

DENVER CITY COUNCIL



Proclamation No. 25-

A Proclamation Regarding Proposed Changes to Federal Historic Preservation Regulations

WHEREAS, for nearly 60 years, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act has required federal agencies to identify historic places, weigh the effects of their projects, and consult with state and local governments, Tribes, and the public before moving forward — not to stop projects, but to give those who know a place best a voice in what happens to it; and

WHEREAS the City and County of Denver is a Certified Local Government under this framework, with a formal seat at the table in reviewing federally connected projects that affect its historic resources; and for more than 50 years, Historic Denver has served as a trusted community steward and advocate, often working with the city and its residents to protect the places, stories, and communities that matter to Denver; and

WHEREAS, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation voted on July 24, 2026, to advance a sweeping rewrite of the Section 106 regulations making public participation optional and reduce consultation with state, Tribal, and local governments to a formality rather than a path to agreement; and

WHEREAS this rewrite also reduces Certified Local Governments such as Denver to optional invitees, exempts many federally funded projects from review, narrows what counts as a “historic property,” and lets federal agencies decide whether their own projects cause harm; and

WHEREAS Denver has lived through the consequences of this approach before, such as when the 1960s Skyline Urban Renewal Project cleared 27 blocks of downtown; when federal HUD funds cleared most of Auraria, Denver’s oldest neighborhood; and when Interstate 70 severed Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea, leaving damage still being repaired six decades later; and

WHEREAS these losses occurred before Section 106 had real force, and stand in contrast to what's possible when the process works, as shown by Denver’s Union Station, where a Section 106 review preserved the Great Hall, original ironwork, and staircases inside a modern transit hub; and

WHEREAS, in response to this threat, Historic Denver has worked to inform and mobilize residents, just as it has long fought to protect the places under threat closer to home; and

WHEREAS historic preservation has long been a bipartisan, urban-and-rural value shared by the people of Denver and Colorado, rooted in the question of who gets a say in the places where we live, work, and gather; and

WHEREAS the communities most affected — residents, Tribes, and local governments who know a place best — are precisely the voices this rewrite would cut out of the conversation.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE DENVER CITY COUNCIL:

Section 1. That the Denver City Council expresses its strong opposition to the proposed revisions to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, urges the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to withdraw or substantially revise the proposal, and encourages residents and preservation partners to make their voices heard during the public comment period.

Section 2. That the Clerk and Recorder of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that a copy be transmitted to Historic Denver.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL DATE

PRESIDENT

