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## Historic Preservation Commission

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### HPC-24-07

August 21, 2024

**To:** Historic Preservation Commission  
**From:** Wade Broadhead, Senior Planner  
**Through:** Scott Hobson, Acting Director of Planning and Community Development  
**Location:** City Park Bath House, 330 S. City Park Avenue  
**Applicant:** George Koncilja  
**Owner:** City of Pueblo  
**Year Built:** 1938  
**Legal Description:** Located in City Park adjacent to the tennis courts due east of the Pueblo Zoo  
**Zone District:** S-1, Governmental Use Zone District

#### Synopsis

The applicant is requesting Local Landmark designation for the City Park Bath House located within City Park, 330 S. City Park Avenue. According to Section 4-14-8, of the Pueblo Municipal Code, a building object, monument, structure or site may individually be designated as a Landmark if it has distinctive character and meets the criteria listed in the code. PMC 4-14-8(b) "Designation of a landmark or historic district may be initiated by the application of Council, HPC or the owner..." At their July 17, 2024, meeting the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) voted 7-0 to submit landmark application for the Bath House. An application was submitted the following day July 18, 2024, without the consent of the owner, the City of Pueblo. Staff received an email August 13, 2024, from Parks & Recreation Director, Steven Meier, objecting to the designation and urging the commission to deny. Another letter was received August 14, 2024, from Public Works Director, Andrew Hayes, objecting to the nomination.

The application cites significance under three Historic Landmark criteria: special historic or prehistoric interest or importance; special architectural, engineering or aesthetic interest or importance; special geographic interest or importance, (Section 4-14-8, (a)., (1), a.; (1), c.; (2), a.; (2), c.; (3), a.). The application states that it represents one of Pueblo's significant historical events, the Works Progress Administration activities during the Great Depression as well as showcasing the workmanship of a distinctive architectural style: Rustic. The landmark nomination covers only the bathhouse building erected in 1938 and no other park buildings or structures.

#### Background

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The applicant nominated the subject property for landmark designation per the requirements contained in Section 4-14-8, Chapter 14 – Historic Preservation Code, Title IV – Building Regulations, of the Pueblo Municipal Code. The Historic Preservation Commission may approve this application if it serves the goals of the historic preservation code. According to the Pueblo Standards of Appropriateness, September 2005, a building, may individually be designated as a Landmark, if it has distinctive character and meets two of the following criteria:

1. Special historic or prehistoric interest or importance:

- a. Has significant character, interest or value, as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, State, or Nation; or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or
  - b. Has the site of a historic event with a significant effect upon society; or
  - c. Exemplifies the cultural heritage of the community; or has yielded, or may be likely to yield, important prehistoric information.
2. Special architectural, engineering, or aesthetic interest or importance:
- a. Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or
  - b. Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural-type or engineering specimen; or
  - c. Is the work of a designer whose individual work has significantly influenced the development of the City; or
  - d. Contains elements of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation.
3. Special geographic interest or importance:
- a. by being part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area, which should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on a historic, cultural or architectural motif, or
  - b. owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or City.

The City Park Bathhouse application was prepared by George Koncilja, HPC member, and Gary Trujillo, retired architect specializing in historic preservation and rehabilitation. on behalf of the City of Pueblo Historic Preservation Commission. Staff utilized the 2010 draft Historic Structures Assessment, Pueblo City Park Bathhouse and Grandstands, prepared by Nadine Abell, CU Denver School of Architecture, student; the Colorado Cultural Resource Survey, Architectural Inventory Form for the Bath House and City Park Tennis Score Keepers; the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form titled New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains, 2005; the Pueblo Lore article; and The Pueblo Experience, published in January 2007 in assessing the application for Landmark nomination.

**1. a. Has significant character, interest or value, as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, State or Nation; or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past.**

According to the Historic Structure Assessment, City Park was the recipient of many federal relief projects between 1933 and 1940 as part of the Works Project Administration (WPA). The projects included a plan to develop land in the park, create new facilities and manage the water rights that were sold with the park. In 1935, following the construction of the zoo the surrounding community requested the City add recreation elements to the park. The recreation area was constructed as a complex and included the multi-purpose bathhouse with concession stand, wading pool, ball field with grandstands, three tennis courts, horseshoe courts and shuffleboard courts.

Erected in 1938 The City Park Bathhouse is one of two WPA era bathhouses constructed in Pueblo; a nearly identical bathhouse still retains its function at Mitchell Park within Pueblo's East Side

Neighborhood. The building was one of 113 WPA projects that was completed before the 1939 State of the City Report.

The Works Progress Administration had a significant impact on the United States, and especially Pueblo during the Depression, creating jobs and programs to fight unemployment. The WPA made significant investments in Pueblo's Park systems including Mineral Park and City Park, usually choosing construction materials that were low in cost and high on labor. The bathhouse was also part of the first municipal efforts to provide bathing pools for citizens which started in the 1920s and expanded with widespread WPA efforts nationwide.

**Staff finds that the site does have direct association with significant persons and events in Pueblo and Colorado related to the Works Progress Administration and innovations in recreation amenities.**

**1. c. Exemplifies the cultural heritage of the community; or has yielded, or may be likely to yield, important prehistoric information.**

Cultural heritage generally consists of tangible and intangible assets that are inherited from past generations. Cultural heritage may include buildings, monuments, archive materials, books, works of art and artifacts. According to the applicant, the bathhouse, "served in the same role as a 'tennis clubhouse' since it was built. While also serving other roles over its life, it has housed the tennis community for nearly a century. Many generations of Puebloans have enjoyed this building and share find memories of its role in the area".

The 2010, Historic Structure Assessment of the City Park Bathhouse and Grandstands states that the bathhouse was constructed as a multi-purpose building that included a concession stand, restrooms, and gathering space to serve the wading pool, ball field, tennis court, horseshoe court, and shuffleboard courts. In the late 1950's the City reconfigured the recreation area because of its success and popularity. The swimming pool and ball field were moved to the southwest side of the park. In the 1970's the tennis court development expanded, and the bathhouse was renovated with the existing flat roof addition to provide additional storage to serve the tennis complex.

The cultural heritage criterion is wide reaching and there are no specific standards for "cultural character of community," which could mean a range of things and may relate more to places that represent nonmaterial aspects of local culture. To that end, the building has played a significant support role in the recreational activity of Pueblo residents and visitors for almost 90 years.

**Staff finds that the site does exemplify the cultural heritage of the community for its long-term support of Pueblo recreational activities, including tennis.**

**2. a. Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style**

According to the applicant, the construction style of the bathhouse and related structures are WPA Rustic. "Rustic architecture is usually associated with lodges, mountain buildings associated with the National Park Services and the U.S. Forest Service. 'Parkitecture' was another term for this style.

According to the New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plain's, Parkitecture is represented by heavy use of native stone/masonry and wood/timber, that are native to a region in order to harmonize with the local landscape. The City Park Bathhouse is clad with rough cut, non-coursing sandstone and a U-shaped cross gable with a low shed roof below the gables. The rough cut stone is a character defining feature of the building, showcasing a Pueblo variant of Rustic/Parkitecture style. The WPA utilized this style on other buildings throughout City Park and the adjacent City Park Zoo.

The Historic Structures Assessment of the bathhouse confirms the bathhouse is built in the WPA Rustic style and used local sandstone in the construction of the structure. The bathhouse is a good example of the Rustic/Parkitecture Style as it was implemented in Pueblo by the WPA.

**Staff finds the site eligible under 2. a. as a good example of the Rustic/Parkitecture architectural style.**

**2. c. Is the work of a designer whose individual work has significantly influenced the development of the City.**

Although the WPA was known for teaching masonry skills to Americans throughout the depression, this criterion refers to one designer and the City Park Bath House was designed by a team of people according to the HSA from 2010, so it is ineligible without further documentation.

**Without further documentation of a specific designer or architect, Staff finds 2.c. ineligible because the site was not designed by one designer but a team of people teaching masonry skills.**

**3. a. By being part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area, which should be developed or preserved according to a plan based on a historic, cultural or architectural motif**

According to the application for Landmark nomination, "City Park Tennis Clubhouse (bathhouse) is within an area of concentrated WPA structures. Which gives a real sense of place to the local population familiar with the park. Stone boundary fences that border major thoroughfares are a distinct sign of the type of buildings and features that may be found within those boundaries."

City Park is a historic park, with a variety of amenities, including the zoo, golf course, retaining walls and other structures constructed by the WPA. However, a road has been erected along the west of the bath house, and the wading pool was removed as well as numerous other features altered in the vicinity. Much of the direct historic context related to the original use of the bathhouse has been heavily modified or removed so that it is no longer used as it was historically intended.

**Staff finds that while the building is related to the historic City Park, largely developed by the WPA and could be preserved according to a plan based on a historic, cultural, or architectural motif.**

The Pueblo City Park Bath House exhibits a moderate/medium degree of integrity. Significant modifications have been made to the structure itself including a rear stucco addition and the blocking up

of the open archways on the primary façade. Furthermore, the setting and feeling of the site have been seriously modified with the addition of 17 tennis courts, the construction of a road to the west, and removal of the wading pool. The bathhouse is located in its original position, and the overall WPA Rustic architectural design is intact.

### **Changes to the Building and Property**

A flat roofed stucco storage room was added to the bathhouse and the entry archways were blocked in with concrete masonry units in the 1970's. Most of the other structural openings and windows have been blocked, boarded, and clad with stucco. The wading pool was removed in the early 1950's and a total of 17 tennis courts have been added over the years.

### **Zoning District**

The site and surrounding area are zoned S-1, and the surrounding neighborhood is mostly zoned R-2 and comprised of single-family homes.

### **City's Comprehensive Plan Compliance**

The City Park Bathhouse is located in the Open Space and Parks future land use area according to the Pueblo Regional Comprehensive Plan, adopted in July of 2022. Open Space and Parks are characterized by Parks, open space, greenways, and natural areas. According to the Comprehensive Plan, Open Space and Parks encompass parks, recreation centers, open space, greenways, trails and natural areas that have been preserved for active and passive recreational purposes.” The original bath house was strongly associated with the prior wading pool which was removed after advances in recreation pool technology and practice. The building has also served other recreational activities, especially tennis, since its construction.

The Regional Goals and Policies section of the Comprehensive Plan addresses historic preservation efforts in the City. *Policy 4.1.3 Inventory of Cultural Resources* encourages the expansion of the Pueblo Inventory of Cultural Resources and the measurer of success on page 54 encourages an increasing trend in local landmarks. Landmarking the City Park Bathhouse directly addresses this policy in the Pueblo Regional Comprehensive Plan with respect to planning and historic preservation by documenting WPA contributions in Pueblo.

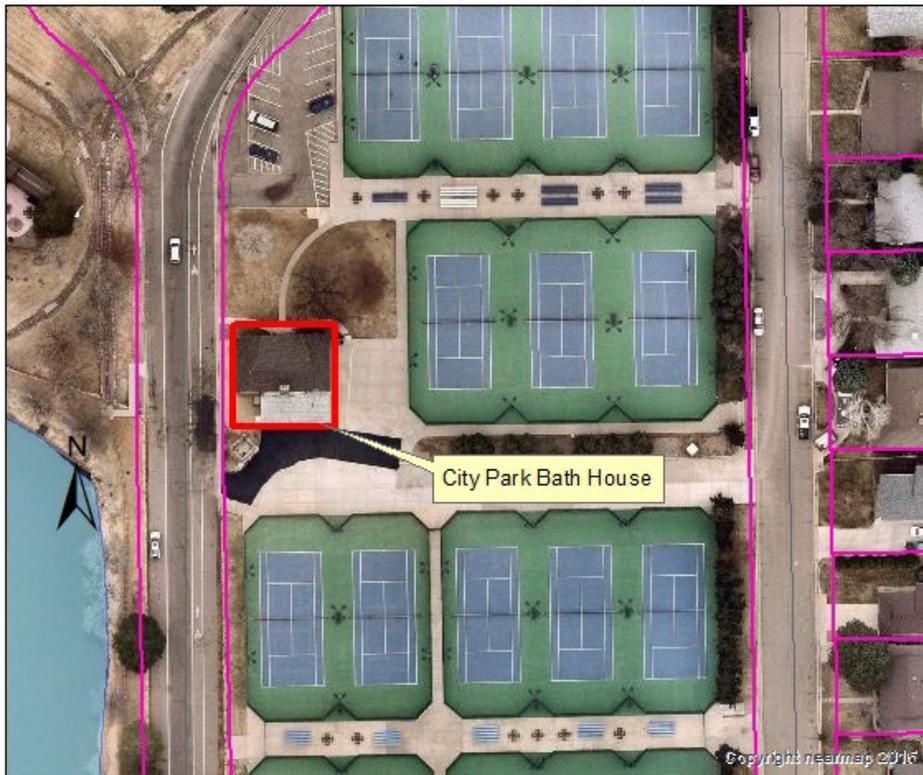
### **Recommended Action:**

If the Historic Preservation Commission finds the property meets the eligibility criteria: Section 4-14-8, 1.a., 1.c., 2.a., and 3.a. of the Pueblo Municipal Code, a recommendation of approval will be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission for review and recommendation to City Council for final review and approval of a Local Landmark designation.

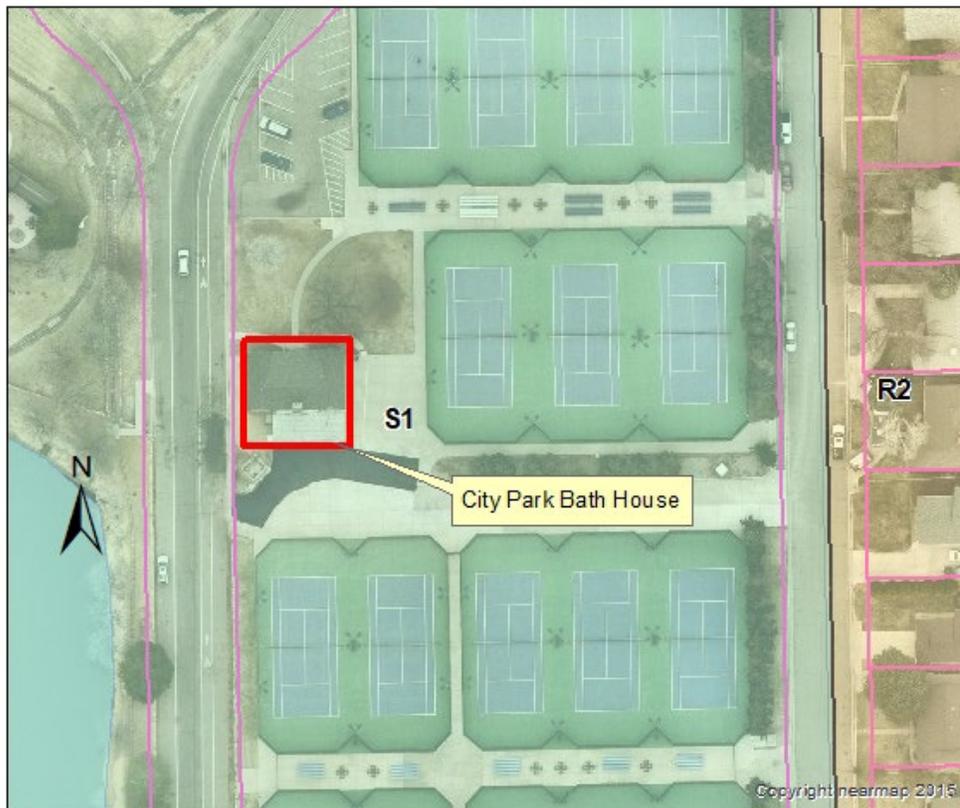
#### Exhibits

- A. Maps
- B. Photographs
- C. Application signature sheet and OpenGov document, full nomination is attached via PDF.

### **EXHIBIT A. MAPS**



**A1. Aerial image of the property**



**A2. Zoning map of the property**



**A3. Comprehensive Plan Map**

**EXHIBIT B. SITE PHOTOGRAPHS**



**Proof of posting**



**Overview from front façade looking south**



**Concession addition to the rear, south.**



**Eastern façade facing tennis courts.**



**View north east from South City Park Avenue**

## EXHIBIT C. APPLICATIONS AND ATTACHEMNTS

 City of Pueblo PLACE

July 18, 2024

### 24-150

Historic Preservation  
Commission

Status: Active

Submitted On: 7/17/2024

### Primary Location

330 S CITY PARK AVE  
PUEBLO, CO 81005

### Owner

PUEBLO COUNTY  
W 10TH ST 215 PUEBLO , CO  
81003-2945

### Applicant

 George Koncilja  
 719-406-8092  
 koncilja.re@gmail.com  
 1801 Court Street  
Pueblo, CO 81003

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## Internal

 Case Number

HPC-24-07

 Planner Assigned

-

 Continuances 

-

 Number of Posters

-

 Number of Postcards/Mailings

-

 Newspaper Notice Cost

-

 Public Notice Costs must be paid by:

-

 Public Notice zoning poster must be displayed by:

-

## HPC Hearing Information

 HPC Hearing Date

-

 HPC Hearing Results

-

🔒 Check box if hearing is a Special Requested  
Hearing

### Planning & Zoning Commission Information

🔒 P&Z Hearing Date

-

🔒 P&Z Hearing Results

-

🔒 Check box if hearing is a Special Requested  
Hearing

### City Council Information

🔒 Council First Reading

-

🔒 Council Final Reading

-

🔒 Council Hearing Results

-

🔒 Effective Date

-

🔒 Ordinance Number

🔒 Recording Number

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### Application Information

Application Type\*

Historic Nomination

Residential or Non-Residential?\*

Non-Residential

Certificate of Compliance is for properties not located in HB zone district and are not contributing to National Historic District Register.

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## Nomination for Local Historic Designation

Name of Property and/or Historic Name\*

City Park Tennis/Wading Facility

Present Use\*

Tennis Facility

Historic Use\*

Tennis/Wading clubhouse for tennis courts and pool

Site Number (issued by State of Colorado)

Are you designating a historic district?\*

No

What is the Applicant's Affiliation/Interest in Property?\*

As the Historic Preservation Commission we are interested in preserving the structure due to it's historic significance

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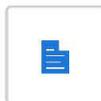
## Owner Consent to Designation

Property Owner Signature\*

Non Consensual  
Jul 17, 2024

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## Attachments



**wpa - new deal full issue jan 2007.pdf**

wpa - new deal full issue jan 2007.pdf

Uploaded by George Koncilja on Jul 17, 2024 at 11:08 PM

## **Eligibility Criteria: Historic City Park Tennis/Wading Facility**

### **Narrative Detail**

#### **Statement of Significance Summary**

The City Park Tennis Clubhouse (historic name Tennis/Wading Facility), heretofore referred to as the Tennis Clubhouse is historically significant for several reasons. First, as a contributing structure to the historic City Park formerly known as Park District #2. This follows **Historic Criterion 1a**, outlining an association with the historical development within the city.

Construction of the Tennis Clubhouse was added to City Park as part of the U.S. New Deal Works Project Administration. The WPA provided funding to states and local governments to create a variety of buildings, infrastructure, art and housing. This closely follows **Historic Criterion 2a**, as part of the physical development of an area of the city. Namely City Park historic WPA structures. construction style also is an important part of the significance.

Although the Tennis Clubhouse was part of the early tennis activity within Pueblo. It has not been listed as Historic Criterion 1d. This may be a subject of discussion because of the numerous tennis championships for state and local players, which were held at this site.

#### **Statement of Significance Summary Expanded:**

##### **1. History**

1a Have direct association with historical development of the city, state or nation.

Charles L. Dittmer first acquired the 150-acre parcel known as the "Park"; early records refer to it as Carlile's Park. Which was to be part of a grandiose plan of extensive landscaping, lakes, fountains and statuary with amenities meant to enhance an adjoining Carlile Park Subdivision. In the fall of 1899, a group of investors organized as the C.L.W. Dittmer Land and Building Company with Charles Dittmer as general Manager. In December of that year the parcel. was acquired from the Colorado Coal and iron company.

Financial Difficulties mostly caused by the silver crash of 1893 coupled with the Panic of 1903 forced the partnership to refocus their plans for the Park. The partners to sell the 150-acre parcel. The City of Pueblo started to develop a park on the northside of Pueblo, in 1898, known as the Mineral Palace. Similarly, to what happened to Dittmer, a failed development, on the northside, made the Mineral Palace land available, this became Park District #1.

Southside residents also wanted a park on their side of town. The citizens approved a bond issue of \$150,000 to purchase the acreage from Dittmer and his associates. Park District #2 was formed to develop and maintain parks on the southside of Pueblo.

Charles Dittmer was appointed as special agent for the park commissioners since he had invested 15 years of work and planning. He provided some infrastructure. He assisted with further planning for embellishments such as gates and statuary. The Park evolved into a sanctuary in the city for the citizens to enjoy picnics, leisure activities, and socializing.

However, it wasn't until the WPA funding were significant structures built within the Park. A Zoo, Aviary, animal habitats, canals, and Tennis Clubhouse were constructed between 1933-1940. Boundary walls and bridges were also constructed as part of this 'New Deal' program with local labor provided from the WPA. These programs helped lift the country out of the Great Depression and particularly assisted Pueblo which had been especially devastated first by the 'Great Flood' of 1921 and then the stock market collapse of 1929

The Pueblo Zoo became its own National Register District in 1995 which highlights the quality of the planning and development of a zoo. Within the 3-acre district are two buildings, six structures, moats, canals, artificial mountains, bear pits and water features. The use of natural materials and settings were part of a movement to provide a naturalistic approach to zoo habitats.

The eastern edge of the Park is occupied by the tennis complex with the seventeen courts, and Tennis Clubhouse. There were originally viewing stands on the south elevation, which were demolished. The tower that held the announcer booth remains.

The right side of the front door there is an inserted plaque that commemorates the building and the significance of it; it reads "ERECTED THROUGH THE COOPERATION OF FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS BY WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION DEDICATED TO THE ENRICHMENT OF HUMAN LIVES \*A RECORD OF PERMANENT ACHIEVEMENT\*".

### **Statement of Significance Summary Expanded:**

#### **2. Architecture**

2a Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.

The construction style of the Tennis Clubhouse and related structures are WPA Rustic. Rustic architecture is usually associated with lodges, mountain buildings associated with the National Park Services and the U.S. Forest Service. "Parkitecture" was another term for this style. Publications authored in the 1930's espoused this style. Rationale for use in the mountains was the availability of natural materials, stone and timber. Mainly was to create a structure that was reflected of nature.

Many of the publications were authored by Herbert Maier. He was the architect/landscape architect who headed the NPS district that included the Rocky Mountain Region. Although publications contained designs and plans it was noted not to copy the designs but rather adapt to local topography, cultural influences and conditions.

Maier believed that using indigenous or natural materials was the best way to integrate the structure with its surroundings. Rustic architecture was a simple method to provide the best solution, following function and nature. WPA sought to put as many people as possible. This meant using hand tools and hand labor as opposed to power tools.

WPA Rustic architecture is an architectural style from the era of the U.S. New Deal Works Project Administration. The WPA provided funding for architects to create a variety of buildings, including amphitheaters and lodges. WPA architecture is akin to National Park Service rustic architecture. WPA Rustic, as opposed to National Park Service Rustic as utilized in most national parks, involves more demarcation between the building and the landscape. The term has been used by the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places program to describe many buildings and structures, including American Legion meeting halls and other buildings built by the WPA in the 1930s

2c. The architects who designed this structure and others (see 2a above) were also employed through the WPA and it's been shown that they reused design plans there similarities with the pool building in Mitchell Park.

### **Geography**

3a Have a prominent location or be established, familiar and orienting visual feature of the contemporary city.

City Park Tennis Clubhouse is within an area of concentrated WPA structures. Which gives a real sense of place to the local population familiar with the Park. Stone boundary fences that border major thoroughfares are a distinct sign of the type of buildings and features that may be found within those boundaries.

### **Architectural Description**

Closely describe the structure and its surrounds.

The main elevation is north facing, it has a main gable with an intersecting gable at each end, one on the east and one on the west. The main gable ridge runs east/west and has an unequal slope on the north, with an equal slope on the south. The unequal slope has the break over the porch. The two intersecting gable ridges both run north/south. All original building roofs are covered with asphalt shingles.

The entire structure is constructed of red cilium sandstone. The stones were harvested in the foothills west of Pueblo. Stones were left mostly uncut, natural in appearance, with a raked mortar joint, which highlights each individual stone because of the recessed mortar joint.

Four circular arched openings define the main elevation, each rise to doorway height. The arches are coupled and form an arcade, which opens onto a porch. The outer two arched openings are infilled with stone at the bottom three feet. Originally those two openings had segmented arches at the very bottom of the infill. Those arches have been infilled with stone matching the original. A center concrete stair provides access to the inner two arched openings. The stairs are flanked on each side with stone walls staggered to match the treads. The four circular arches have been infilled with concrete masonry units (CMU). The eastern and western openings have been infilled, the western arch the opens onto the stair have also been infilled. The eastern arch opening onto the stairs is partially infilled, to accommodate a 3 x 7 door.

The two-intersecting gables on the east and west are symmetrical to the centerline of the north elevation. Each have full height stone gable ends. The stone terminates at the peak and the roof is a 6-12 pitch. At the top of each peak are three 4-inch round, clay pipes, which protrude and act as attic venting. Wood cornice boards follow the roof rake.to the

Two coupled casement windows are centered on the east and west gables, separated by an eighteen-inch-wide column. The windows are six true divided lites, approximately 52 inches above finished floor (AFF). The original windows are behind CMU that have been infilled into the front of the opening.

The west elevation has full height stone to the bottom of the roof. There are four window openings. The northern most window opening has two coupled casement windows, that are six true divided lites. The two middle openings each have two coupled casement windows that are four divided lites.

The southern most opening has casement windows two coupled over two coupled casement windows separated by a horizontal mullion. Each of the casement windows are six divided lites. Those windows originally serviced the building kitchen. All openings on the west elevation have CMU infilling the original window opening.

The south elevation has been altered by a non-conforming addition, which runs over three quarters of the south elevation. The portion of the building not covered by the addition is the south gable end of the western intersecting gable. The stone runs full height of the gable end. One large window, oft centered to the west, is coupled over two coupled casements with six divided lites, also infilled with CMU.

The east elevation has full height stone to the bottom of the roof. Four window openings off centered in the elevation are two coupled casements with four divided lites each. All openings are infilled with CMU masonry. It should be noted that the historic photograph shows a different window configuration. There is no noticeable alteration of the openings that exist now. Which may have been a very early alteration using original material.

**Research Sources:**

- Pueblo County Historical Society
- The Pueblo Lore: January 2007 Issue by George Williams
  - See attached document; pages 41/42 discuss the Tennis facility while the entirety of the issue is dedicated to WPA projects in Pueblo
- Site Visits to City Park, Mineral Palace Park, Pueblo Mountain Park and Mitchell Park
- History Colorado WPA Rustic – Colorado Historic Architecture and Engineering Guide
- Historic Plans, Details and Elements by John Theodore Haneman
- Dictionary of Building Preservation by Ward Butcher.
- Valentine Engineering Field Observation Report – James Valentine

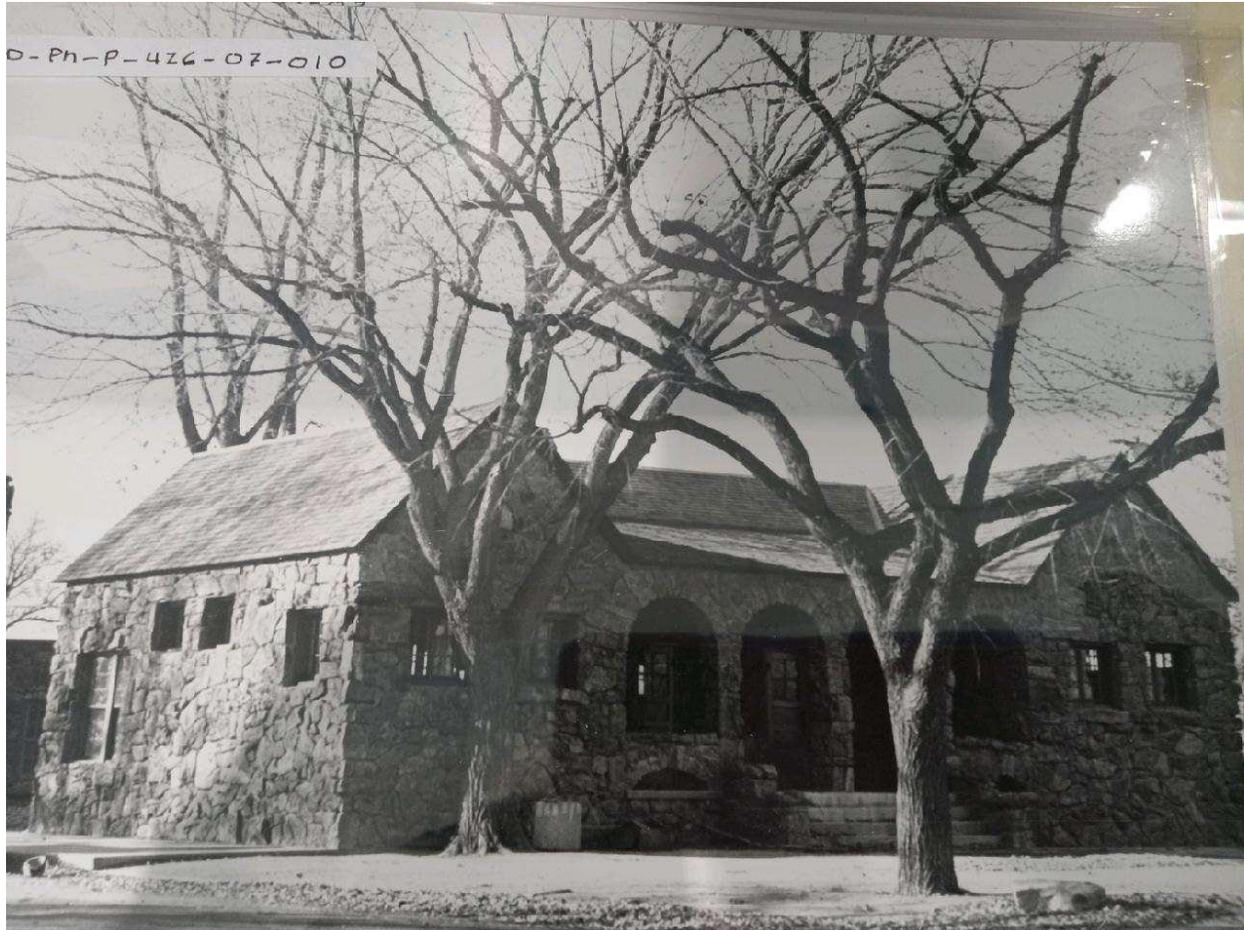
Photographs:

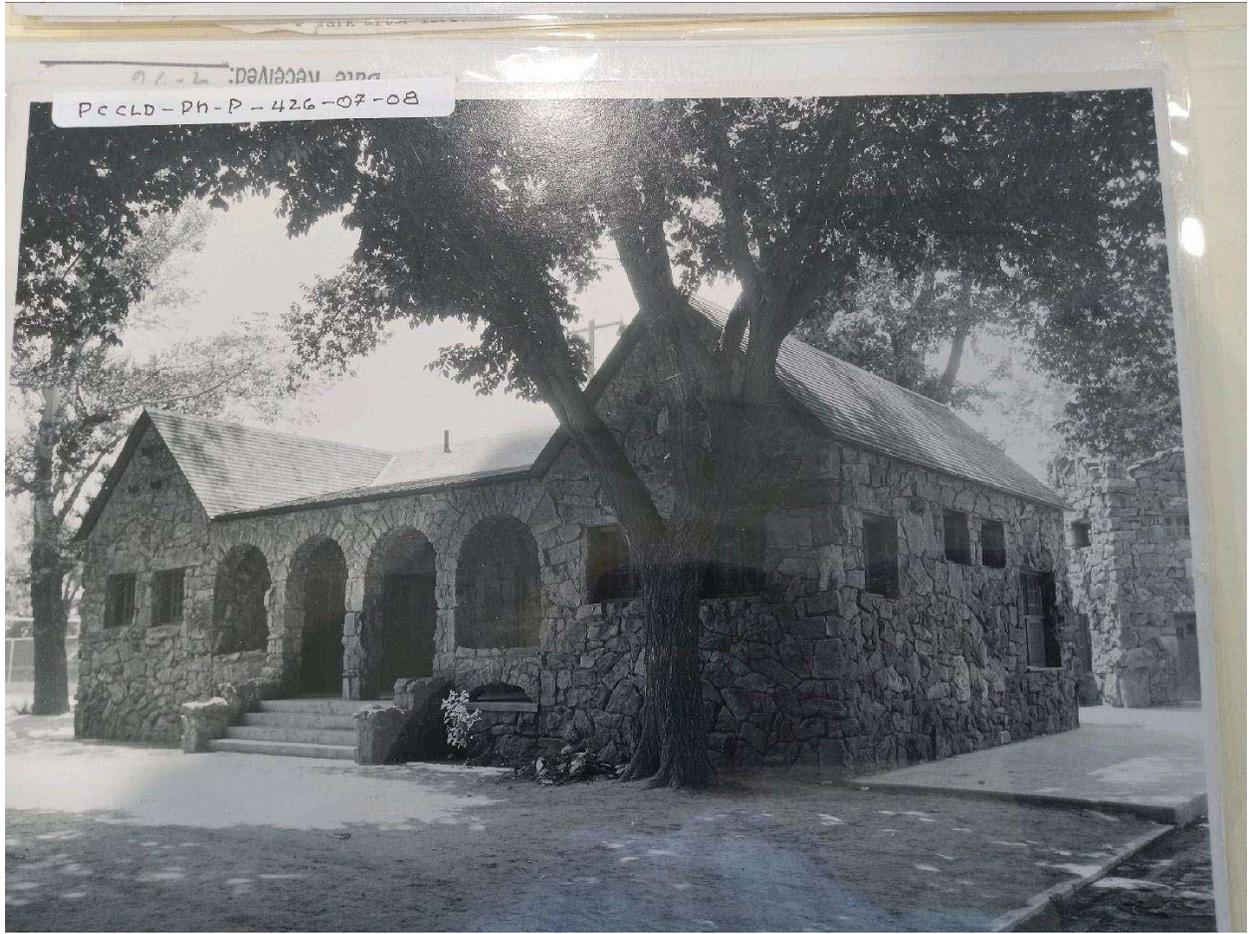




ERECTED THROUGH  
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ADMINISTRATION  
DEDICATED TO THE  
ENRICHMENT  
OF HUMAN LIVES  
\* A RECORD OF \*  
\* PERMANENT \*  
\* ACHIEVEMENT \*

D-PH-P-426-07-010







## Eligibility Criteria: Historic City Park Tennis/Wading Facility

### Narrative Details:

1a. The New Deal Program had a profound impact on the country and particularly here in Pueblo. The fact that this building, as well as much of City Park, was developed because of this program holds historic significance and we should do everything possible to preserve that. These buildings and structures collectively represent a time when individuals who shared in a bleak future banded together to build a better future; a notion that should not be forgotten about or destroyed.

1c. This building has served in the same role as a 'tennis clubhouse' since it was built. While also serving other roles over its life, it has housed the tennis community for nearly a century. Many generations of Puebloans have enjoyed this building and share fond memories of its role in the area.

2a. The building was built with the same materials and in the same style as the surrounding structures (stone walls through the park, former golf clubhouse building, buildings throughout the zoo, pavilions, etc.) which helps to unify and define this area. The building materials that were used to construct it were sourced from local areas, primarily near Beulah. This aesthetic look is what defines the City Park area and creates a cohesive look throughout the entire district.

2c. The architects who designed this structure and others were also employed through the WPA program and it's been shown that they reused design plans (note the similarities with the pool building in Mitchell Park).

3a. This building lies within the City Park district, which on a broad scale is a historic site. The WPAs involvement in the development of City Park into the recreation hub that it is today should be celebrated and preserved and not forgotten about.

### **Statement of Significance:**

The City Park Tennis/Wading Facility is historically significant for several reasons. It was built in the 1930s as part of the 'New Deal' program with local labor provided from the WPA. These programs helped lift the country out of the Great Depression and particularly assisted Pueblo which had been especially devastated first by the 'Great Flood' of 1921 and then the stock market collapse of 1929. Historically this building served as the shower room for the wading pool, the clubhouse for the original 4 tennis courts and concession stands for the entire area. Although the pool was eventually moved and concessions no longer served from the building, it has serviced the tennis courts for over 90 years. Multiple generations of Puebloans have fond memories of this building and many have grandparents and other relatives that helped to construct it, along with other WPA era structures. The structure is built out of the same materials as other buildings, walls, pavilions, etc. throughout the surrounding area helping to create a cohesive look throughout City Park. On the interior of this building, along with a number of other WPA era buildings, is an inserted plaque that commemorates the building and the significance of it; it reads "ERECTED THROUGH THE COOPERATION OF FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS BY WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION DEDICATED TO THE ENRICHMENT OF HUMAN LIVES \*A RECORD OF PERMANENT ACHIEVEMENT\*". This type of history should be preserved at all costs.

### **Research Sources:**

- Pueblo County Historical Society
- The Pueblo Lore: January 2007 Issue by George Williams
  - See attached document; pages 41/42 discuss the Tennis facility while the entirety of the issue is dedicated to WPA projects in Pueblo
- Site Visits to City Park, Mineral Palace Park, Pueblo Mountain Park and Mitchell Park

**Photographs:**





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ENRICHMENT  
OF HUMAN LIVES  
\* A RECORD OF \*  
\* PERMANENT \*  
\* ACHIEVEMENT \*

Andrew E. Hayes, P.E.  
Director of Public Works



211 East D Street  
Pueblo, CO 81003

Phone (719) 553-2295  
Fax (719) 553-2294

## Department of Public Works

August 14, 2024

TO: City of Pueblo Historic Preservation Commission  
1 City Hall Pl.  
Pueblo, CO 81003

RE: Historic Designation of Tennis Court Bathhouse Facility

Dear Members of the Historic Preservation Commission,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the recent nomination of the City Park Tennis Court Bathhouse for designation on the City's registry of historic buildings. While I understand and appreciate the importance of preserving our community's historical assets, I believe that the designation of this particular structure may not be appropriate given the circumstances and could have unintended consequences for the City of Pueblo.

The Tennis Court Bathhouse, constructed during the WPA era, has undoubtedly served our community well over the decades. However, it is important to recognize that the building has undergone significant modifications since its original construction in the 1930s. These alterations, while necessary for the building's continued use, have unfortunately diminished its historic integrity. As a result, the structure no longer represents the unique architectural elements that once made it a candidate for historic preservation.

Furthermore, the building requires substantial structural repairs to ensure it is safe for occupancy and compliant with current building codes and ADA standards. Groundwater and soil issues present particularly challenging engineering problems that must be addressed. Given the scope and cost of these repairs, the City has determined that it would be more prudent to replace the existing building with a new, modern facility that can better serve the needs of our community while still honoring the legacy of the original structure. This plan includes reutilizing stone elements from the existing structure for the facade of the new building and constructing an interpretive wall inside the new facility.

It is also important to note that the current facility plays a critical role in hosting numerous tennis events, including the high school state tennis tournament, and is open to the public for daily use. Delaying the project to accommodate a historic designation could jeopardize these activities and result in the loss of approximately \$500,000 in project funds if a construction contract is not awarded by the end of the year.

I respectfully request that the Commission carefully consider these factors and the broader impact on our community before moving forward with the designation process. The City is committed to honoring the history of the Bathhouse while also ensuring that the needs of our community are met in a timely and responsible manner.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me with any questions. I can be reached by phone at 719-553-2295 or by e-mail at [ahayes@pueblo.us](mailto:ahayes@pueblo.us).

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AEH", written over a horizontal line.

Andrew E. Hayes, P.E.

**Steve Henson**

**32 Sovereign Circle**

**Pueblo, Colo., 81005**

**(719) 733-7606**

**henson.slpueblo@gmail.com**

Aug. 12, 2024

To whom it may concern:

Re: Concerns about demolishing current clubhouse building at the Pueblo City Park tennis courts.

Hello!

I would like to address this issue by first praising the Koncilja family for its tireless efforts to preserve, protect and utilize Pueblo's historic buildings. I do not believe anyone has had more of an impact in this endeavor than the Konciljas.

Further, the Koncilja and Henson families have been friends and professional acquaintances for decades, and I greatly admire the Konciljas for their community efforts.

So it is with reluctance that I must disagree with efforts to preserve the old clubhouse at the City Park tennis courts. And I believe I am in a unique position to discuss this topic.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the clubhouse -- constructed during the New Deal initiatives during the Great Depression -- was operated by the Pueblo Tennis Club. The PTC was a member organization (\$25 annual fee, which got you a key to the clubhouse) that ran tournaments and some instructional programs at the park courts. The facility was not open to the public.

During the 1970s, I served three terms as president of the organization, which at one time had nearly 200 members.

At one point, the PTC spent more than \$10,000 to renovate the clubhouse. It was very nice, with clean restrooms, showers, lockers and a lounge area with nice furniture, a TV, etc.

But there always were significant infrastructure issues, such as water seepage in the basement from the lake across the street. The PTC did not have the resources to address those issues, and the city wasn't interested in pumping money into the old structure.

Eventually, the city took over control of the courts and the clubhouse, and the PTC disbanded.

In my opinion, the city's decision to open the restrooms and the facility to the general public led to the decline of the building and the current sad state of affairs that we see today.

Frankly, it's an old building that is filthy from top to bottom, and way past the point where some paint and new flooring will transform it into a nice facility. It is not functional, with no secure areas for vending machines or a pro shop, and a tiny tournament director's area that has outgrown its usefulness.

It also is an embarrassment to the community of Pueblo. Among the many tournaments hosted at the facility are the boys and girls high school district and state tournaments. It is humiliating to hear people talk about the filthy facilities, the mosquitoes that inhabit the drafty building, the worn and stained carpeting, and the inability of players to shower between matches and change into fresh clothing. If we are not careful, we will lose those tournaments because of the terrible condition of the clubhouse.

I believe that pumping taxpayer money into the building would be akin to putting lipstick on a pig. Further, given the significant plumbing and electrical issues, not to mention the foundation issues, this project would be a money pit.

The proposal to build a new building used recycled rock from the existing structure is an exciting proposal and one that, I believe, honors the past by using those materials from the existing building. Such a new building would make the City Park tennis facility among the finest in the nation.

Other than being old, there is nothing important about the existing clubhouse. It is not architecturally significant, and its usefulness is long gone.

Pueblo deserves a nice, new clubhouse at the tennis courts, one with a significant nod to the work of the past. I urge the city to proceed with that project.

P.S. A word to the wise. Once constructed, do NOT open the facility to the public when staff is not present. If the new facility is open without supervision, it, too, shall become a filthy facility and a waste of taxpayers' money.

Sincerely,

*Steve Henson*

Steve Henson

Past president of the Pueblo Tennis Club and the Colorado Tennis Association; winner of more than 150 USTA-sanctioned tournaments with rankings as high as No. 1 in Colorado in singles and doubles (5.0 category), along with numerous other rankings in Colorado and the Intermountain district (Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Wyoming and Montana); and an inductee into the Pueblo Sports Association Hall of Fame. I currently am the assistant girls tennis coach at Pueblo County High School. This past season, the entire team qualified for the state tournament.

I also was the longtime managing editor of The Pueblo Chieftain newspaper, have long been active in the Pueblo community, and am an adjunct professor at Colorado State University Pueblo.

**From:** [Steven Meier](#)  
**To:** [Wade Broadhead](#)  
**Cc:** [Scott Hobson](#); [Beritt Odom](#); [Andrew Hayes](#)  
**Subject:** Bathhouse at City Park Tennis Complex  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 13, 2024 2:43:06 PM

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Wade and the Historic Preservation Committee,

The Parks and Recreation Department recommends that the Historic Preservation Committee **do not** move forward with recommending the non-consensual historic designation of the City Park Bathhouse. The City's initial goal for the existing stone facility was to fully renovate and save the old stone building, but as the engineers and architects began investigating the structure it became apparent that the building had extensive structural and code issues that present numerous safety concerns for staff and visiting patrons. The building does not meet ADA accessibility requirements as well as the building code as it relates to number of fixtures per occupancy. The stone foundation has been deteriorating significantly and with the constant presence of groundwater the renovation and / or replacement of the existing foundation would prove to be more expensive than it would be to demolish and build a new facility.

The Parks and Recreation Department urges you to deny this application.

**Steven Meier, Director**

***Parks and Recreation***

*800 Goodnight Ave*

*Pueblo, CO 81005*

*719-553-2790*



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