
University Park Historic District

Land Use, Transportation, and Infrastructure

Kara Hahn, Landmark Planning & Regulatory Supervisor

March 19, 2024

Overview

Historic Districts in Denver

University Park Themes

Criteria

Public Comment & Outreach



Historic Districts in Denver

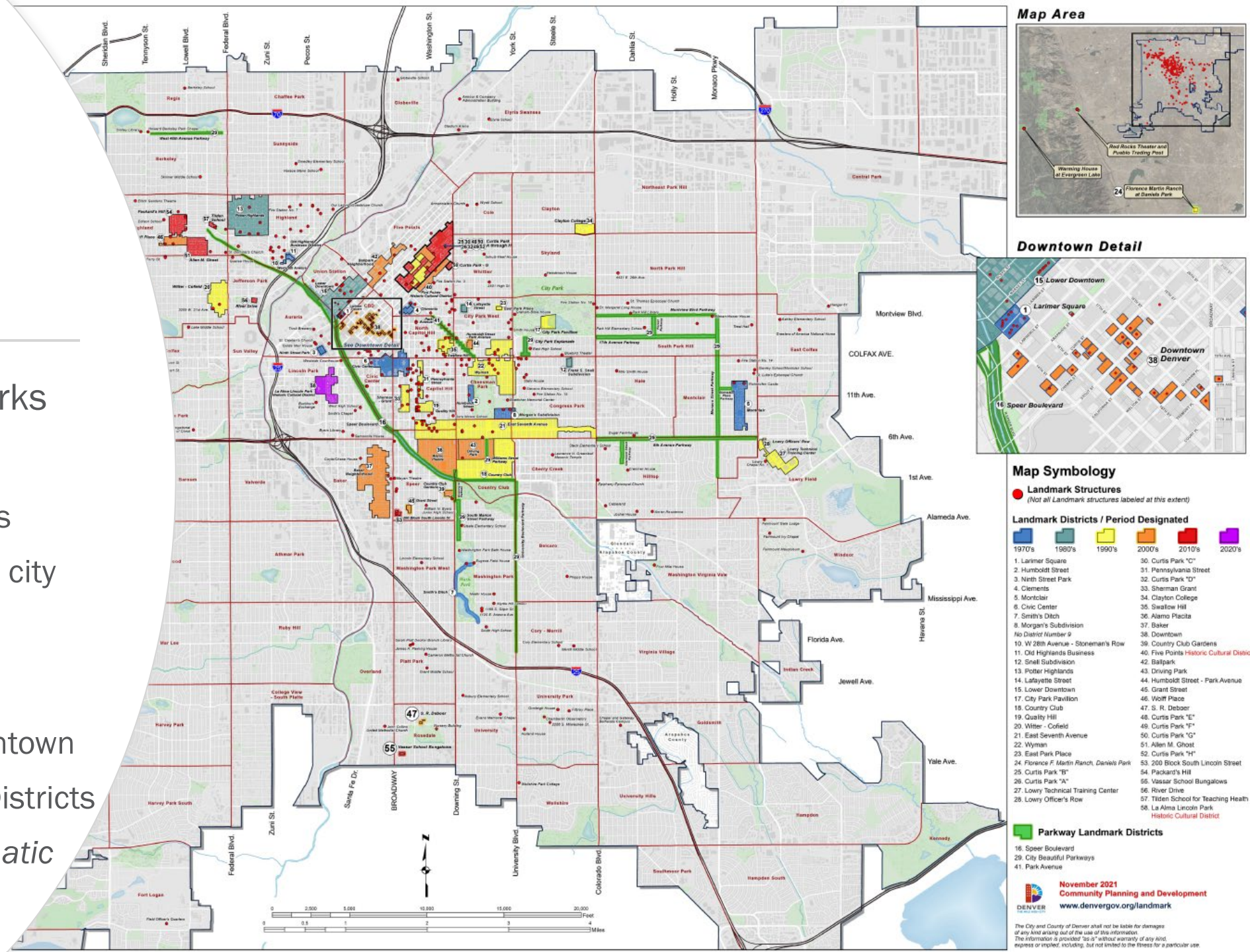
An aerial, black and white photograph of San Francisco, showing the city's dense urban landscape. The San Francisco City Hall, with its prominent dome, is visible in the upper left. The Transamerica Pyramid stands out in the center. The Golden Gate Bridge is visible in the distance, spanning the bay. The title '1967 Landmark Preservation Ordinance' is overlaid in large, bold, white text across the middle of the image.

1967 Landmark Preservation Ordinance

- Purpose:
 - Designate, preserve, and protect
 - Foster civic pride
 - Promote good urban design

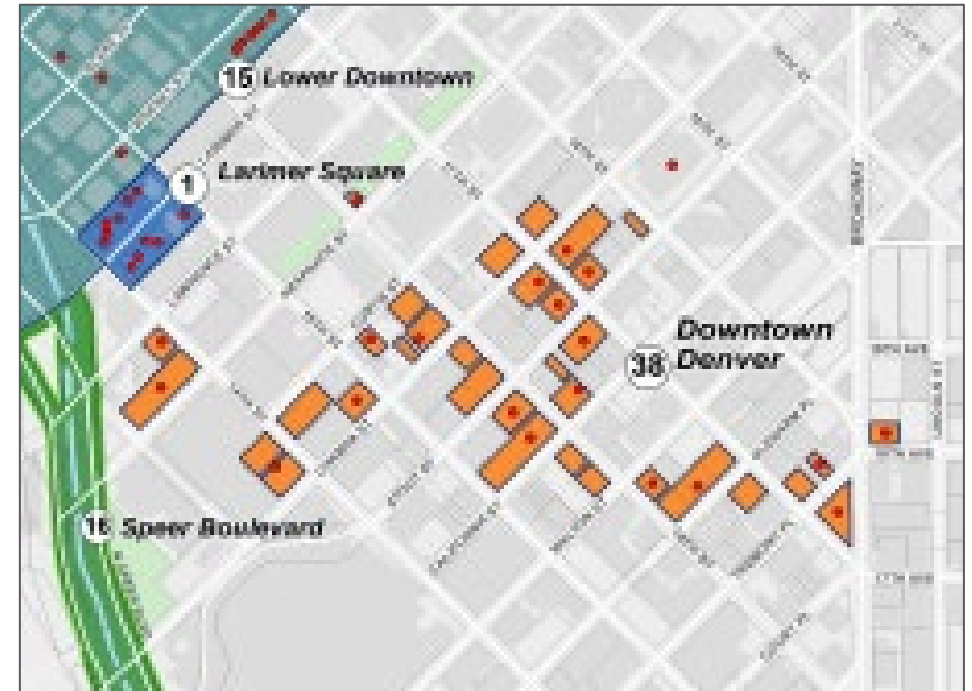
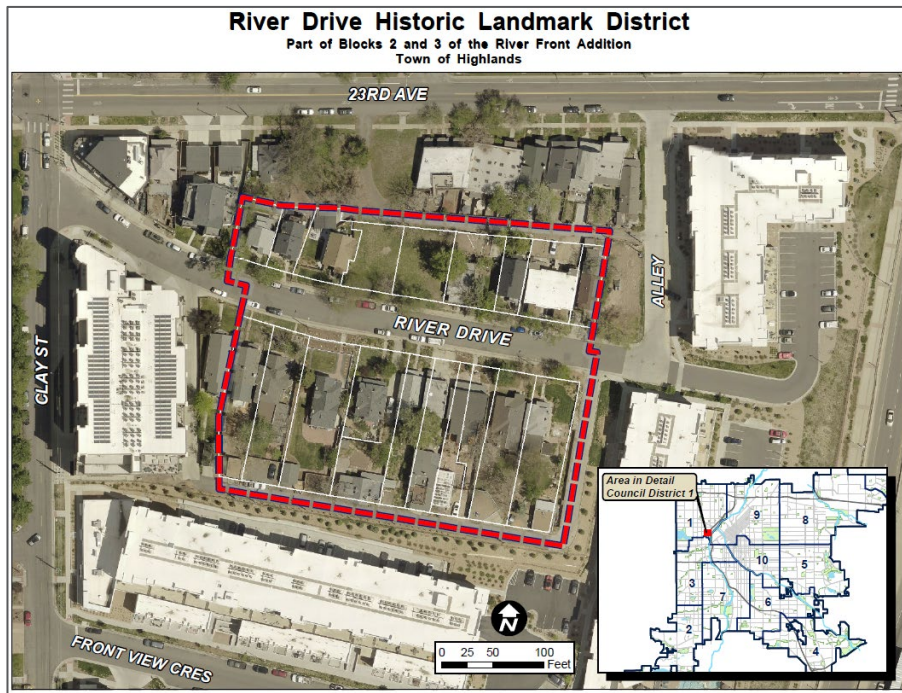
Individual Landmarks & Historic Districts

- 362 Individual Landmarks
- 59 Historic Districts
 - ~ 7,200 landmark buildings
 - ~ 160,000 buildings within city
- District composition
 - Primarily residential
 - Five commercial or downtown
 - Three Historic Cultural Districts
 - *One discontinuous thematic District*



Typical Historic Districts

Discontiguous Thematic Historic Districts





Discontiguous Thematic District

- Geographic area
- Historic themes
- Chronological period

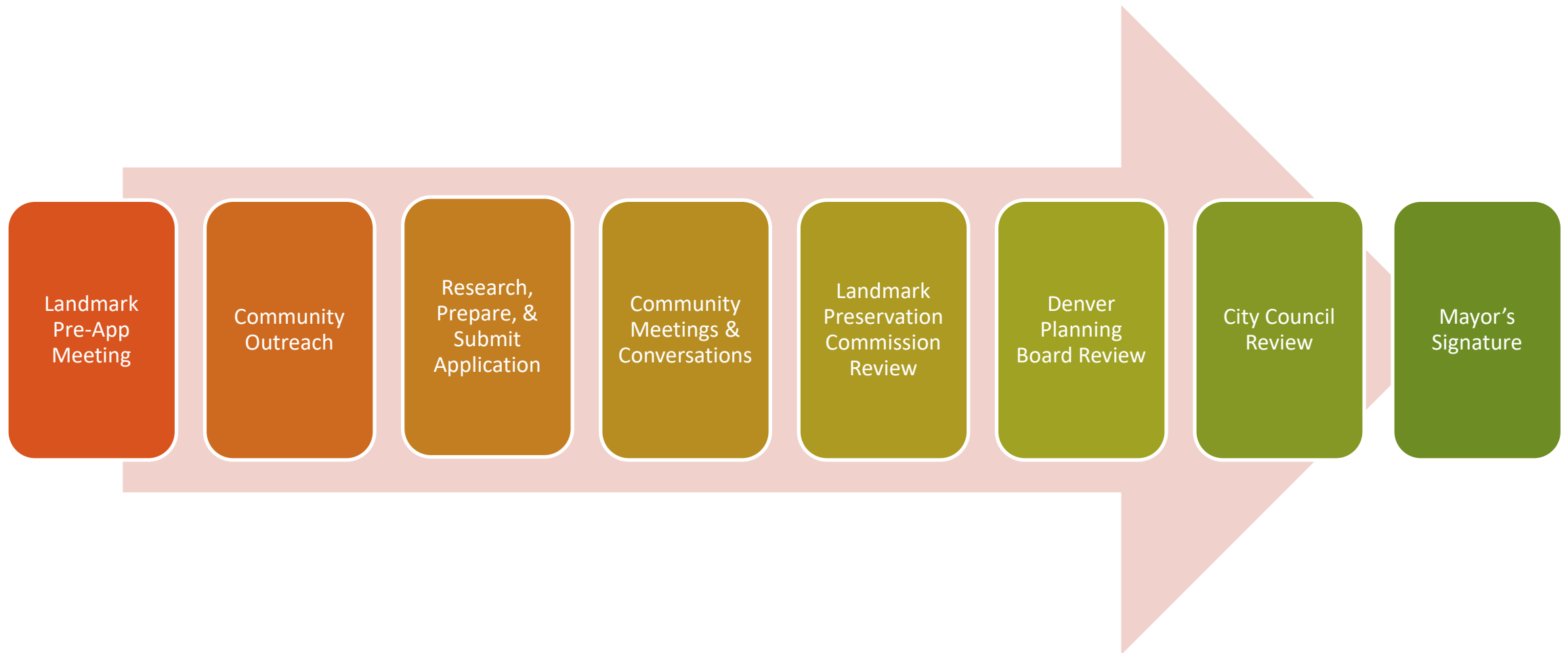
Who Can Apply for Designation?

Community-driven process

- Property owner
- Community Planning & Development manager
- *City Council Member*
- Three residents of Denver



Landmark Designation Process



Design Review

- Properties designated “as is”
 - No required improvements
- Design Guidelines
 - Preserve historic character of property
 - Provide clear regulations for owners, staff, and LPC
- Demolition highly discouraged
 - Requires Commission review



Landmark **does** review:

- ✓ *Exterior work that requires a building or zoning permit*
- ✓ New construction
- ✓ Additions
- ✓ Garages and ADUs
- ✓ Egress windows
- ✓ Window and door replacement
- ✓ Roofing
- ✓ Exterior alterations
- ✓ Electric & mechanical
- ✓ Fences and Retaining Walls
- ✓ Curb cuts
- ✓ Solar
- ✓ Signage



Landmark **does not** review:

- x Interior alterations
- x Paint colors
- x Repairs and maintenance (painting, minor replacement in kind, etc.)
- x Storm windows
- x Plants or trees
- x Work below grade



University Park Neighborhood

University Park Theme

A Utopian Methodist Suburb on the South Denver Plains, 1886-1967

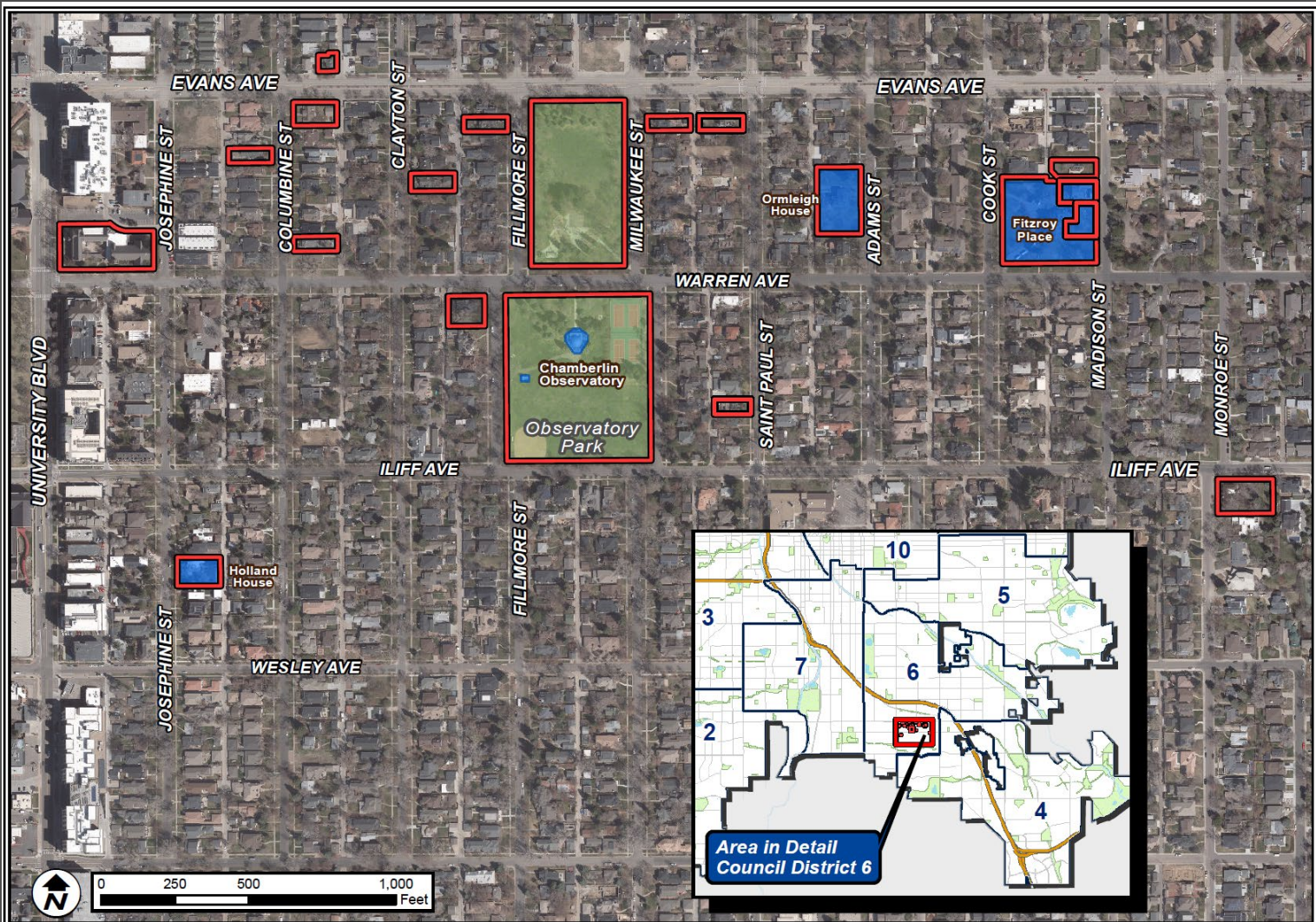




University Park Subcategories



- Founders & Supporters
- DU Promoters, Educators & Women
- Methodists Influences
 - Progressive Architecture





Proposed University Park Historic District

February 2024

-  Proposed District Property
-  Landmark Structure

Landmark Designation Criteria



Landmark Designation Eligibility

Districts must meet following *:

1. Maintains integrity
2. More than 30 years old, or exceptionally important
3. Meets at least three of ten criteria
4. LPC considers historic context

*Per Landmark Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 30, DRMC)

Designation Criteria: Meet 3 out of 10

History

- A. Historic development of city
- B. Recognized persons who had influence on society

C. Visible characteristics of architectural style or type

Architecture

- D. Significant example of recognized architect or master builder
- E. Significant innovation or technical achievement

Geography

- F. Familiar feature of neighborhood, due to physical character
- G. Understanding of urban environment through physical characteristics or rarity

Culture

- H. Cultural understanding of how the site was used by past generations
- I. Physical attribute that is source of pride or cultural understanding
- J. Social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth that contributed to culture

A. Direct association with historical development of city

- DU moves south
 - Downtown Denver
 - “Hilltop”
- Donated land
 - Campus & other land
 - Subdivided for sale



UNIVERSITY PARK

Scale 1"=400'
(Orig. Map—Scale 1"=200')

Avenues—100 ft. wide.
Streets—50 ft. wide, except
4th St., which is 100 ft. wide.
Alleys—20 ft. wide.
Lots—25 ft. by 150 ft.
Corner Lots—30.75 ft. by 150 ft.



A. Direct association with historical development of city

- Prominent Methodist leaders
 - Purchased lots as support
 - University Park neighborhood
- Limited amenities
 - Lacked water, trees, or transportation
- Large lots
 - Gardens & small farm animals



A. Direct association with historical development of city

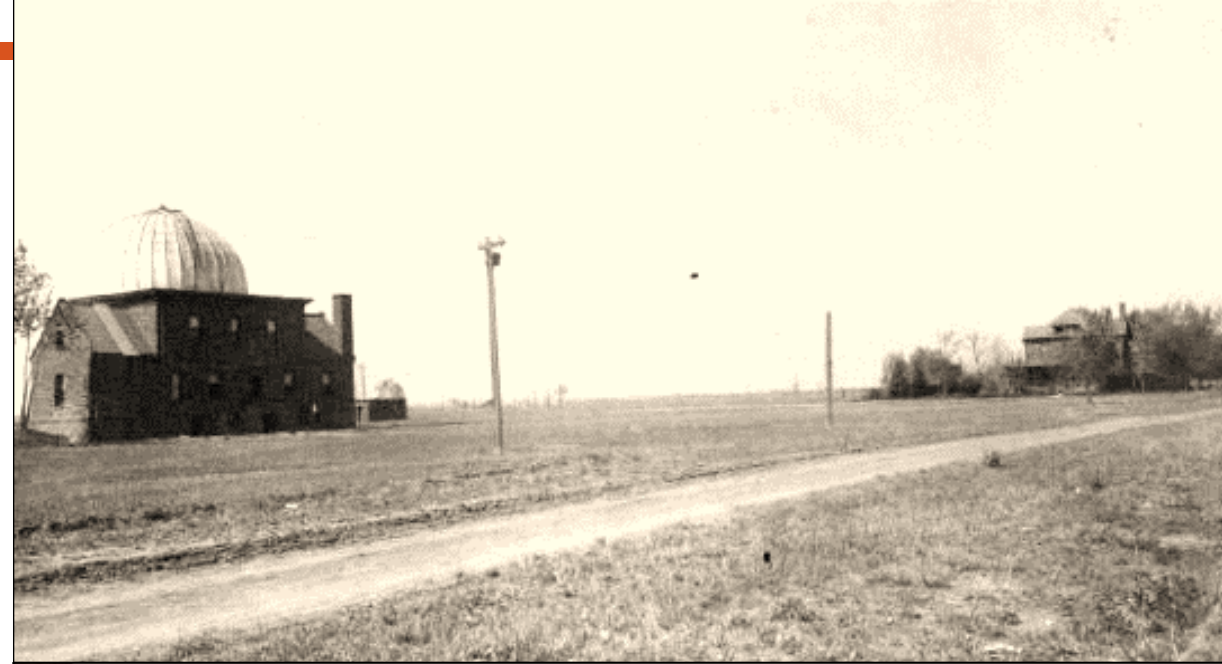


- Supporters housed boarders
 - Students & professors
- DU financial struggles
 - Built houses in lieu of salary
- DU planned three parks
 - Hired landscape architects
 - Observatory Park



B. Direct & substantial association with recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society

- Prof Herbert Howe & Fannie Shattuck Howe
 - Daughter of Methodist educator & DU supporter Joseph C. Shattuck
 - Dr. Howe nationally recognized astronomer
- Henry A. Buchtel
 - Methodist minister
 - DU Chancellor 1900
 - Colorado governor 1906





Elizabeth Iliff Warren, c. 1874. Source: Iliff School of Theology Archives.

B. Direct & substantial association with recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society

- Progressive women
 - Mary E. Holland
 - Martha Kimball
 - Alberta Bloom Iliff
 - Louise Iliff
- Elizabeth Iliff Warren
 - Multiple large donations
 - First female Board of Trustee

C. Embodies distinctive visible characteristics of architectural style or type



- Adjacent to DU
 - Progressive architecture
 - Stylistic-design laboratory
 - Early examples

**C. Embodies
distinctive visible
characteristics of
architectural style
or type**

- Styles throughout district
 - Queen Anne
 - Richardsonian
 - Foursquare
 - Bungalow
 - Romantic
 - Modern





F. Represents an established & familiar feature of neighborhood due to physical characteristics



- Settlement pattern
 - Sparces & remote location
 - Extensive lots
- Distinctive architecture
 - Varying styles
 - Two-story
- Post-War development
 - Minimal Traditional infill
 - One-story

F. Represents an established & familiar feature of neighborhood due to physical characteristics

- Larger-scale buildings
 - Non-residential
 - Grandiose architecture
 - Corner lots
 - Along busy roads



Integrity:

Would prior residents recognize the property today?



Integrity

- Retains form & characteristics
 - Minimum alterations
 - Maintains aspects of integrity
 - Original location
 - Feeling, setting, and association
 - Design, materials, & workmanship
-



Historic Context & Period of Significance

- Context strongly interrelated
 - Areas of significance
 - Theme & subcategories
 - Period of significance
- Period of significance
 - 1886 -1967
 - Construction of first extant building
 - Deaths of Alberta Iliff and Louise Iliff



Planning Board Considerations

Planning Board Considerations

- Per Landmark Ordinance
- City Council recommendation
- Consider designation with respect to:
 1. Relationship to Comprehensive Plan
 2. Effect of designation upon surrounding neighborhood
 3. Such other planning considerations as may be relevant



Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures & Districts



Collfax Avenue A, Frank S. Snell Subdivision Historic District. Historic photo on left 1911; current photo on right 2014.


Comprehensive Plan

- Goal 1: Create city of complete neighborhoods
 - Strategy D:
 - Encourage quality infill
- Goal 2: Enhance neighborhoods
 - Strategy B:
 - Improve design quality
 - Strategy C:
 - Create people-oriented places - embrace community character

Comprehensive Plan

- Goal 3: Preserve authenticity & celebrate history, architecture & culture
 - Strategy B
 - Commitment to historic districts & landmarks
 - Increase awareness of benefits of preservation
 - Strategy C
 - Ensure city policies support historic preservation
 - Strategy E
 - Support stewardship & reuse of buildings





Blueprint Denver

- Aligns with recommendations
 - Embrace existing character & cultural heritage
 - Preserve historic features
 - Ensure infill is compatible with character of the district
 - Neighborhoods retain unique character



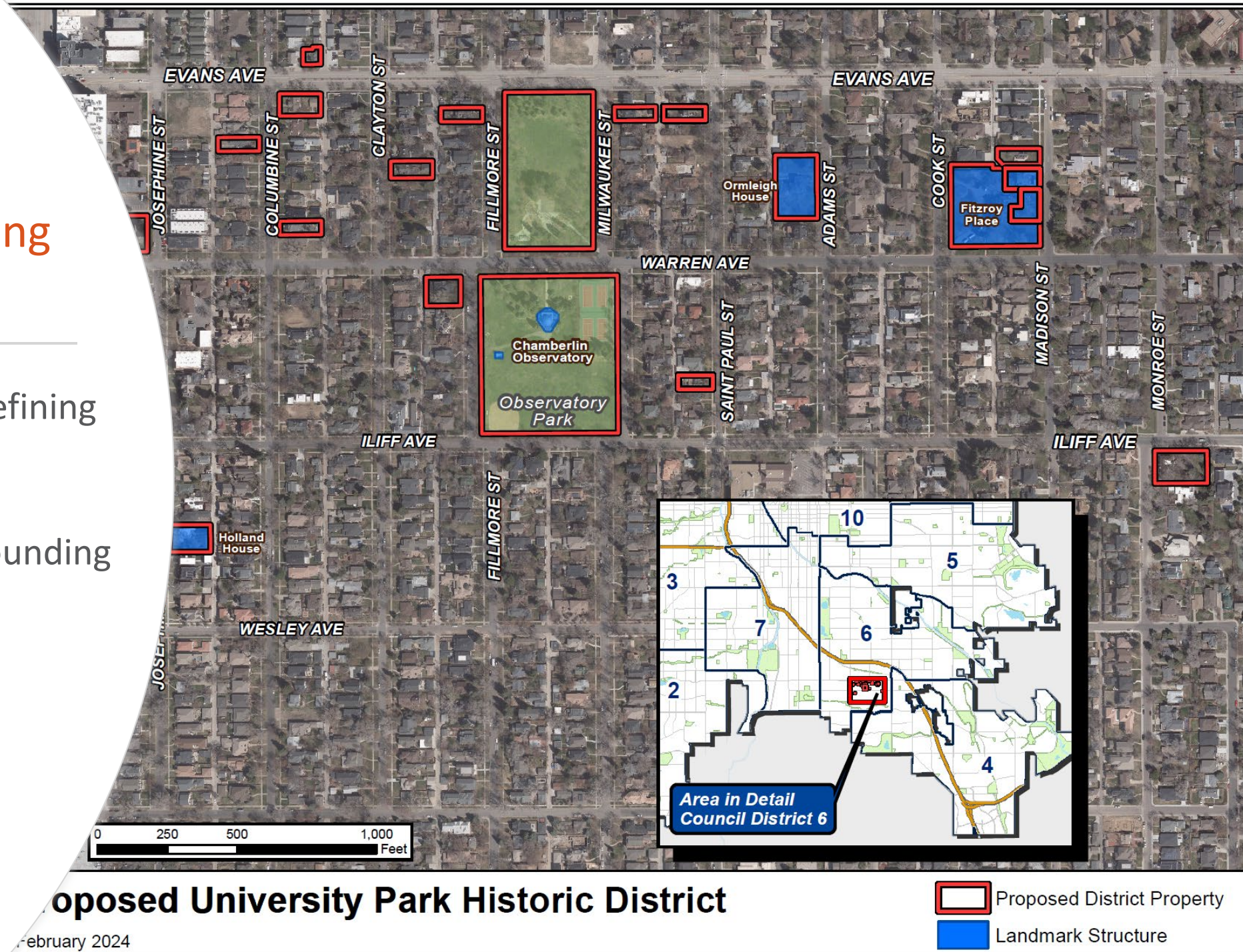
University Park Neighborhood Plan

- Primary Goal
 - High quality design
 - Preserving historic resources
- Support landmark designations of districts that reflect outstanding elements of neighborhood's cultural, geographic, artistic, social, economic, political, architectural or historic heritage



Effect on Surrounding Areas

- Preserve character defining features of district
- Little impact on surrounding neighborhoods



Public Comment & Outreach

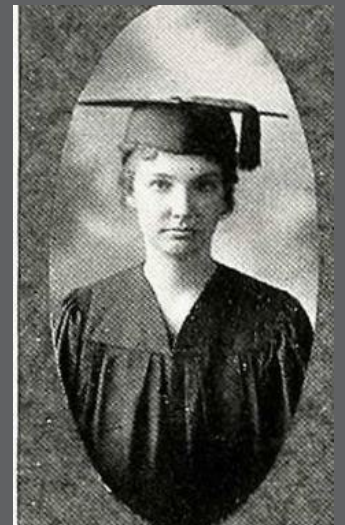
Public Comments

- RNOs, Organizations, & Non-profits
 - University Park Community Council letter of support
 - Denver Parks and Recreation letter of support
 - Historic Denver letter of support
 - Children's Art School letter of support
 - Accelerated School letter of support
 - University of Denver letter of opposition
- Individuals in support
 - 15 in support
 - 1 in opposition to inclusion of Buchtel Bungalow



Outreach

- Extensive Public Outreach
 - Multiple visits to properties
 - Provided “history book,” flyers, letters
 - Numerous articles in newsletter
- Community Meetings
 - Neighborhood sponsored
 - City hosted
 - In-person and virtual



Ordinance Criteria

- Application meets at least three criteria
 - A. It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;
 - B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;
 - C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;
 - F. It represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics;
 - Retains Integrity
-
- Consider a proposed designation with respect to:
 1. Its relationship to the Denver Comprehensive Plan;
 2. The effect of the designation upon the surrounding neighborhood; and
 3. Such other planning considerations as may be relevant to the proposed designation or amendments

Based on ordinance designation criteria and on the recommendations of the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) and Denver Planning Board, staff recommends forwarding the application to the full council.