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## HPC-23-09

July 19, 2023

**To:** Historic Preservation Commission  
**From:** Wade Broadhead, Senior Planner  
**Through:** Scott Hobson, Acting Director of Planning and Community Development  
**Location:** 215 W 10<sup>th</sup> St  
**Applicant:** Weston Burrer  
**Owner:** Pueblo County  
**Year Built:** 1908  
**Legal:** All of Courthouse Square and adjacent portion of vacated 11<sup>th</sup> Street in County Addition  
**Zone District:** S-1, Governmental Zone District

### Synopsis

The Pueblo County Courthouse was erected in 1908, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975, and locally landmarked by Pueblo City Council in 2002. The County is proposing to construct a three run, 120 sq ft ADA ramp, to access the western side of the Pueblo County Courthouse adjacent to Court Street. While the ADA ramp is not part of the primary structure the proposed modifications do affect significant original historic material related to the setting of the landmark and the work requires a building permit because they are altering exterior stairs; therefore, a Certificate of Appropriateness is required (Standards of Appropriateness p. 7). At present there is only one ADA access for the courthouse on the eastern side of the building at grade. To further accessibility and provide additional egress options in case of an emergency Pueblo County is adding an ADA ramp to the western side entryway to the building as well as a modification to the original stone stairs. The ramp is a three run 120 sq feet and will be located directly south of the existing stairs at the western entrance to the building. All original granite stair blocks will be removed but there will be no modifications to the courthouse building nor the granite wall the encloses the stairway area.

### Analysis

#### *Description of the request*

In 2020 there was a large water line break and significant settling around the area of the western entrance that damaged existing historic stonework. The County hired Wilson and Company to study the damage and monitor the settling. The most recent structural report shows the settling has stopped and the County now wishes to add an ADA accessible ramp to this façade for enhanced general access and emergency egress. The Courthouse is approximately 275' long so having only one ADA egress point is not a safe condition.

The western entryway to the courthouse enters via the sidewalk along Court Street and had one large set of stairs going down to the main building entrance. This stair access area measures 35 ft by about 40 ft. The ramp will occupy the southern section of this sunken access area and will be constructed from concrete with a metal railing. Due to the water leak, the existing granite stairs are damaged and the risers and tread do not meet building code so they will be removed. The stairs will be replaced with code

compliant concrete stairs. Staff recommends keeping the natural gray color of the concrete to ‘read’ and signify that these new stairs are a later addition and not tint them red. The ramp ends at the landing to the doors and no portion of the existing building will be modified. The ramp will be divided from the non-accessible stairway by a series of three concrete planters. The planters will help negotiate and buffer the height difference between the ADA and non-ADA access ways coming from Court Street and add a new differentiated decorative element.

Applicable standards:

### **Standards of Appropriateness and Demolition Standards, 2005**

#### 3.1.11 Accessibility

The Standards of appropriateness make wide latitude for changes to allow for greater accessibility in both interior and exterior modifications that are respectful of the original historic material. Guideline 3.1.11(2) states “Installing ramps is often necessary. Ramps can be faced with a variety of materials, including wood, brick, and stone. Often the type of and quality of the materials determines how compatible a ramp design will be with the historic property, unpainted pressure treated wood should not be used to construct ramps because it appears temporary and is not a visually compatible with the most historic properties, ramps should also be located to minimize the loss of historic features at the connection point-porch railings, steps., and windows and should preserve the overall historic setting and character of the property.

3.1.11(12) A new addition may be necessary as an accessibility solution.

#### Findings

The proposed ADA ramp and stair replacement are permanent and use high quality materials such as metal and concrete, so they comply with the Standards of Appropriateness which steers away from pressure treated wood. The courthouse is a highly public and frequently utilized public building that requires multiple ADA accessible locations. The proposed modification is considered a new addition that respects the original design of the structure and is allowed by section 3.1.11(12) of the Standards of Appropriateness. The access is also being taken from a secondary façade of the building in a sunken setting so it is less visible from the public view. The applicant has minimized loss of features at the connection point although the loss of the granite slabs is unfortunate. While the slabs contribute to the historic landscape setting of the landmark, the removal will not negatively affect the integrity of the Courthouse. Similar granite slabs comprise the stairs leading to the primary Courthouse entrance.

### **Recommendations:**

Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. Leave concrete stair replacement and other concrete work original gray/white color, do not tint.
2. Provide elevations and drawings clarifying the removal of stone and material types before building permit is issued.

#### Exhibits

- A. Findings of Fact
- B. Exhibits
- C. Photographs
- D. Applications and attachments

## Exhibit A. Findings of Fact for a Certificate of Appropriateness

### **FINDINGS OF FACT FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS REQUIREMENTS SECTION 4-14-11(A):**

1. Conform to the intent and purpose of this code.

• **Comments:**

Affirmative finding: the proposed ramp and stair replacement using new high-quality materials is considered an addition, which is acceptable according to the Standards of Appropriateness.

2. Preserve the special character, interest, and value of the landmark or historic district and its environs.

• **Comments:**

Neutral finding, the removal of the stairs does damage historic material; however, the overall interest and value of the landmark building and its environs are not affected. The stones defining the general entryway area are being preserved and the entryway area has not been reduced, only modified to accommodate modern accessibility for a highly visited public building.

3. Not be an adverse impact on the exterior features of the landmark.

• **Comments:**

Affirmative finding, the design of the ramp and entryway area avoids a modification to the exterior features of the landmark. The setting will be slightly modified, and the ramp will be visible to the street, however it is necessary to meet accessibility and safety requirements. The sunken location, high quality design and material choices also mitigate the visual impact to the setting.

4. The extent to which proposed improvements would be harmonious with the character of a Historic District, and the relationship between the results of such work and the exterior features of other neighboring elements in such Historic District.

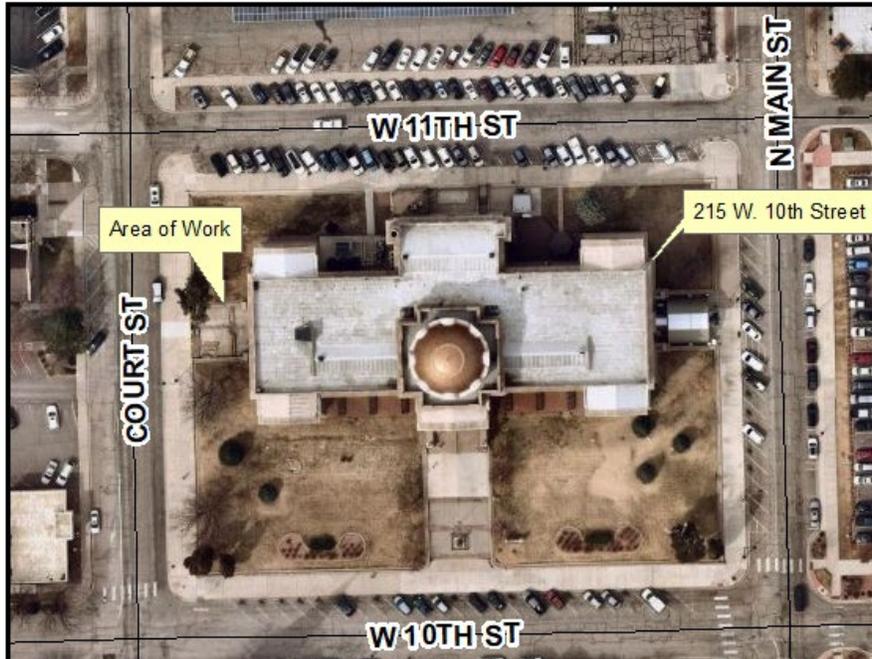
**Comments:**

Not Applicable: The Pueblo County Courthouse is not located in a Historic District.

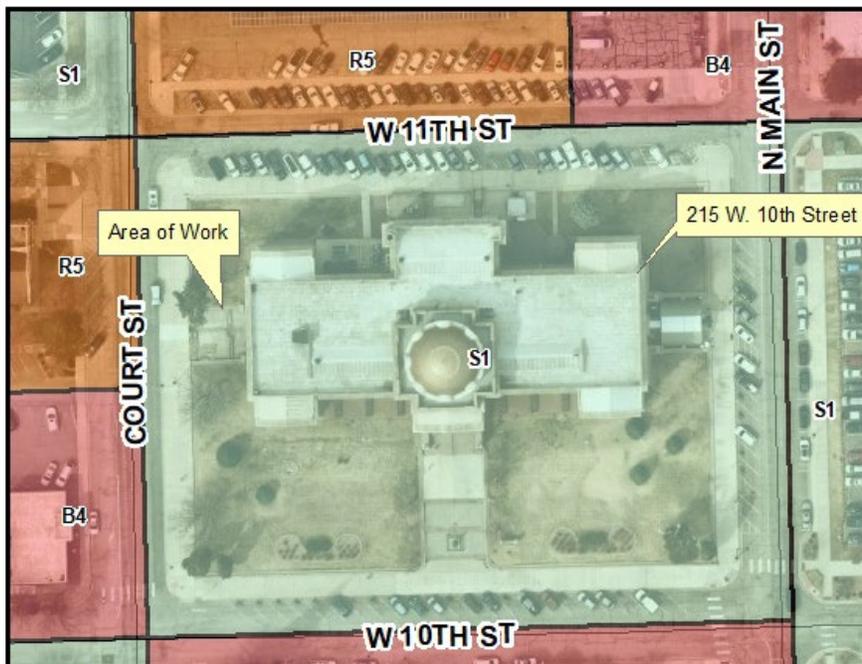
5. Scale, form, and composition of principal facades and relationship to the street.

**Comments:**

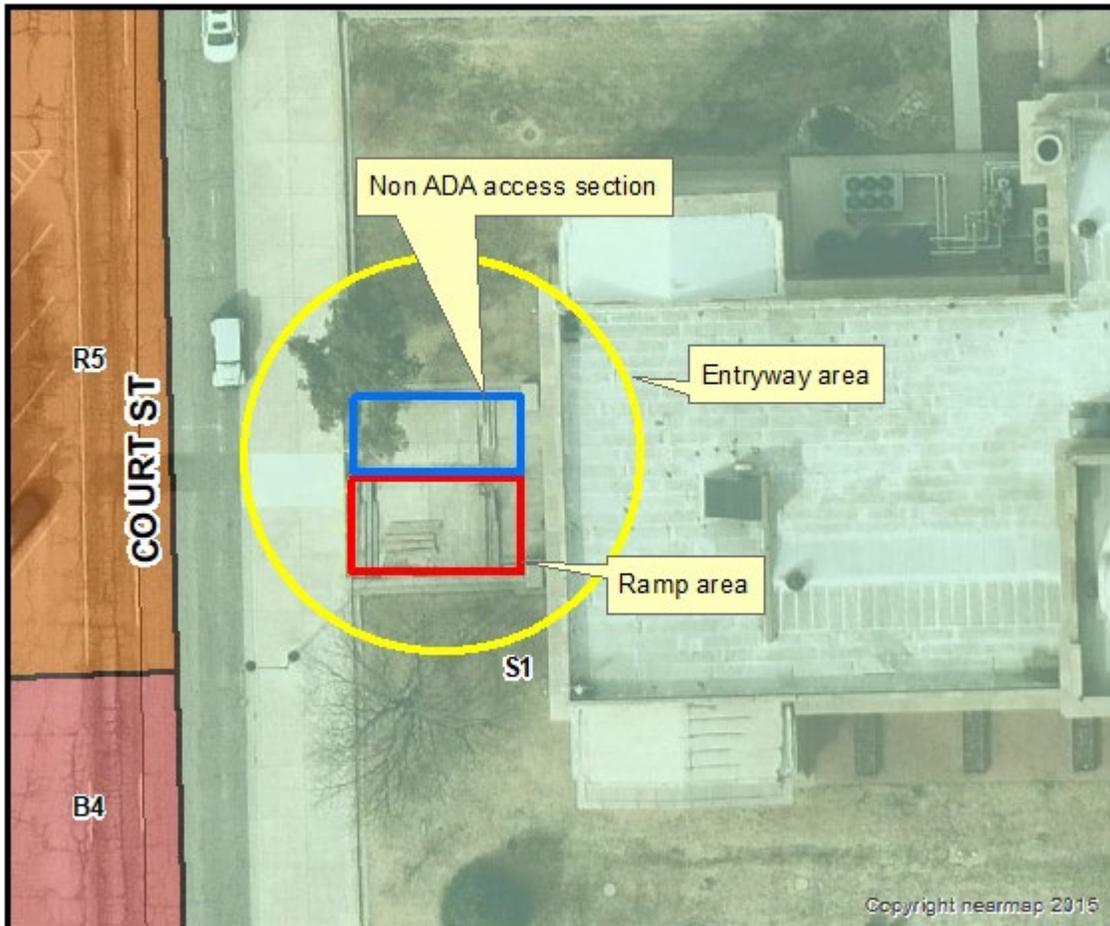
Affirmative finding: the proposed modifications are the minimum to provide fair and equitable access for all citizens at this access point. The size of the railing and stairs meet building code and do not overwhelm the current façade and keep the changes away from the primary façade.



( A ) LOCATION



( B ) ZONING



**B1. Staff site plan of proposed request**

**(C) SITE PHOTOGRAPHS**



View of the primary facade



View of southern section of stairs



View looking south



View of the top area of stairs where they meet Court Street



View looking northeast

6/9/23, 12:20 PM

23-107



City of Pueblo PLACE

6/9/2023

### 23-107

Historic Preservation  
Commission

Status: Active

Submitted On: 6/9/2023

#### Primary Location

215 W 10TH ST  
PUEBLO, CO 81003

#### Owner

PUEBLO COUNTY BUDGET  
OFFICE ,  
215 W 10TH ST STE 217  
PUEBLO , CO 81003-2945

#### Applicant

Weston Burrer  
 719-583-6006  
 burrerw@pueblocounty.us  
 215 W 10th Street  
Rm 5  
Pueblo, CO 81003

## Internal

#### Case Number

HPC-23-09

#### Planner Assigned

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#### Continuances

—

#### Newspaper Notice Cost

—

#### Public Notice Costs must be paid by:

—

#### Public Notice zoning poster must be displayed by:

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## HPC Hearing Information

#### HPC Hearing Date

07/19/2023

#### HPC Hearing Results

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#### Check box if hearing is a Special Requested Hearing

## Application Information

**Application Type\***

Certificate of Appropriateness

**Residential or Non-Residential?\***

Non-Residential

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## Certificate of Appropriateness

**Name of historic resource:\***

Pueblo County Courthouse

**Provide a short description of the proposed work\***

Install combined stair/ramp on west side of the Historic Courthouse to replace the existing stair and concrete that were damaged from a water line leak in 2020. The ramp would allow this entrance to be accessible ingress/egress.

**Type of Historic Registry\***

National

**Scope of work:**

(Mark all that apply)

**New construction**

**Addition**

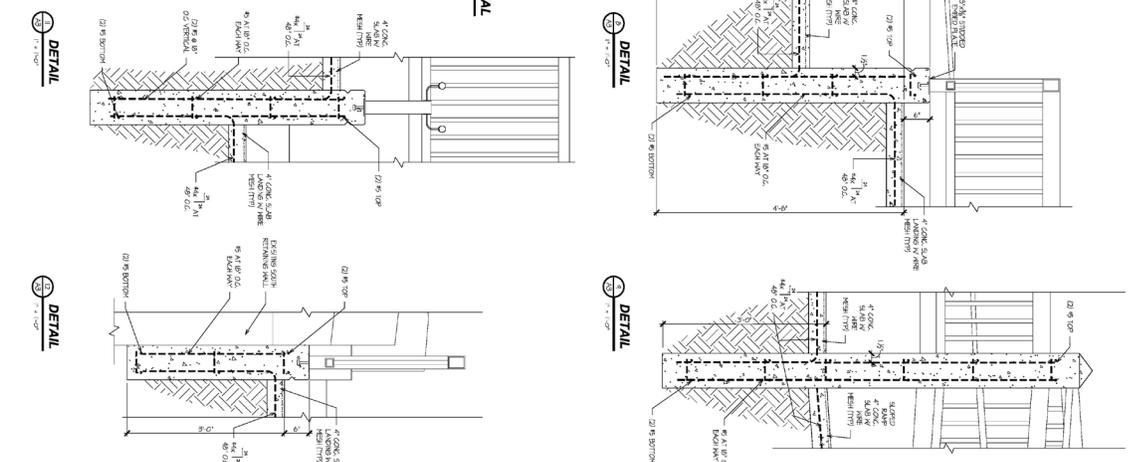
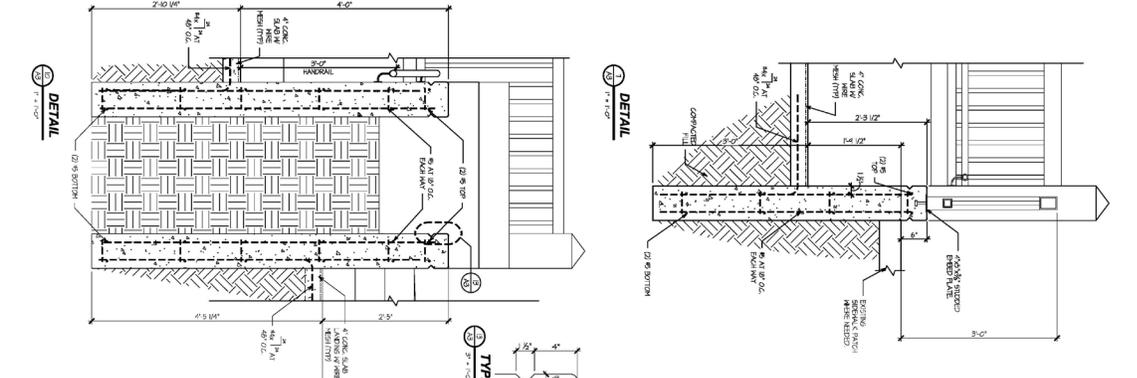
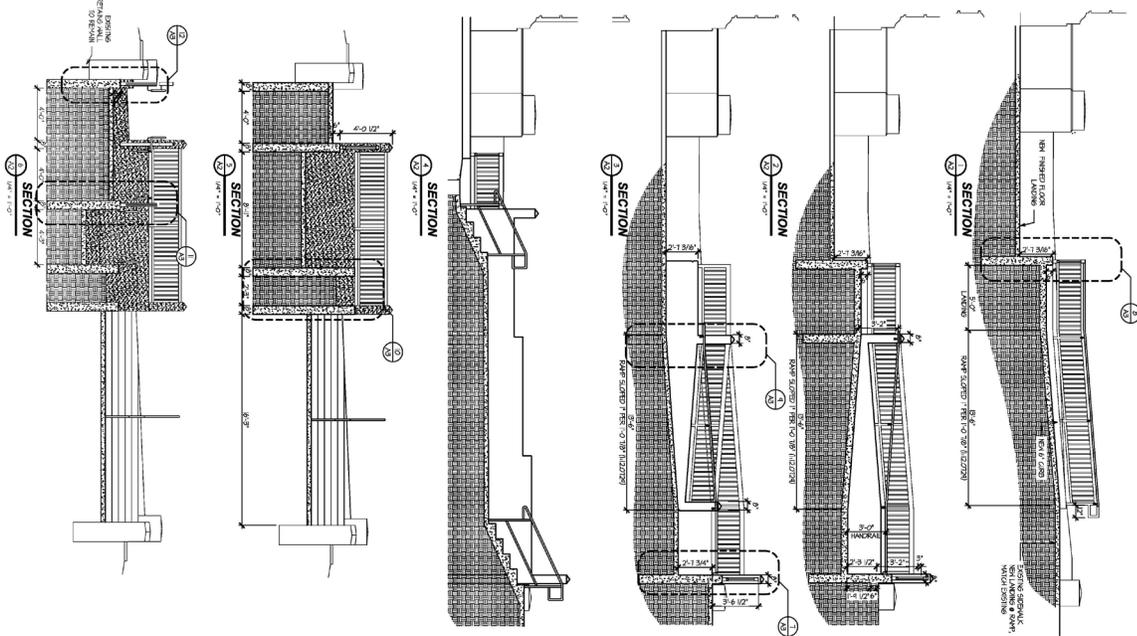
**Modification**

**Paint**

**Awning**

**Replace or add windows or doors**

In March of 2020, the main water line into the building had a leak underground that started to undermine the concrete slabs outside as well as the foundation of the west end of the Historic Courthouse. Once the repair was completed, we engaged Wilson and Co. to conduct a year-long analysis to determine how much the building had moved, and if the movement is continuing. Their final report came this spring. The building has finished moving so now we want to replace the concrete and steps from the perimeter sidewalk with a combined ramp and stair to make the building more accessible for ingress and also egress in the case of an emergency.



<p>SECTIONS AND DETAILS <b>A3</b></p>	<p>ISSUE RECORD:</p>	<p>STAMP:</p>	<p><b>COURTHOUSE H.C. RAMP</b></p> <p>Pueblo, CO.</p>
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