

What Have We Learned? (Public Meeting #3)

Project Title: Historic Downtown Pueblo Intensive Survey, Context, and Outreach, Part 2

Work Session: June 25, 2020, 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting Location: City Planning & Community Development Department, 211 East D Street, Pueblo CO 81003

What Have We Learned? (1½ hour video of virtual meeting)

<https://youtu.be/adKOeU7x3Ek>

Presenters

Alan Lamberg, grant recipient contact, Senior Planner for City Planning & Community Development Department, and Staff liaison to Historic Preservation Commission.

Alan introduced the program, welcomed all present by name and the organization they represent, and thanked everyone involved in the project, including volunteers.

Logan Simpson Design, Inc. Historic Preservation Specialists Jennifer Levstik (project manager) and Langston Guettinger (architectural historian).

Jen encouraged citizens of Pueblo to learn about the history of this community by reading the new historical context report and surveys. She then described her team's field methods, the surveyed area, and the findings of the study. There is substantial history in Pueblo, and the architectural history revealed a variety of styles extant from 1890 to 1966.

Langston, even though he has not yet been to Pueblo, he enjoyed learning about this community while he conducted the archival research. He described the architecture and history of the 15 intensively surveyed buildings. For instance, for 620-624 North Main Street he highlighted the 1922 remodel that unified the facade with the adjacent building, which was the original town city hall and fire station.

Jen stated an official recommendation. Based on the findings of part 1 and 2 projects, the consultants identified a core area of downtown that could be designated a historic district. They recommended that such a nomination apply to National Parks Service "Criteria A" for historical events, specifically the development of the commercial business district. Furthermore, there are very good representatives of "Criteria B" for architecture that are intact today. In the core area most buildings have historic features. Even if some are vacant, we should understand that alterations were necessary changes to attract business during the later historic periods. A nomination, with support of property owners, would be a project with additional research as necessary.

Call to Action: Share what you learned from the *Historic Downtown Pueblo Project*.

<https://Surveymonkey.com/r/PuebloDTProject>

Audience

Twelve (12) audience members, including ten (10) representatives from supporting partner organizations, one (1) affected property owner, and one (1) historian.

Public Meeting and Discussion

Strengths and Opportunities

Redevelopment

This project's knowledge will support our community's efforts to be reborn [Jason F]. Good work that will support the future of 300 North Main Street [Ashleigh W], which should be applauded for their effort to qualify for historic grants and tax credits [Alan L].¹

This knowledge can support beautifying downtown and its businesses; a fact sheet to property owners should be developed by the Historic Preservation Education Committee [Steven T]. Feel free to copy information from the survey forms and free-use photos [Jen L]. Encourage private-public partnerships and focus on residential occupancy on upper floors of buildings [Margaret W-M]. As a property owner remodeling a building for mixed uses, this project will support such efforts [Debbie L]. And a main focus for downtown should be residential conversions [Todd P, 7/1].

Tourism

This project supports increased program capacity, such as walking tours. Such programs have helped Central Plaza [Gregory H].

Preservation and educational programs

Looking forward to the Historic Preservation Education Committee getting started. We should learn from other communities' committees, too. [Carla H.] This project was a great collaboration for research [Aaron R]. As new director of El Pueblo History Museum, this project will be a great resource [Alyssum S]. Focus on youth involvement (people under 40, and children under 18), programs available from National Trust for Historic Preservation, Watertower Place [Gregory H].

Weaknesses and Challenges

Research of earlier historic period

The project is missing knowledge of 1860s-1870s Pueblo, specifically of buildings that are no longer extant, and there is more to learn of early pioneers, officials, and entrepreneurs [Heather N]. Staff will follow up directly. Volunteers welcome to identify missing or incorrect facts involving specific places in the historic core area, the names of buildings and persons, and citations of sources. Staff will facilitate an additional page on the project Internet portal [Alan L].

Rehabilitation and/or restoration

Cautioned that removing stucco requires careful treatment [Jen L].

¹ Redevelopment case study for 300 N Main St is Historic Preservation Commission case# HPC-18-13, see <https://Pueblo.us/2614>

Preservation and educational programs

We've yet to fully engage property owners, realtors, and PEDCo; education outreach should focus on them [Laurel C]. Fortunately, this is achievable, and there are zoning code text amendments that will help [Alan L].

Public improvements

Parking is still a challenge, but there are streets that could reduce a traffic lane and add angled parking. This is also pedestrian friendly. Another challenge is plant maintenance and trash pickup. This is a problem for some areas that abut private property but is worse at our three off ramps downtown from Interstate 25. [Todd P, 7/1]

Historic district nomination

Concern that past alterations, particularly stucco since the 1980s, will disqualify [Carla H]. Fortunately, stucco and alterations up until the 1960s can be considered positive historic context [Jen L].

Project Summary: In 2017, the City of Pueblo completed part 1, which documented 154 buildings on 149 sites. It resulted in 124 reconnaissance surveys and 25 intensive surveys. Also available is the 84-page historic narrative of Downtown Pueblo, which indicated a core historic area, but further research about the commercial development was necessary to complete the picture. The part 2 project occurred during 2019-2020, which included 15 more properties featured with an intensive level survey. An additional contextual report focused on the commercial development of downtown, with histories for influential persons, events, and changes to significant buildings. We cultivated an understanding of Historic Downtown Pueblo in ways important to property and business owners. We will continue to involve them by promoting ways historic preservation can be a tool for economic development.

This project paid for by a grant from the Colorado State Historical Fund, with support by the Pueblo City Council, Historic Pueblo, Inc., Pueblo Urban Renewal Authority, and the Pueblo Archeological & Historical Society.

Contact: Visit the project portal at <https://Pueblo.us/HistoricDowntown> or e-mail HPC@Pueblo.us or call 719-553-2259.