools all opened prior to 1960, many elementary schools came to be during the housing boom of the 1950s and 1960s, and Stevens High School and Central High School were built in 1969 and 1977, respectively.¹⁶ From brick schoolhouse walls to the distinctive scent of cafeteria tile, these facilities stand as more than examples of building styles from bygone eras. They hearken back to formative moments in the lives of many area residents, bringing back adolescent excitement and anxiety, evoking the excitement of crosstown sports rivalries, and reminding proud grandparents of their grandchildren’s winter programs. They are anchors of community memory whose walls contain stories about the formative years and family and social histories of many Rapid Citians.

State and Federal Government

As the largest West River community, Rapid City has long served as a central hub for state and federal government offices and resources, and government dollars flowing into the community have been important to the economy, especially after the construction of the Rapid City Air Base during World War II. In Rapid City and the Black Hills region, government’s role as a significant landowner has also affected the ways in which people think about the landscape and the concept of public resources. Buildings, including various Forest Service and USDA offices, as well as field offices for the state’s Congressional delegation, provide a physical connection to state and federal government.

Government-sponsored conservation management and outdoor recreation facilities are a central element in Rapid City’s story. Several US Forest Service offices in Rapid City have been the administrative home of conservation management, wildfire prevention, and timber and water management work related to the vast Black Hills National Forest, most recently the new Mystic Ranger District office opened atop Highway 16 in 2006. The South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Department also has offices in Rapid City, and in 2008, acquired more than 30 acres on the west side, which it uses as an educational outdoor recreation campus. For many residents, jobs and resources provided by these offices have helped define the local outdoor culture and shape environmental ethics.

Likewise, the presence of a federal courthouse in Rapid City evidences the city’s role in the complex legal relationship between Native people and tribes and the federal government. Issues related to treaty rights and sovereignty have been debated and adjudicated in the city. Within the walls of the courthouse, the lives of many Native people have been affected by changing interpretations of their individual rights and responsibilities under the law. The Andrew W. Bogue

¹⁵ “Wilson Elementary,” Rapid City Area Schools, accessed February 7, 2020, <https://public.rcas.org/el/wilson/Pages/Default.aspx>.

¹⁶ “Rapid City Area Schools Embarks on Ambitious Plan to Modernize Facilities,” KOTA News, April 4, 2019, accessed February 8, 2020, <https://www.kotatv.com/content/news/Rapid-City-Area-Schools-embarks-on-ambitious-plan-to-modernize-facilities-508272781.html>; “Old Rapid City High School Named to National Register of Historic Places,” *Rapid City Journal*, August 27, 2010, accessed February 8, 2020, https://rapidcityjournal.com/news/old-rapid-city-high-school-named-to-national-register-of/article_312ff222-b21f-11df-a126-001cc4c03286.html; “Timeline.”



Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse, which opened on ninth street in Rapid City in 1973, serves as an important reminder of these relationships.

Rapid City's relative geographic isolation, far from the more populous eastern side of the state and the urban centers of the nation has also affected the city's perspective on state and federal government and politics. The City has welcomed the visits of a number of US presidents over the years and the summer stay of President Calvin Coolidge. Presidential candidates have also traveled to the Black Hills as part of their national campaigns. But at other times, the city's citizens have been frustrated by their lack of ability to shape state and federal policies in line with the community's interests.

State and federal investments in higher education have played an important role in the city. The South Dakota School of Mines & Technology has been an anchor institution for more than a century. More recently, extension campuses for medical programs at South Dakota State University and the University of South Dakota continue the long legacy of nursing education that traces back to St. John's McNamara Hospital buildings on 11th Street, which opened in 1928.¹⁷ For generations of young people—and for decades, primarily women—these places represented critical moments in their personal and professional development. The training and values imbued there have resonated throughout the local and regional healthcare systems.

Other resources represent changing attitudes toward the role of government in the economy. In the 1920s, the state of South Dakota constructed and operated its own cement plant, which played an important role in the region's economic development. Municipal, state, and federal programs and regulation shaped the creation of various electric, gas, and telephone utilities.

Military service has defined the lives and careers of many area residents. Perhaps the largest federal investment in the Rapid City area, Ellsworth Air Force Base, lies outside city limits, but its creation led to the development of military housing developments as well as military-related social and service organizations like the VFW and TREA halls to the community. These relationships also reflected the historically important relationship between the Black Hills and the Veterans Administration. Ellsworth also opened a new dimension for racial tensions in the 1950s and 1960s when a wave of African American servicemen and their families came to Rapid City. Many of these families experienced discrimination in housing and at local hotels and restaurants, prompting attention from the national media and the state civil rights commission and forcing the community to confront issues of social inclusion and exclusion.¹⁸

Meanwhile, the South Dakota National Guard occupies two large acreages in western Rapid City, both of which date back to the reapportionment of Rapid City Indian School property in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and a helicopter hanger adjacent to the Rapid City Regional Airport.

Given the nation-to-nation relationship between tribes and the federal government, Rapid City has become an administrative home to several federal offices that serve Native American

¹⁷ Eric Steven Zimmer, *The Question Is "Why?": Stanford M. Adelstein, A Jewish Life in South Dakota* (Rapid City, SD: Vantage Point Press, 2019), 139.

¹⁸ South Dakota Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights "Report on Rapid City" (March 1963): 45–47.



residents of Rapid City, surrounding communities, and area reservations. Many Native Americans, for example, travel to Rapid City for care at the Sioux San IHS Hospital facilities, which were originally created by the Department of the Interior to house the Rapid City Indian School in 1898. Others come to Rapid City to study in state colleges and technical schools, or at the extension campus of Oglala Lakota College, a tribal college that is funded in part by federal support. Meanwhile, the primarily Native neighborhood called “Lakota Homes” was created with the support of a federal housing program in the 1960s. The Native community has developed important resources near these places, like the *Inipi* ceremony (sweats) lodges near Sioux San or the Mother Butler Center off I-90, which has been a popular meeting place for Native families and community groups for decades.

As the citizens of Rapid City have debated and forged agreements over how to govern themselves for nearly 150 years, the landscape and built environment of the community reflects many of the unresolved tensions in the community’s perspective on the role of government, but general patterns emerge. Some structures, particularly county buildings, have appropriated elements of classicism that provide subtle references to the republican ideals of ancient Greece and Rome. A few, like the campus of the Journey Museum & Learning Center or the Mother Butler Center, reference the Native history of the region. But more often, government buildings—from the City and School Administrative Center (CSAC) to the Civic Center—are generally utilitarian in design and function, reflecting the community’s recognition of the need for public services, but its financially conservative desire to restrain both budgets and any ostentatious celebration of the power of public agencies.