

## **Frequently Asked Questions about Park County Historic Landmark Designation**

### **What county regulations apply to historic properties in Park County?**

Park County Resolution 2012-30 establishes the Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (PCHPAC), provides for the designation of historic resources, notification to the historic preservation advisory commission of the intended alteration, removal, or demolition of designated historic resources, and revocation of designations of historic resources. This resolution has been incorporated in Park County Land Use Regulations, Article XI - Division 4. The Land Use Regulations can be accessed via the web at <http://www.parkco.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/267>.

### **Who is on Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (PCHPAC) and when do they meet?**

PCHPAC is a seven-member citizen advisory commission appointed by the Park County Commissioners. Members of the commission represent diverse areas of the county and offer a wide variety of expertise regarding history, real estate, archaeology, construction, and transportation. PCHPAC provides advice and guidance for the county in conducting historic surveys, collecting historic information, reviewing changes and advising appropriate repairs to historic properties and reviewing requests for historic designation. Public meetings are held at 9am on the third Saturday of each month at different locations within the county. Agendas for all meetings are posted online and in the Fairplay Flume.

### **What makes a property historic?**

The decision to recognize older buildings, structures, objects, cemeteries, sites, landscapes, and districts as Park County Historic Landmarks and Districts rests in the meaning they bring to our lives as places that define and mark our shared historical and cultural heritage. For example, a building may be historic because it was designed by a well-known architect, was the first school in a town, or is the place where a significant event occurred. A building may also be historic because it exemplifies patterns of community development, incorporates local materials and innovative methods in construction, or because it is typical of a significant era in a community's history. In addition to buildings, structures such as bridges, objects such as sculptures, cemeteries, sites such as battlefields, and rural landscapes can be designated as landmarks or districts if they meet the criteria established by PCHPAC and listed in Article XI - Division 4 of the Park County Land Use Regulations.

### **What are the advantages of having a property designated as a Park County Historic Landmark?**

- Designation officially and publically recognizes a property as an important piece of Park County's history.
- Owners of designated properties can take advantage of **free** technical advice from local preservation professionals. PCHPAC Commission members and Park County Office of Historic Preservation staff can guide you through the process of repairing, rehabbing, or restoring a historic property, helping you to extend the useful life of your property while preserving those unique character defining features that make your property significant.
- Designation provides greater flexibility in meeting current building code

requirements. Owners of historic properties can often significantly reduce the cost of rehabilitation by taking advantage of alternative requirements and exemptions exclusive to designated properties.

- Designated historic properties are eligible to compete for state and local grants, which can significantly reduce the costs associated with rehabilitating a historic property. Park County Office of Historic Preservation staff can assist you throughout the process of applying for and receiving grant funding.
- Owners undertaking a substantial rehabilitation of a historic property may be eligible for state and federal tax credit programs.
- Studies have shown that designated historic properties hold their value or increase in value over time.
- By encouraging preservation of the significant visual features that tell the story of Park County as it has evolved over time, designation helps ensure that future generations will be able to understand and appreciate our shared cultural heritage.

**Do I automatically receive funds or other financial assistance when my property is listed as a landmark?**

No. However, owners of officially designated historic properties may qualify for state or federal income tax credits for the rehabilitation of historic properties. Owners may also be eligible to apply for state and local preservation grants.

**What kinds of grants are available to owners of designated properties?**

The State Historical Fund is a statewide grants program that was created by the 1990 constitutional amendment allowing limited gaming in the towns of Cripple Creek, Central City, and Black Hawk. The amendment directs that a portion of the gaming tax revenues be used for historic preservation throughout the state.

Park County provides small matching grants for projects that promote historic preservation in the county. Funds may be granted for rehabilitation, education, interpretation and other projects endorsed by PCHPAC.

**What kinds of tax credits are available to owners of historic properties?**

Tax incentives are designed to promote restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation of older structures. There are three types of credits available.

20% State Income Tax Credit

The State of Colorado offers a 20% tax credit to owners of properties that are officially designated as local historic landmarks or listed on the State Register. Unlike the federal tax credit, these properties do not have to be income producing. PCHPAC conducts reviews of these credits and can provide application forms and additional guidance. If you spend \$100,000 on a project and claim the 20% State Tax Credit, it would reduce the amount of taxes you owe the State of Colorado by \$20,000. The State Tax Credit can be spread out over a period of up to 10 years.

### Federal 20% Income Tax Credit

A 20% credit is available to owners of properties meeting specific criteria. In brief, the property must be income producing (i.e. owner occupied residential structures are not eligible) and listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or a contributing building to a National Register District. Work must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for rehabilitation, be reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Unlike a deduction, which reduces your taxable income, a tax credit directly reduces the amount of tax you owe. If you spend \$100,000 on a project, claiming the 20% federal credit would reduce the amount of taxes you owe the IRS by \$20,000. If you don't owe \$20,000 in one year, you can spread the tax credit out over a period of up to 20 years.

### Federal 10% Income Tax Credit

A 10% credit is available to owners of historic properties meeting less stringent criteria than the 20% tax credit. This 10% credit is available for properties that are not eligible for the National Register and are not considered contributing to a historic district. However, the building must be income producing and built before 1936. Work must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for rehabilitation, be reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

### **What are the disadvantages of having a property listed as a Park County Historic Landmark?**

Listing a property as a Park County Historic Landmark does not impose restrictions on the private property owner. The private owner is free to sell, alter, move, or demolish the property in any way that they choose after consulting with the Office of Historic Preservation about their plans.

However, if the property owner is applying for state or federal tax credits, the proposed projects are reviewed by PCHPAC to ensure that the project meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation. The review process can take up to a month to complete depending on when the application is submitted.

Designated historic properties are eligible to compete for Colorado State Historical Fund grants, via a program established by the passage of the constitutional amendment legalizing gambling in certain Colorado communities. State Historical Fund grants are competitive and there is no guarantee that your projects will be funded. Projects that have a clear public benefit are more likely to be funded through the State Historical Fund. Grant applications are accepted twice a year. The application process can be time consuming and requires that persons in the private sector apply through a municipality or county. State Historical Fund grants require a matching contribution provided by the owner or another funding source. If the property is owned or occupied by a private individual or for-profit business, a cash match of at least 50% is competitively expected, and in most cases the match should be even higher. These factors should be considered when planning your project.

**What do I need to do to have my property designated as a Historic Landmark?**

The landmark designation process consists of the following steps.

- 1) Owner/applicant completes a Park County Local Historic Landmark Nomination Owner Consent Form and a Park County Local Historic Landmark Eligibility Form.
- 2) Based on the information provided by the owner and other sources, staff will determine if the property is eligible for designation.
- 3) Once the property is determined to be eligible, staff will prepare a Park County Landmark Nomination Form for review by PCHPAC.
- 4) PCHPAC reviews the Park County Landmark Nomination Form to confirm that the property meets the criteria for landmark designation. PCHPAC either recommends approval, conditional approval, or disapproval of the application to the Board of County Commissioners.
- 5) The Board of County Commissioners reviews the Park County Landmark Nomination Form and PCHPAC's recommendation and either approves or denies the application for designation.

**How much time does it take to designate a property as a Park Count Historic Landmark?**

This depends on the type and location of the property, among other things. Preparation of a nomination for designation typically requires a significant amount of original research which can take several weeks to complete depending on staff workload.

**Do I have to pay a fee to have my property designated?**

The Office of Historic Preservation does not charge a fee for historic landmark designation.

**Am I required to restore or preserve my property if it is listed as a Park County Historic Landmark?**

No. However, because the property contributes to our understanding of the history of Park County in an important way, you are strongly encouraged to preserve it.

**Do I have to allow public access to my property if it is designated as a Park County Historic Landmark?**

No. Designation as a historic landmark does not require private property owners to provide public access to their property.

**If my private property is listed as a Park County Historic Landmark, am I restricted in what I can do with the property?**

No. Park County Resolution 2012-30 requires only that the Office of Historic Preservation be notified of any building permit, subdivision, zoning, or other land use application or request that reasonably affects designated or eligible landmarks so that staff and/or PCHPAC may review and make recommendations to the property owner.

**What are staff and/or PCHPAC's recommendations based on?**

Staff reviews are based on the Standards for Moving, Altering or Demolishing of historic properties listed in Section 8 of Resolution 2012-30. These standards are based upon the Secretary Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties. Last revised in 1992, the Secretary Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties are the Secretary's best advice to everyone on how to appropriately repair or alter a wide variety of historic properties. Park County has modified these standards slightly to meet the specific needs of its residents.

**Will Office of Historic Preservation/PCHPAC consultation delay my project?**

Most reviews can be completed at the staff level the same day they are received. More complicated projects may require review by PCHPAC, which meets on the third Saturday of each month. Projects requiring PCHPAC review will be scheduled for the next monthly meeting regardless of the application date.

**How much does the Office of Historic Preservation/PCHPAC consultation cost?**

Nothing. All services provided by the Office of Historic Preservation and PCHPAC are free of charge.

**Do I have to follow the Office of Historic Preservation/PCHPAC's recommendations?**

Staff and/or PCHPAC's recommendations are advisory only and are intended to promote preservation of Park County's historic buildings, structures, objects, and sites in a manner that is consistent with the standards for the treatment of historic properties established by Resolution 2012-30, thus protecting property values and preserving the unique history and cultural heritage of Park County for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

We strongly encourage property owners to carefully consider the recommendations provided by staff and PCHPAC, however property owners are not required to follow the recommendations if they so choose.

**What happens if I do not follow the Office of Historic Preservation/PCHPAC's recommendations?**

There is no penalty if an owner chooses to disregard staff's recommendations. However, if the changes made to a property are so extensive that the property no longer conveys its historic significance, the Office of Historic Preservation may request that the Board of County Commissioners revoke the property's landmark status.

**If I repair, rehabilitate, or restore my designated historic property, do I have to bring my property up to current code?**

Not necessarily. Park County Resolution 2012-30 includes a provision that can provide relief from Park County Building Codes and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Office of Historic Preservation staff will work closely with you and the Building Department to resolve any code-related questions related to your preservation project.

**Will my property taxes increase as a result of landmark designation?**

Landmark designation has no effect on the assessment for tax purposes. Property taxes are based on other factors which do not include landmark designation as a criterion.

**What happens if I sell my property?**

Historic Landmark status is not affected by changes in ownership.

**Do I automatically receive a plaque to place on my property when it is listed?**

Yes.