



CHAPTER 8

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER

- Information about Ellensburg’s historic preservation program.
- Policies and programs that seek to help Ellensburg identify and protect historic sites and structures.
- Policies that provide a framework for the adaptive reuse of historic sites and structures.
- Policies that seek to maintain our community character and heritage.

OVERVIEW

The historic preservation chapter defines Ellensburg’s preservation goals, policies, and programs that provide a framework for the preservation and active use of historic structures to enhance the city’s quality of life, economic vibrancy, and environmental sustainability. The purpose of this chapter is to support the acquisition, preservation, restoration, redevelopment, and continued use of historic properties.

This chapter contains goals, policies, and programs to support the City’s role in preserving and protecting the character and integrity of its historic buildings, sites, landscapes, and neighborhoods.

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Ellensburg has a well-established preservation program including the Downtown Historic District (1980), Residential Historic District (1984), Ellensburg Landmarks Register (2000), the landmarks and design ordinance (2000), the attainment of Certified Local Government status (2001), and the ordinance for special valuation of improvements to historic property (2002). In 2007 Ellensburg was named one of America's dozen distinctive destinations by the National Trust of Historic Preservation and maintains a Certified National Main Street Community. In addition, the City's Community Development Department, the Ellensburg Public Library, the Kittitas County Historical Museum, and state databases, provide extensive information that address the distinctiveness of local architectural features and how different styles relate to each other.

Many of Ellensburg's historic structures are located within a 16-block area of the Downtown Historic District, an area rebuilt shortly after the fire of 1889. There are also historic structures located on the Central Washington University campus, in the industrial district along the railroad, and in the residential neighborhoods in and surrounding the downtown area. Preservation and rehabilitation efforts are a means of retaining and enhancing our community's unique attributes, and of encouraging development of high quality structures. Many buildings in Ellensburg's downtown that date back to the late 1800s and early 1900s have been restored, and are being used as restaurants, galleries, shops, offices, residences, and community gathering places.

This plan includes the adoption of the downtown historic district, residential historic district, and landmarks register by reference.

GOALS, POLICIES, & PROGRAMS

These historic preservation goals, policies, and programs are designed to work with the other elements to help support the acquisition, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of historic property.

Goal HP-1: Identify and protect archaeological and significant historic properties.

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| Policy A | Identify and protect significant archaeological and historic landmarks during the review process. |
| <i>Program 1</i> | Review and update the inventory of historic properties and murals that will inform proposals for new historic districts in Ellensburg. |
| <i>Program 2</i> | Use the inventory of historic properties in support of the continued application of an independent review process based on National, State, and local standards for historic preservation. |
| <i>Program 3</i> | Implement and expand the historic properties mitigation program. |
| <i>Program 4</i> | Develop criteria and review local guidelines to ensure project review for demolition, remodels, and infill development. |
| <i>Program 5</i> | Publicize and promote education programs on the definition of archaeological and historic properties and guidelines that set forth appropriate materials and architectural design standards reflecting the spacing, scale, and architectural characteristics of the National Register Historic district. |
| Policy B | Provide education materials that describe the history and distinctiveness of existing and proposed Historic Districts. |
| <i>Program 1</i> | Document and make use of technology and data platforms to publicize the existing architectural styles, building materials, spacing, and proportion within historic districts. |
| <i>Program 2</i> | Complete educational materials available in a variety of formats that outline the benefits of historic preservation and encourage renovation, restoration, and infill construction throughout the community. Materials should also include the necessary steps for renovation, restoration, landscaping, and street/access projects. |

Goal HP-2: Maintain the integrity and reuse of historic properties.

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| Policy A | Continue to encourage and facilitate adaptive reuse of historic buildings. |
| <i>Program 1</i> | Enhance and publicize the program of incentives to apply to renovation, rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings. |
| <i>Program 2</i> | Administer and review for effectiveness existing tax relief programs, new market housing credits, and property tax deferrals that encourage development of housing in the Downtown Historic District in a manner consistent with the area's historic character. |
| <i>Program 3</i> | Provide education on possible regulatory relief that may be available when conducting work on historic buildings. |
| <i>Program 4</i> | Investigate building code requirements from other municipalities for historic buildings to address fire suppression, exiting, and access requirements. |
| <i>Program 5</i> | Partner with local organizations to provide education programs for local designers and contractors in residential, industrial, and commercial historic building renovation techniques and opportunities that adhere to Secretary of Interior standards. |
| <i>Program 6</i> | Encourage mixing residential and non-residential uses in the Downtown Historic District and explore prohibiting first floor residential in commercial and mixed use buildings. |
| <i>Program 7</i> | Create new historic districts in residential areas bordering the existing downtown historic district. |
| <i>Program 8</i> | Uphold and reinforce design standards that help complement the appearance and design patterns in the immediate neighborhood of infill development projects. |
| <i>Program 9</i> | Encourage and support green building policies and practices, including but not limited to consideration of recycling materials from demolition projects, energy efficient building design, LEED, Built Green, and encouragement for deconstruction (the piece-by-piece disassembly of an existing building with reuse/recycling of much of the material). |

Goal HP-3: Retain clear physical evidence of our community’s history, traditions and heritage.

Policy A **Encourage development that contributes to the distinctive and mixed visual fabric of the City’s architectural character.**

Program 1 Identify historic buildings and land ownership to accommodate new uses.

Program 2 Review design guidelines and identify mechanisms or designs which can be used to accommodate and inform the design of larger tenants or connect them to the Downtown Historic District.

Policy B **Encourage new development that complements the architectural design of existing neighborhoods.**

Program 1 Provide design guidelines that promote compatible development.

Goal HP-4: Maintain and create civic buildings that reflect sense of community and public purpose.

Policy A **Reuse existing public buildings in such a way that civic and historic design elements are preserved.**

Program 1 Encourage school districts, CWU, City and County to reuse buildings or sale of buildings which allow the exterior of the building to be preserved and the interior modernized and/or preserved for current and future needs of the entity or organization rather than tear down.

Program 2 Prepare inventory and feasibility studies for future reuse of the city buildings.

Policy B **New public buildings should recognize historic design traditions present in the community.**

Program 1 Expand the land development code design standards to address public buildings both within and outside the historic core.

Goal HP-5: Use historic preservation as a means to economic vitality.

Policy A **Publicize historic preservation projects and highlight the economic benefits.**

Program 1 Continue to strengthen partnerships with state and other government agencies and funding sources for preservation, infill, energy efficiency and revitalization.

Policy B Partner with local organizations to create and provide resources for downtown businesses that take full advantage of the mixed historic character of the community.

Program 1 Create work plan and provide design assistance and review for the creation, renovation, and installation of 1) public lighting 2) signage – commercial and public, including wall murals 3) parking 4) public art 5) landscaping 6) access, including ADA, elevator and fire suppression and escape.

ACTION ITEMS

Historic Preservation Annual Work Plan

In conjunction with the Landmarks and Design Commission, develop an annual historic preservation and landmarks and design commission work plan.

POLICY CONNECTIONS

Policies and programs that address affordable and diverse housing options are in the **Housing** chapter.

The **Economic Development** chapter includes policies relating to maintaining downtown as a destination for visitors and residents.