

Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission

Preservation Plan Update: Phase II Progress Report

Mission and Role

The Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission enhances quality of life in Rapid City by engaging in activities that protect historic structures and sites. It works to cultivate a shared understanding of history and culture through ongoing dialogue that strengthens social bonds, shapes community identity, and helps to bridge the city's past to its future. As a part of city government, the Commission supports the goals and values articulated in the city's Comprehensive Plan and seeks to identify ways to implement elements of the plan that relate to the city's rich history and the character of its neighborhoods, parks, and city center.

Project Overview

In 2019, the Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission (RCHPC) engaged Vantage Point Historical Services, Inc. (VPHS) to update its Comprehensive Plan and Historic Context Document. Across the country, historic preservation commissions use these documents to organize information about historical and cultural resources into a narrative that identifies themes and property types to help communities make decisions about how to use, learn from, and preserve local history.

Phase I of this project included a planning retreat that resulted in draft updates to the RCHPC's mission statement and strategic plan, its Comprehensive Plan and Historic Context Document, including a chronological "Overview of Rapid City's History" that identified important eras in the city's past. The Commission also held two community outreach sessions to engage a diverse set of Rapid City's residents and solicit their feedback.

Phase II includes the development of this thematic framework, which builds on the chronological narrative in the Historic Context Document. The framework describes Rapid City's environmental setting and illuminates three major themes and various subthemes that give meaning and structure to

the history of the community. Public feedback on these themes was provided in a workshop in June, 2020. In this phase, the project team also identified representative property types (sites and structures) closely associated with the themes and subthemes in the framework and created various maps associated with the themes and the representative property types.

Phase III, to be completed this fall and in the spring of 2021, will include a Cultural Resource Inventory of Rapid City based on the documentation developed in Phase I and Phase II. The Cultural Resource Inventory will build on existing planning documents created for the RCHPC, the SD State Historic Preservation Office, and the SD Archaeological Research Center by offering a holistic approach to understanding historic and cultural assets across Rapid City. By noting significant viewsheds, landscape elements, archaeological sites, geologic formations, and other natural resources, as well as elements of the built environment, the Cultural Resource Inventory will help tell a more complete story about Rapid City's history. It will acknowledge defining features that may or may not be eligible for formal preservation but nonetheless contribute to Rapid City's sense of place—and ultimately, to the process of making and remaking the community's identity. In this phase, the project team will also conduct public workshops to engage residents in a conversation related to sites and structures that have significant meaning to the community. At the end of Phase III, the Comprehensive Plan, Historic Context Report, and Cultural Resource Inventory will be finalized for use by the RCHPC as it serves the community in coming years.

Grant Funding

The Commission's efforts to update the Comprehensive Plan and Historic Context Report and prepare a Cultural Resource Inventory have relied on substantial Federal Financial assistance from the National Park Service. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the American With Disabilities Act of 1990, and South Dakota law SDCL 20-13, the State of South Dakota and U. S. Department of the Interior prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, disability, ancestry or national origin. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: South Dakota Division of Human Rights, State Capital, Pierre, SD 57501, or the Office of Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 201 I Street NW, Washington, D. C. 20240.