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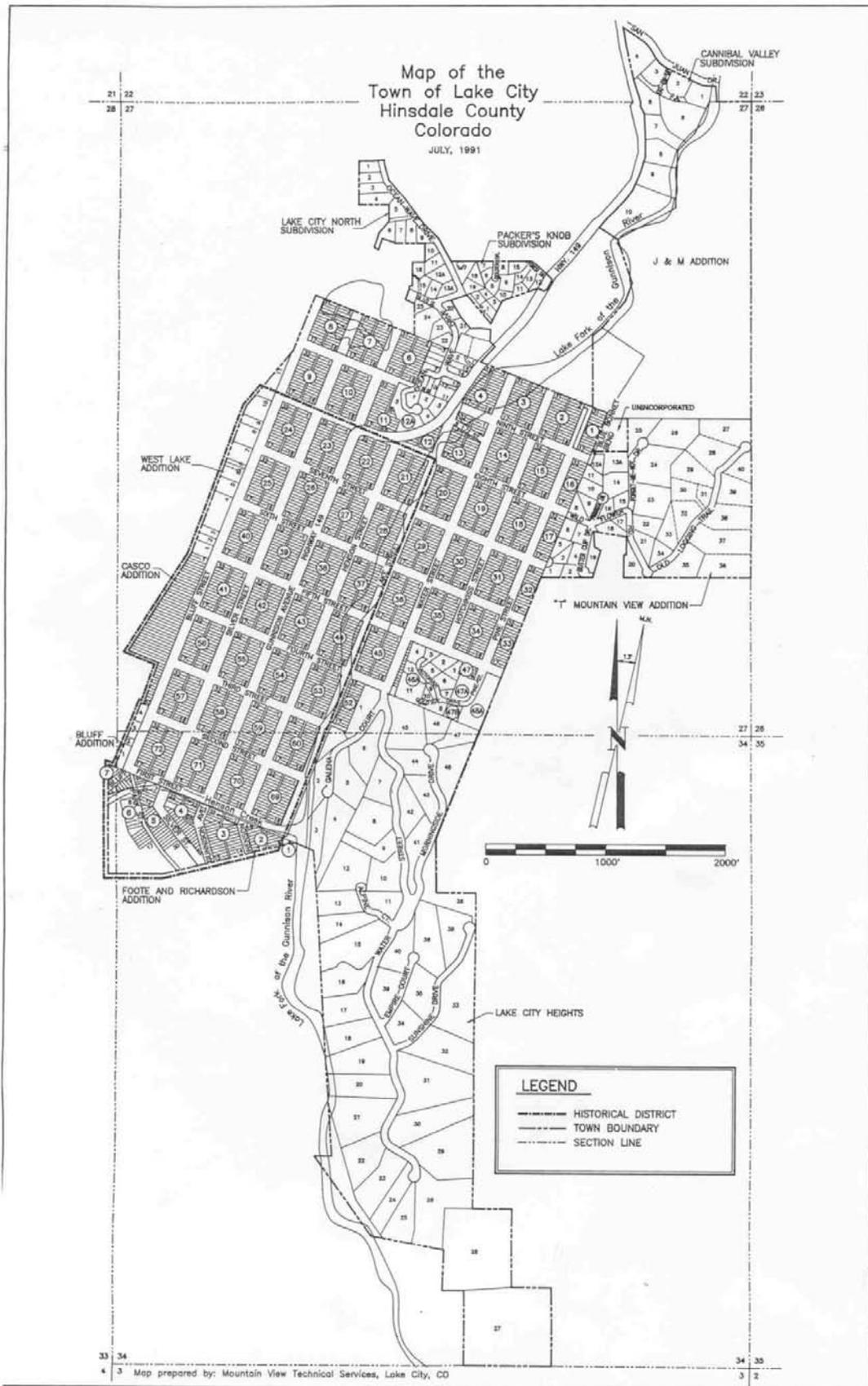
## **Photographs:**

Provided by *Lake City Silver World* and Robert Stigall, where noted.

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## **Introduction**

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Lake City is a small mountain town, incorporated in 1875 in the San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado. The town was shaped by nineteenth-century mining and twentieth-century tourism. Lake City's remote location and high altitude also influenced local growth and the design of its historic architecture. The town is located 55 miles southwest of Gunnison and 55 miles northwest of Creede, at an elevation of 8,671 feet.

Lake City has a winter population of 378 and summer population of 2,500. It is located on the Alpine Loop and the Silver Thread National Scenic Byways, and summer tourism is a primary industry. Lake City is the county seat and the only municipality within Hinsdale County, which is comprised of 97% National Forests and other public lands. With around 800 year-round residents, it is one of the least populated counties in the U.S.

A portion of the historic Lake City townsite, shown on the map on page 5, was designated as a National Register Historic District in 1978 for the town's role in the development of the American West. To protect the Lake City Historic District, the town adopted a local Historic Preservation Ordinance and Design Guidelines in 1984. Preserving the Historic District continues to be one of the town's major priorities today.



**Lake City in the late 1800s, facing southeast. Photo courtesy of the *Silver World*.**

## **Purpose**

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The Design Guidelines serve as a tool for preserving the Lake City Historic District. They inform property owners and builders about compatible and appropriate design for new construction within the District. They provide design expectations for additions and alterations made to the District's historic buildings. They also advise property owners on preserving their historic commercial buildings and houses.

The Design Guidelines are used by the Lake City Building Inspector, Preservation Review Officer, and Board of Trustees as they review design plans for construction projects within the Historic District. This document also describes the town's history and illustrates its architectural styles to help people understand, appreciate, and preserve Lake City's architectural heritage. The Design Guidelines are enforced by the town's 1984 Historic Preservation Ordinance. They also reflect *The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and *Standards for Preservation*, provided in the **Appendices**.

## ***In This Book***

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***Frequently Asked Questions*** explains how the Lake City Design Guidelines affect builders, developers, and owners of historic properties.

***Lake City's Historic Preservation Ordinance*** describes the local preservation ordinance and the Town's design review process.

***Lake City's Historic Influences*** tells how historic events and influences shaped the town.

***Lake City's Architectural Heritage*** describes the development patterns and architectural styles of the town's historic commercial buildings and residences.

***General Building Requirements*** and ***General Design Guidelines*** identify general requirements and guidelines that apply to all construction projects within the Lake City Historic District.

***Residential Treatment Area*** provides guidelines for compatible design of new construction within the Residential Treatment Area of the Historic District. It also contains guidelines for preserving and altering historic houses within the area.

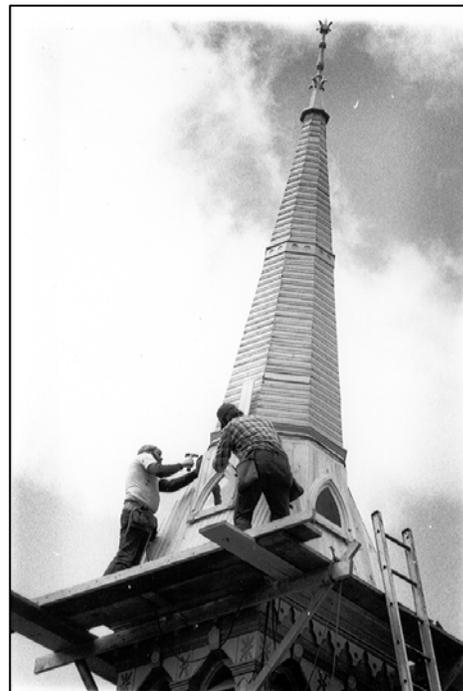
***Business Treatment Area*** provides guidelines for compatible design of new commercial construction in the Business Treatment Area of the Historic District. It also contains guidelines for preserving and altering historic buildings within the area.

***Complimentary Treatment Area*** addresses compatible design of new construction in this area. It also contains guidelines for preserving and altering historic buildings within the area.

The ***Appendices*** contains Preservation Treatment Approaches recommended by the Secretary of the Interior, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation*, and a directory of preservation resources.

The ***Glossary*** defines architectural, planning, and historic preservation terms.

**Carpenters repairing church steeple.  
Photo courtesy of the  
*Silver World.***



# ***Frequently Asked Questions***

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## ***Why do we need Design Guidelines for Lake City?***

The Design Guidelines help preserve the historic character of Lake City, which is so appealing to residents and visitors. The town's historic buildings and houses convey its interesting past. Built during the various boom periods, these places reflect the silver and gold mining activity and the twentieth-century rise in tourism. Collectively, the historic buildings contribute to the unique character of the town and its economy.

Following these guidelines helps preserve the town's historic properties and protect the appearance of the Historic District. An incompatible new building or an inappropriate addition could drastically change the character of the Lake City Historic District.

The Design Guidelines inform property owners about compatible restoration and alterations. It also provides design ideas for property owners, contractors, and developers.

Inquire at Town Hall for more information about Lake City's design review process and the date and time of Town Board of Trustee meetings.

## ***How do the Design Guidelines affect new construction?***

The Town requires that new construction in the Historic District respect the character of the historic buildings in the district. A new building or an addition to a historic building within the Historic District must follow these Design Guidelines. New construction must be compatible with the historic buildings in size, scale, exterior materials, and decorative elements. A new building should fit in with the older buildings, but not attempt to duplicate or mimic the historic design. The ***Residential Treatment Area, Business Treatment Area***, and ***Complimentary Treatment Area*** chapters provide specific information and examples.

## ***How do the Design Guidelines affect preserving, maintaining, or renovating historic buildings and houses?***

Owners of historic properties within the Historic District must preserve the historic appearance of their buildings. Property owners can remodel and make whatever changes they wish inside their properties, although they are encouraged to preserve unique interior features. Following the Guidelines for the exterior of a historic property helps to preserve the Lake City's historic character.

## ***Are there financial incentives for restoring a historic property?***

Designated State or National Register properties may qualify for Colorado or federal tax credits for approved preservation work. For more information on this program, contact the Colorado Historical Society listed in the ***Appendices***.

A historic property within the Lake City Historic District could be eligible for a State Historical Fund (SHF) grant. These grant funds are generated by tax revenues from legalized gaming and are available for approved exterior preservation work. Grants are awarded for projects with a demonstrated public benefit. A SHF project must follow *The Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. SHF grants have funded preservation work on the Lake City Town Hall, Hinsdale County Courthouse, and Hinsdale County Museum.

# **Lake City's Historic Preservation Ordinance**

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During the 1970s, the Colorado Historical Society surveyed many historic Colorado towns to identify historic properties and districts eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Lake City was one of several mountain mining towns designated as a National Register Historic District because of its significant history and many intact historic properties. To protect the Historic District, the Town Board adopted the Historic Preservation Ordinance to:

1. Foster civic pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past and promote the use of the Historic District for the education and pleasure of the Town's citizens.
2. Protect the unique scenic and historic atmosphere and character of the Town and protect the architectural, cultural and aesthetic heritage of the Town.
3. Strengthen the Town's economy by protecting and enhancing the Town's attractions for visitors.
4. Preserve and protect the continued existence of historical structures and sites within the Town.
5. Draw a reasonable balance between the desires of the property owners and the preservation of the Town's heritage, while avoiding the imposition of an unreasonable economic hardship.
6. Prevent the use of materials or design in the repair, construction, reconstruction, or remodeling of structures which:
  - (a) Adversely affect others property values, the benefits of occupancy of other property, or the desirability of the District for business or residential use; or
  - (b) Are hazardous or are incompatible with the historic character of the District.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance also established Design Guidelines to influence the design of new construction and of alterations and additions made to historic properties. This Design Guidelines document expands upon the earlier guidelines.

## **Historic District Boundaries**

The Lake City Historic District, shown on the facing page, is bounded by Eighth Street on the north, Lake Street/Lake Fork River on the east, the bluff on the west, and the southern edge of the Foote and Richardson Addition on the south.

It includes a portion of the original 1875 town plat and four additions west of the Lake Fork made around 1880 — the Foote and Richardson, West Lake, Casco, and Bluff additions.

Gunnison Avenue, the main thoroughfare through town is also State Highway 149.

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Map of Lake City Historic District**

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## ***Lake City's Historic Influences***

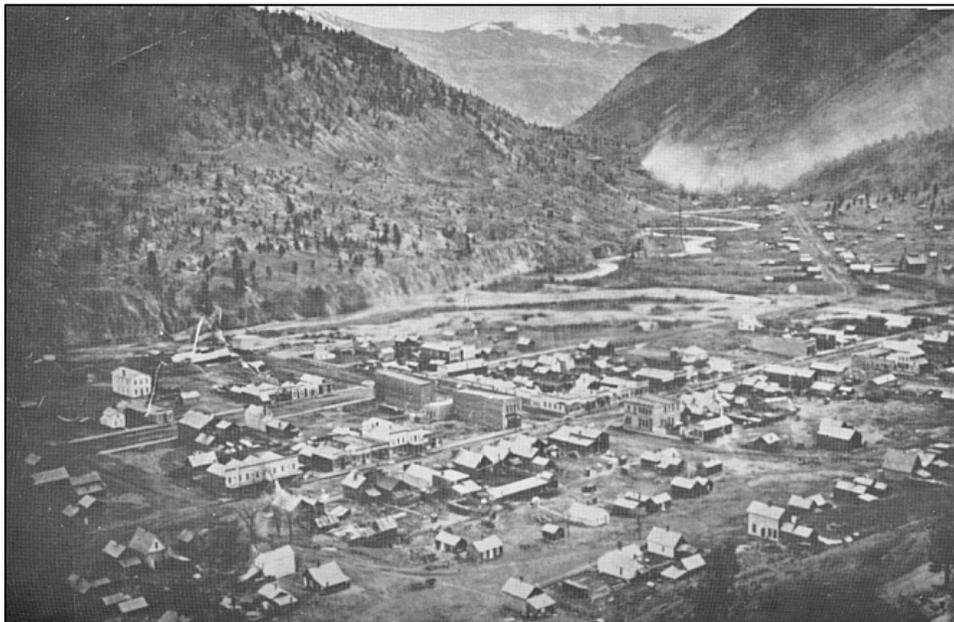
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Lake City was founded in 1874 as a mining supply town at the edge of the San Juan mining region, and was incorporated the following year. It is located in a small mountain valley at the northeastern edge of the San Juan Mountains. It has an elevation of 8,671 feet and is bounded on three sides by large bluffs and hills. Two main rivers, Henson Creek and the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River, merge on the south end of town to flow north to drain into the Gunnison River.

Platted along the San Juan & Saguache Toll Road, the town was incorporated in 1875. Silver mining expanded in the southwestern mountains, and Lake City grew as a supply center providing goods and services to prospectors, miners, and mining operations. Construction of the Lake City Branch of the D&RG Railroad in 1889 boosted the mining industry and contributed to the town's growth. The Silver Panic of 1893 that devastated the silver mining industry throughout the Rocky Mountain West also reduced mining activity in Lake City. Nevertheless, gold, lead, zinc, and silver mining continued locally into the 1900s.

As mining waned, Lake City gained appeal as a tourist resort offering trout fishing and unsurpassed scenery. By the 1920s, road improvements and the increased availability of the automobile made the area more accessible. Summer tourism became the primary industry, however growth was gradual until the late 1900s.

Today, Lake City faces steady new development. Several new residential additions have been annexed, and new construction is slowly ongoing within the Historic District as well. These Design Guidelines have been prepared to ensure that the Historic District remains authentic and intact.



**Lake City lies in a small mountain valley. Facing southeast, the confluence of Henson Creek and the Lake Fork is visible at the center. Circa 1880. Photograph courtesy of the *Silver World*.**

## ***Pioneer Settlement and Mining Supply Center***

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During initial settlement of Colorado Territory, the Ute and Mountain Ute tribes occupied the San Juan Mountains and the surrounding area. Prospectors trespassing in the San Juans discovered precious mineral deposits in the early 1870s. They pressured the U. S. government for access to the region. The U. S. Senate ratified the Brunot Agreement in 1873, which ultimately forced the Native Americans to move from the San Juans onto reservations at the southwestern corner of Colorado and in Utah in the 1880s.

The Brunot Agreement and removal of the Utes immediately opened up the San Juan region to prospecting, mining, and settlement. Hinsdale County was created in 1874, and the San Juan & Saguache Toll Road built that year. Enos Throop Hotchkiss, the toll road builder, discovered gold near present-day Lake City. He helped found Lake City in 1874, which was incorporated the following year. The Hinsdale County seat was moved from San Juan City to Lake City in 1875.

Five mining districts were established in Hinsdale County — the Lake, Galena, Park, Sherman, and Carson districts. The two principal producers were the Lake District and Galena District. The Lake District extended three miles west and nine miles south of Lake City. The Galena District stretched westward along Henson Creek and its tributaries to the Ouray and San Juan county lines. Enos Hotchkiss's gold claim at Lake San Cristobal, four miles south of Lake City, was developed as the Golden Fleece Mine. Silver was mined along Henson Creek southwest of town; the Hidden Treasure located three miles up Henson Creek was one of the largest strikes.

Investors built the Henson Creek and Uncompaghre Toll Road to reach mineral deposits in the Lake and Galena mining districts. The steep, narrow canyon road prohibited transportation of mineral ore in large quantities, so processing mills were built near mine sites. The Ute and Ulay Mine four miles southwest of town was a large operation, and some of its historic mining infrastructure still remains. Capitol City, a mining camp ten miles southwest of Lake City, contained numerous mines, the circa 1875 Lee Mining and Smelting Company, and the 1927 – 1928 Empire Chief mill that processed lead, silver, and zinc ore. Near the summit of Engineer Pass, the Frank Hough Mine produced copper, silver, and gold from 1882 to 1900.



**Historic Gunnison Avenue had many false front commercial buildings. Photo circa 1890s, courtesy of the *Silver World*.**

## ***Lake City's Historic Influences***

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Lake City was incorporated on August 16, 1875. The Lake City Town Company platted the 260-acre original town site, which consisted of 72 blocks of 32 lots, 25' x 125' in size. Many newcomers arrived via two-horse wagon, paying three dollars to travel the San Juan & Saguache Toll Road. Others rode the Barlow and Sanderson's Stage Line, which provided tri-weekly coach service from Saguache to Silverton, via Lake City. By 1880, several residential additions had been made. These included the Foote & Richardson's and Samuel Wade's additions, and the Casco Placer and West Lake divisions.

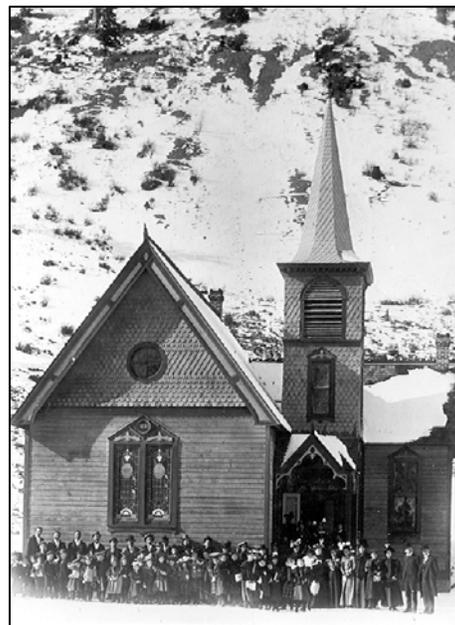
Lake City was a mining supply center, not a mining camp, and early residents cultivated it as a civilized and cultured community. Several churches were built in the 1870s, designed in the elaborate architectural styles popular at that time. Four of these remain carefully preserved today. Local citizens transplanted cottonwood trees from near Henson Creek and built irrigation ditches to water the trees, which remain as a character-defining feature of the Lake City Historic District.

Early Lake Citizens included mine owners, merchants, and businessmen, who lived with their families in the residential neighborhoods. Some miners lived in town, but most resided in boarding houses at the outlying mines, visiting the town for Saturday night recreation. "Hell's Acre," a redlight district at the southwest corner of town offered entertainment and vice, until a fire consumed nearly all the structures.

By 1877, the town had more than 2,000 inhabitants and at least 500 buildings. The solid, masonry design of the Hough Block, Bank Block, and Finley Block expressed the vision of the early civic leaders, who considered Lake City the metropolis of the silvery San Juans. The commercial district contained several other brick buildings and numerous false front structures. Businesses included a bank, grocery stores, bakeries, drugstores, laundries, barber shops, black smith shops, restaurants, saloons, assayers, jewelry stores, a brewery, and the Silver World newspaper. Several hotels provided lodging for visitors and newcomers. Several ore processing plants had been completed, including the Crooke Smelting Works, Gieson Lixivation Works, and the Ocean Wave Smelting Works.

Many dwellings were designed in styles popular at that time. Others were log cabins and simple woodframe structures. Residents organized construction of the Presbyterian Church, Catholic Church, Baptist, and Episcopal churches. Townsfolk also spearheaded the 1880 construction of the Lake City School designed by architect Robert Roeschlaub. The first licensed architect in the state, Roeschlaub designed many public facilities and private buildings and residences around the state. The 1877 Hinsdale County Courthouse and 1883 Armory Building and Opera House met other public needs.

**Congregation in front of the Baptist Church, around 1900.  
Photo courtesy of CHS.**



## ***Lake City's Historic Influences***

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Several events motivated local construction. A devastating fire leveled the 300 block of Gunnison Avenue in 1879, which was subsequently rebuilt. (The large brick Brockett Block, at the northwest corner of Gunnison and Third was rebuilt, but was demolished in the 1940s.) A mineral strike in the early 1880s triggered a small building boom.

The impact of mining and town building on the natural environment were soon noticeable. Lake City's early growth rapidly stripped the forests from the surrounding mountains, as trees were cut down for building lumber, mining operations, and fuel wood. The remains of "cave" methods of silver mining are visible south of town along the Lake Fork and southwest of town along Henson Creek. Remnants of historic mining include deteriorating structures north of Lake San Cristobal, weathered mining camps south of the lake, and the Ute and Ulay Mine and other mines on upper Henson Creek.

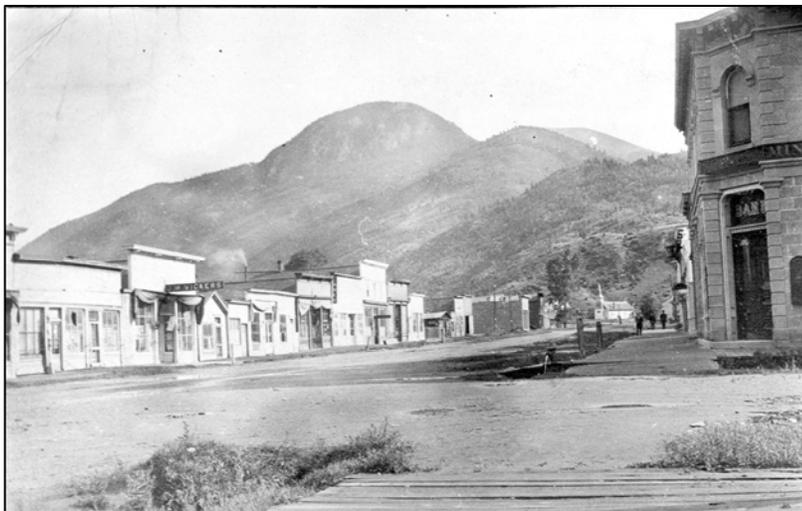
## ***The Railroad and the Second Mining Era***

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The Lake City Branch of the D&RG Railroad was completed south from Sapinero Junction in 1889. The railroad brought a measure of prosperity to the Lake City area and stimulated mining operations for the next decade. It provided efficient transportation for ore concentrates from the local mills to Pueblo and Denver, and it furnished economical shipment of goods and supplies into town. In 1890, twenty mines were shipping ore in the Lake City quadrant.

The town gained several civic improvements too. In 1890, a municipal water system was installed, financed by municipal bonds. The following year, a local power plant began providing electricity for houses and streets. In the early 1890s, many new local residences were built, including several in the elaborate Queen Anne style so popular in the late nineteenth century.

Mining continued in the Lake City area despite the 1893 Silver Panic, which drastically decreased silver mining throughout the Rocky Mountain West. By 1895, Hinsdale County gold production had tripled, lead production had doubled, and silver was being mined in larger quantities to compensate for the steep decline in the price of silver. In 1897, there were nearly 500 men working in the mines and some 108 mines and prospects. Mineral extraction continued as a local economic base for another decade. Mining dwindled as precious metals prices declined and gold and silver deposits were depleted. To bolster the local economy, Lake City began promoting its tourism assets as well as its mining resources.



**Vacant storefronts on the east side of the 200 block of Silver Street, circa 1910. These burned down in 1915. Photograph courtesy of the *Silver World*.**

## **Tourism**

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Around the turn of the century, Lake City turned to tourism to supplement the local economy. The 1895 publication, "Resources and Mineral Wealth of Hinsdale County," mentioned the area's scenic opportunities.

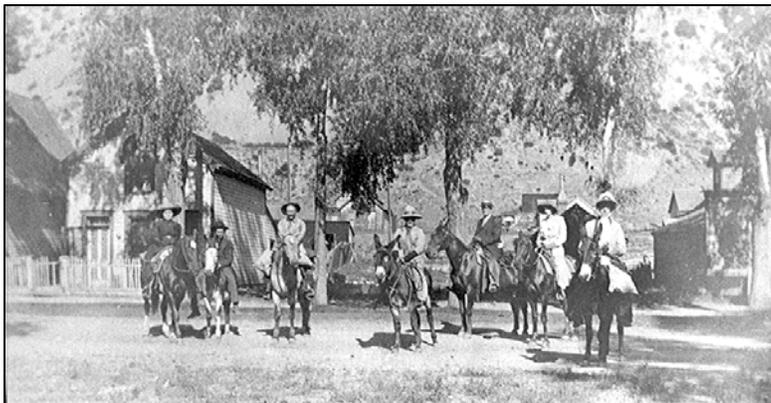
An April 1913 issue of the *Lake City Times* advertised the town as "A Place to Fish and Enjoy the Summer Season... [and] A Place to Mine, Prospect or Ranch with Pleasure and Profit." The availability of inexpensive properties and abundance of mountain scenery and unparalleled trout fishing began attracting tourists. Fishing and horseback riding were popular recreations. The D&RG railroad that followed the Lake Fork into town catered to fishermen by dropping them off at favorite fishing holes along the Lake Fork.



**Boaters on Lake San Cristobal. The town touted the scenic opportunities too, in the 1895 publication *Resources and Mineral Wealth of Hinsdale County*.**

The Wuppermans of Texas were one of the first "summer" families. They purchased a large historic house on Gunnison Avenue in 1912, and arrived via railroad each summer, shipping their touring car with them. By 1920, road improvements enabled visitors to drive to town in automobiles.

Tourist lodgings varied. Historic inns like the Occidental Hotel and Pueblo House accommodated tourists, many of whom stayed for lengthy visits. The Lake Shore Inn at San Cristobal was one of the earliest tourist resorts, built in 1917 by Frank C. French. In the 1920s, a half dozen rustic log cabins were built as the T-Mountain View resort on the hillside a half-mile east of town. The Texan Resort opened alongside the Lake Fork south of town in the 1930s, featuring rustic cabins and trout fishing. Construction of tourist cabin complexes continued, with the Town Square Cabins in 1938, G&M Cabins around 1945, and Alpine Village complex in 1946. Because of the large stock of vacant houses left from mining period, few private residences were constructed until the mid 1900s. After World War II, individuals began building individual vacation cabins in and around town.



**Horseback riding was a popular past-time. Photo circa 1930, courtesy of the *Silver World*.**

## ***Historic Preservation in Lake City***

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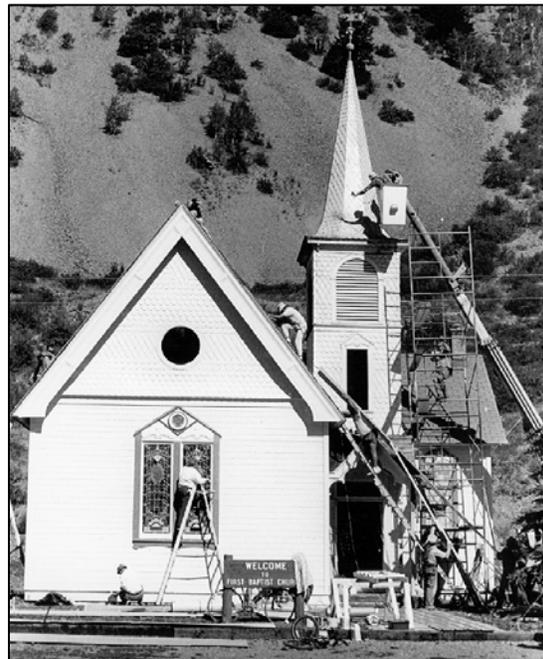
Lake City's remote location helped preserve the buildings remaining from the nineteenth-century. Twentieth-century tourism aided preservation too, with summer residents purchasing and repairing aging empty residences. During most of the 1900s, the town's weak economy discouraged new construction and prevented the modern "improvements" to historic buildings that occurred in many other towns. Lake City became a National Register Historic District in 1978. In 1984, the Town Board of Trustees adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance and Design Guidelines to protect the Historic District.

In recent decades, a great deal of preservation work has occurred in Lake City. The Bank Block was restored to its historic appearance. In 1983, a commercial banking business opened in the building — the local first bank in nearly 70 years. Local carpenters and property owners have worked hard to preserve the town's historic houses, commercial buildings, and churches. During the 1990s, SHF grants aided preservation work on the Hinsdale County Courthouse, the Town Hall (historic Armory Building and Opera House), and the Finley Block, which houses the Hinsdale County Historic Society Museum. Historic preservation also has been a source of local economic development. Preservation projects have provided employment for a number of residents.

The Town has helped conserve the Historic District by applying the 1984 Design Guidelines to construction projects within the District. Through these various efforts, the Lake City Historic District retains its historic character and serves as a valued community asset and a popular attraction for visitors.



**Local painters at the Youman-Carey House. Photo courtesy of the *Silver World*.**



**A work crew from Texas at the Baptist Church. Photo courtesy of the *Silver World*.**

## ***Lake City's Architectural Heritage***

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The historic buildings and houses of Lake City convey the town's history as the supply center for the San Juan Mountain mining region. The town's layout reveals town founders' careful planning, and its commercial buildings and residences communicate the civic pride of early citizens who chose architectural styles imported from the East. The townsite was platted using the grid system and oriented north-northwest. The north-south streets have proper names and parallel the river. The east-west streets are numerical, beginning at Henson Creek and advancing north.



**Entering Lake City, facing south on Gunnison Avenue.**

The Lake City Historic District encompasses the area lying south of Eighth Street, west of Lake Street, and bordered by the 1875 corporate limits on the south and west edges. It includes the Foote and Richardson, West Lake, Casco and Bluff Additions to the Town made around 1880. Gunnison Avenue, the main thoroughfare through town is also State Highway 149. Visitors entering the Historic District on this road encounter rows of one- and two-story mining era residences, which remain much as they were when built 100 to 120 years ago. The wooden picket fences and towering cottonwoods enclose the old homes and accentuate the historic character of the neighborhoods. These residences reflect several late-1800s architectural styles as described in this chapter.

Historic commercial activity centered in the 100, 200, and 300 blocks of Gunnison Avenue and Silver Street. Gunnison Avenue was the east edge of the traditional business district and contained rows of woodframe commercial buildings, since lost to fire or to deterioration. Beginning in the late 1930s, several tourist accommodations were built on Gunnison Avenue, including two long one-story units and several complexes of two-room log cabins. Infill consists of newer commercial buildings with wood exteriors and false front façades.

Commercial buildings on Silver Street, one block west of Gunnison Avenue, consisted of several masonry buildings, such as the stone Bank Block and the brick Hough Block, and rows of false front woodframe buildings. On June 15, 1915, a fire destroyed most of the block of empty buildings southeast of Second and Silver streets. Nearly all were vacant at that time. Fire also consumed several other Silver Street structures, so that the Bank Block, Hough Block, and the storefronts at 205 – 219 Silver Street are the town's most intact historic commercial buildings.

## ***Lake City's Architectural Heritage***

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The historic neighborhoods surround the commercial district and contain a variety of historic houses. A few log cabins remain from the town's pioneer period. Several dwellings reflect the architectural styles popular locally and nationally at the time they were built. Other houses are vernacular in design. The neighborhoods also contain several newer, compatible residences.

Lake City's two civic buildings reveal aspects of the town's past. The Hinsdale County Courthouse is Colorado's oldest courthouse still used for its original purpose. It was built in 1877 at 311 Henson Street. The courthouse was the site of a speech by suffragette Susan B. Anthony. It was also the location of the trial of Alfred Packer, celebrated "Colorado Cannibal."



**Hinsdale County Courthouse**

The 1883 Town Hall at 230 Bluff Street originally served two purposes. The brick building housed the Lake City Guard, a local branch of the state militia. It also contained the Opera House, used for theatrical productions, musical performances, mass meetings, and other events. At one time the structure also had a roller skating rink. It became the Town Hall around 1915, after town hall offices burned down in a conflagration that consumed the entire block of buildings southeast of Silver and Third streets. Today, the building contains a community center and offices for the Town of Lake City and Lake City Area Recreation.

Few private dwellings were built between the late 1890s and the 1930s. Visitors bought vacant residences as summer homes, and the local economy shifted from mining to summer tourism. Several tourist cabin complexes were built to accommodate the increasing number of summer visitors.



**Armory Building/Opera House/ Lake City  
Town Hall**

## ***Early Builders and Building Materials***

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Lake City's isolated location meant that construction relied upon local materials. Wood was most commonly used. The earliest residents first constructed log cabins from trees hand cut from the surrounding mountains. Soon several mills produced dimensional lumber, wood siding, and other building products. By 1876, Lake City had two brickyards, four sawmills, a planing mill, and a shingle mill. Before the D&RG railroad reached the town in 1889, local carpenters hand made architectural elements, such as cornices, brackets, porch balusters, gable-end decorations, and window trim.

Local builders employed masonry materials as well. Local brickyards produced bricks for commercial structures and few dwellings, such as the Kohler and Hilgenhaus residences. The quarry on the bluff northwest of town provided stone for the commercial "blocks" at Silver and Third streets. Adobe bricks made from the clay of the Slumgullion Earth Flow went into a several structures.

Some building materials and decorative features were brought into Lake City by freight wagon. For example, decorative elements on the Hough Building were shipped by rail from St. Louis, Missouri, then hauled 36 miles south by wagon from the D&RG railhead. The 1889 completion of a D&RG branch into Lake City broadened the selection of building materials available locally. Residents could order decorative items through mail order catalogs, and the local lumberyard stocked items shipped into town by rail.



**One of Lake City's earliest structures, a pioneer log cabin, at 117 Gunnison Avenue.**

**This residence on Gunnison Avenue was first constructed of log. Clapboard siding was added a few years later.**



## ***Residential Styles***

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The Lake City Historic District contains numerous intact historic residences that reflect the architectural styles popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s. These have remained intact, surviving decades of neglect and several local fires.

### ***Pioneer Log***

1870s – 1920s

One or one-and-one-half story height

Steep front- or side-gabled roof

Chinked walls of round logs or hewn logs

Some have a porch

Tall narrow window openings

Several cabins were later covered in clapboards



**Thompson Cabin, 430 Silver**

### ***Vernacular – Woodframe***

1870s – 1920s

One or one-and-one-half story height

Front-gabled, side-gabled, or gabled-L roof

Woodframe construction with exterior of horizontal wood siding

Tall narrow window openings

Some have transom windows

Some have porches

Minimal ornamentation



**115 Silver Street**

### ***Vernacular – Masonry***

1870s – 1900s

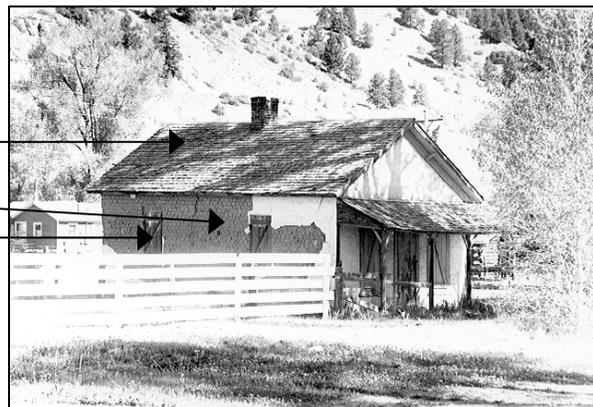
One or one-and-one-half story height

Front-gabled or gabled-L roof

Clay brick or adobe brick material

Tall narrow window openings

Minimal ornamentation



**615 Silver Street  
Photograph by Robert Stigall**

**Greek Revival, local variation**

1870s

One to one-and-one-half story height

Front-gabled roof

Symmetrical massing

Friezeboard along under gable end

Triangular window pediments

Transom windows

Pilaster corner boards

Tall narrow window openings



**Second and Silver streets,  
next to Hinsdale County Museum**

**Queen Anne**

1880s – 1890s

One-and-one-half or two story height

Asymmetrical massing

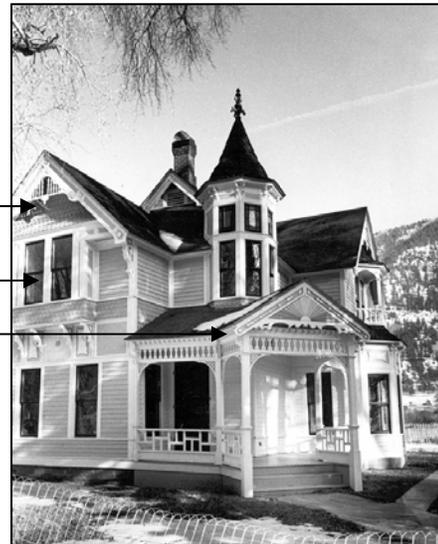
Multiple, steeply pitched gables

Shingles, bargeboard, sunburst motif,  
or other gable-end decoration

Bay and oriel windows

Prominent porch with turned porch posts, carved  
brackets, and other decorative woodworking

Tall, narrow window openings



**Youmans-Carey House,  
602 Gunnison Street**

**Hipped-roof Box**

1900s – 1940s

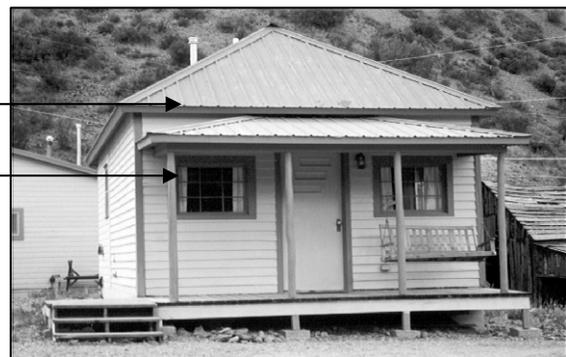
One story height

Hipped roof

Double-hung windows and  
square windows

Small, plain front porch

Rare in Lake City (many have been demolished or  
moved)



**Fifth and Bluff Streets**

**Rustic**

1920s - 1940s

One story height

Low-pitched, gabled roof

Smaller square windows

Horizontal log exterior

Small front porch or stoop cover

Some have an exterior stone chimney

Not plentiful



**407 Silver Street**

**Rustic Style Tourist Cabins**

Several complexes of tourist cabins were built in Lake City from the 1920s into the 1960s. The first were the T-Mountain View cabins on the hill east of town. Others included the 1938 Town Square Cabins, the circa 1945 G&M Cabins on Gunnison Street, and the 1946 Alpine Village at 627 – 631 Silver Street. These feature Rustic Style elements similar to the private Rustic Style residence, shown above.

**Alpine Village  
at 627 – 631 Silver Street**



## **Commercial Styles**

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Historic commercial buildings within the Business Treatment Area of the Lake City Historic District consist of nineteenth-century masonry and woodframe buildings and early-twentieth-century masonry buildings. These styles are described below.

### ***Italianate commercial***

1870s – 1890s

Two story height

Local brick or stone

Flat roof, slightly pitched toward rear

Cornice with decorative elements

Tall, narrow second-story windows  
with decorative window lintels

Horizontal banding dividing first  
and second stories

Transom windows

Storefront arrangement of  
entrance between large windows



**Hough Block, 300-304 Silver Street**

### ***False front commercial***

1870s – 1900s

One or one-and-one-half story height

Bracketed cornice

False front façade

Transom window(s)

Exterior of horizontal wood siding

Storefront of recessed entrance  
between large display windows



**211-215 Silver Street**

### ***Twentieth century commercial***

1900 – 1940

One story height

Flat roof, slightly pitched toward rear

Brick exterior with cornice of patterned  
(corbelled or dentilled) brick

Storefront arrangement of  
entrance  
and large display window(s)



**306 and 308 Silver Street**

## **Churches**

---

Four historic churches have endured for more than 100 years, surviving high country winters and fires: the Baptist, Catholic, Presbyterian, and Episcopal churches. Some had an adjacent manse or parish house where the minister lived.

### ***Gothic Revival***

1870s

Rocky Mountain West variation known as  
"Carpenter Gothic"

One-and-one-half story height

Steep, gabled roof

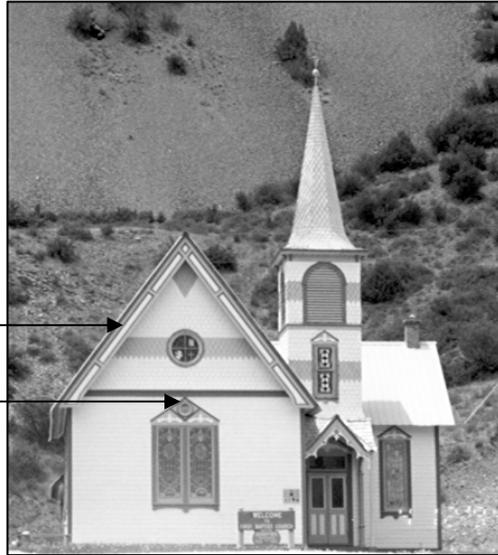
Woodframe construction

Exterior of horizontal wood siding

Bargeboard, shingles, or other  
gable-end trim

Tall narrow windows, many  
with elaborate window surrounds

Transom windows



**First Baptist Church, Fourth  
and Bluff streets**

**St. Rose of Lima Catholic  
Church  
Photograph by Robert Stigall**



## ***Outbuildings and alley structures***

---

The structures built behind the primary residences and buildings are historically significant because they reveal the lifestyles of early Lake City residents. The backyards of many properties were cluttered with coal sheds, ice houses, storage sheds, outhouses, small barns, stables, and even small residences. Many of these remain intact in the Historic District.

The secondary structures are a contributing feature to the character of the district and should be preserved. Moving these structures is discouraged because relocation removes the building from its historic setting.

### **Stables**

A few historic horse stables are scattered throughout town, converted for use as storage sheds. Most are located behind the historic property at the alley. These stables are typically front-gabled, of wood construction with wide doors.

### **Sheds**

Small woodframe structures with slanting “shed roofs” served a variety of functional purposes. In some cases, pioneer log cabins were moved to rear lots for use as utility sheds.

### **Outhouses**

The Town first installed a water system in the 1890s. From the 1920s through the 1960s, due to the decline of the local economy and population, the town lacked financial resources to maintain a central water and sanitation system. Residents relied upon private wells for water. Backyard outhouses, and, later, septic tanks met sewer needs. The present water system was installed in 1968, after a destructive fire occurred. Several historic backyard outhouses still remain.

### **Auto garages**

Garages replaced horse stables and carriage houses as the automobile became a primary means of travel. Several historic garages are located behind properties in the Historic District. These were usually built at the alley, and sometimes resembled the design of the primary house.



**The historic outbuildings and alley structures are an important part of the character of the Historic District and must be preserved.**

# ***General Building Requirements***

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The following requirements apply to all construction in the Historic District.

## ***Building Permit and Certificate of Appropriateness***

The first step in beginning a construction project within the Lake City Historic District is applying for a building permit. The Town Hall staff or building official can provide you with information on this process and with the dates and times of design of review meetings. A building permit is required for any type of new construction. This includes any building, any addition to an existing building, and any detached structure with more than 120 square feet of roof area.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for any construction project within the Lake City Historic District (see map on page 5). You must apply for the Certificate of Appropriateness after applying for a building permit. The Certificate of Appropriateness is required through Historic Preservation Ordinance #1, Series 1984.

## ***Water and Sanitation***

A builder must pay tap fees to the Town of Lake City before building a structure that will incorporate plumbing. You must obtain approval of the planned plumbing system from the Town or the County before installation. Sewer and water taps must be inspected by the Town Engineer prior to use. Applications for sewer and water taps and a list of the Town's specifications are available at Town Hall.

## ***Zoning***

Lake City is zoned. The zoning ordinance specifies Central Business District, General Business District, Tourist, Tourist-2, Limited Multi-Family, Mobile Home, Residential 1, and Rural Estate zones (see Zoning Map available at Town Hall).

## ***Demolition and Relocation***

To preserve the integrity of the Historic District, Lake City strongly discourages demolishing or relocating historic structures, including commercial buildings, residences, and outbuildings. Lake City has an ordinance governing the issuance of permits for relocations and demolitions.

## ***Building Code***

Lake City has adopted the Uniform Building Code with certain changes. All footings are required to be a minimum of 30 inches below finish grade and the required snow load figure for roof design is 65 pounds per square foot. The Building Inspector may require an engineer's approval in any instance deemed necessary. Zoning regulations require:

- Maximum building height of 30 feet.
- Minimum front setback of 15 feet in all zoning districts, except the Central Business District, where a zero front setback is allowed.
- Minimum building width of 21 feet.
- Minimum eave overhang of one foot.
- Minimum roof pitch of 6:12.

# ***General Design Guidelines***

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Several Design Guidelines pertain to any construction project within the Lake City Historic District, including new construction and additions or alterations to a historic property.

## ***Context***

The Lake City Historic District contains a variety of architectural styles, visual patterns, and open spaces that contributes to the overall visual appearance of the community. Both the commercial district and the residential neighborhoods have a degree of visual continuity based on recurrent patterns, spacing, sizes, and shapes. In some blocks this continuity is very strong. In other blocks there is less continuity, because buildings of different architectural styles or types are located next to each other.

### ***Guidelines***

1. Design of a new building must be compatible with the immediately surrounding area.
2. Design of an addition must be compatible with the historic buildings.

## ***Authenticity***

The Lake City Historic District has value because of its authentic architectural styles and elements. Constructing copies of historic buildings or using duplicate historic features lessens the integrity of the District.

### ***Guidelines***

1. Do not copy a historic building in your design of a new building.
2. Do not a duplicate or copy historic features, such as a roof bracket or window lintel. Instead, use a contemporary rendition of a historic feature. This applies to new construction, historic buildings, and additions to historic buildings.

## ***Modern Devices***

Modern devices, such as solar panels, skylights, and satellite dishes, can detract from the appearance of a historic district. These guidelines are not intended to discourage alternative energy sources. It is hoped that solar panels and any other alternative energy equipment will be used, but will be incorporated inconspicuously into building designs.

### ***Guideline***

- If installing modern devices on a property in the Historic District, such as skylights, or satellite dishes, take care to incorporate them inconspicuously into building design.
- A modern device, such as a satellite dish or skylight, should not interfere with the historic integrity of the building.

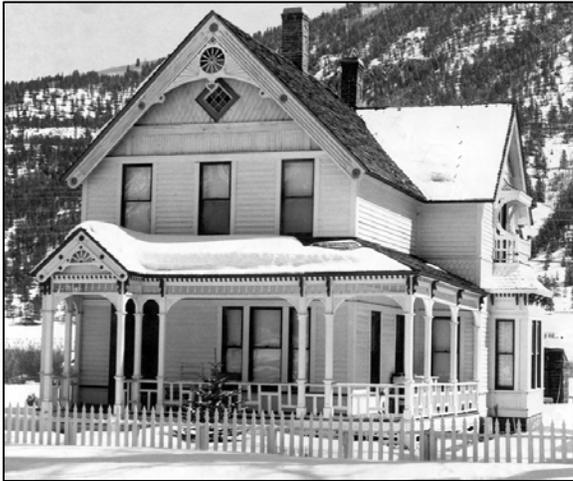
# ***Residential Treatment Area***

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These guidelines are intended to preserve the historic character of the residential neighborhoods in the Lake City Historic District. New construction must be compatible with the older houses, but not identical to them. Changes made to historic dwellings must not alter character-defining features such as height, massing, exterior materials, size and shape of window openings, front porches, or decorative features.

The design of a new residence should consider the neighboring historic houses. Each residential street has a slightly different character. Along Gunnison Avenue, residences are typically one-and-one-half story with a front-gabled orientation. Exterior materials are horizontal wood siding, and a porch is a standard feature. The entrance faces the street and windows are tall and narrow. Yards are characterized by tall shade trees.

In the Silver Street neighborhood between Fourth and Sixth streets, dwellings range from small to large. Again, the larger houses have a tall and narrow appearance, with narrow windows and front porches. Several homes on Silver Street are situated on large lots. Infill consists of a few log cabins from the mid 1900s and several unobtrusive residences from the late 1900s.



**A large 1890s Queen Anne style residence on Gunnison Avenue.  
Photo courtesy of the *Silver World*.**



**A Rustic style log cabin built on Silver Street in the 1940s.**

## ***New Residential Construction***

---

A new residence should respect the character of the historic neighborhood. Lake City dwellings reflect an assortment of sizes and styles. The design of a new house must compliment those nearby. New construction should blend in with, rather than overpower, the size and scale of other houses in the neighborhood. A new residence should not attempt to copy historic architectural features of neighboring houses, because this detracts from the district's authenticity.

### ***Site considerations***

There are several considerations when placing a new building on its site:

- Height, massing, and scale
- Building form and placement

### ***Height, massing and scale***

Historic Lake City residences are one to two stories tall, most with a steep gabled roof. Their footprints are typically square, rectangular, or L-shaped. Property owners often expanded small houses by building smaller wings or rear additions onto the main structure. Due to the 25-foot lot width, many historic Lake City houses are small in scale. Some are only 18 to 20 feet wide.

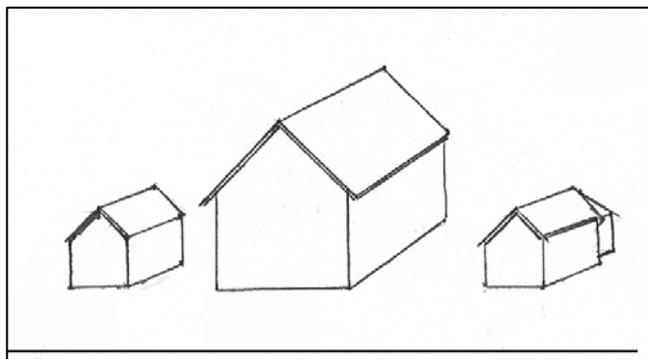
Today, larger residential construction is possible because larger lots are available through consolidating the historic 25-foot-wide lots. Nevertheless, the width, scale, and massing of a new house should compliment the neighboring historic dwellings.



### ***Guidelines***

1. Limit the height of a new residence to two stories.
2. Consider the height of neighboring historic residences when planning height of a new house.
3. If building a larger-sized new house, consider breaking it into visual modules to compliment the smaller scale of historic dwellings.
4. If appropriate, step the building form down to adjacent, smaller historic residences.

**The scale of a new house should not overwhelm the historic houses nearby.**



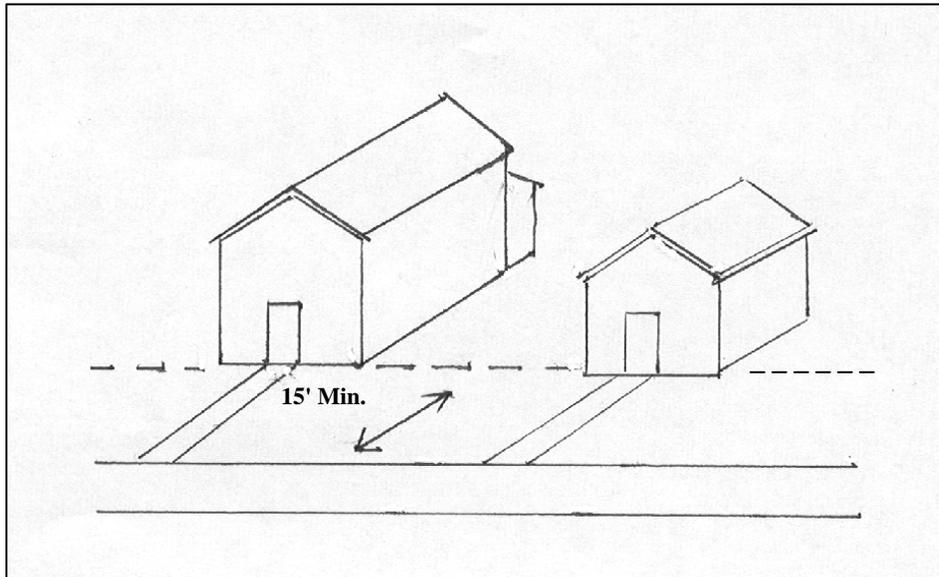
## ***Building Form and Placement***

Historic houses typically were long and narrow, to maximize the use of the traditional 25' by 125' lot size. They were placed with the narrow end parallel to the street. The narrow rectangular forms with front-facing, steeply pitched roof gables contributed to a uniform appearance in the historic neighborhoods.

Historically, set backs varied within the residential neighborhoods. The placement of other houses on the block on which you plan to build should influence the placement of your house. The town requires a minimum setback of 15 feet.

### ***Guidelines***

1. Use forms similar to those in the surrounding area.
2. Consider the placement of the other houses on the block on which you plan to build when determining the placement of yours.
3. Place a new residence with a front setback equal to the adjacent historic residences. In some cases, a deeper setback is allowed.
4. Line up building parallel to lot lines.
5. Incorporate a front-gabled building with steeply pitched roof into the primary façade.



**Most historic homes had a long, narrow form, with the narrow end facing the street. On a block that has a uniform set back, new construction should have a similar setback.**

## ***Architectural features***

The assorted residential styles built in Lake City are expressed by the architectural features. The range of styles reflects the town development from an 1870s silver mining town to its 1920s – 1950s growth as a summer resort. A range of house sizes, exterior materials, roof forms, and architectural ornamentation is acceptable within the Historic District. A guiding factor should be compatible with the neighboring historic structures.

This section discusses:

- Exterior materials
- Roofs
- Porches
- Windows
- Entrance and doors
- Decorative elements

## ***Exterior materials***

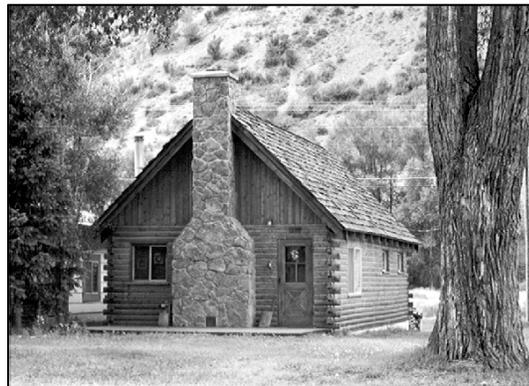
Several types of exterior materials were used historically in Lake City neighborhoods. These included logs, clapboards, shiplap siding, board and batten, and, less commonly, brick and adobe. Pioneer cabins first were built of hand-hewn log. Clapboards and board and batten soon became common exterior materials. Houses occasionally had foundations of native stone, but often had no foundations at all. Some Rustic style dwellings have full-story, exterior stone chimneys.

New construction should use exterior materials that appear similar in color, texture, and dimension to those historically used in Lake City. Synthetic siding may be acceptable on new construction, but is not allowed on historic buildings or additions to historic buildings.

### ***Guidelines***

1. Acceptable exterior materials for new construction include log, horizontal wood siding, wood shingles, and board and batten.
2. Synthetic materials are discouraged.
3. Synthetic materials may only be used if they closely resemble wood in appearance.

**Log products are an acceptable exterior material.**

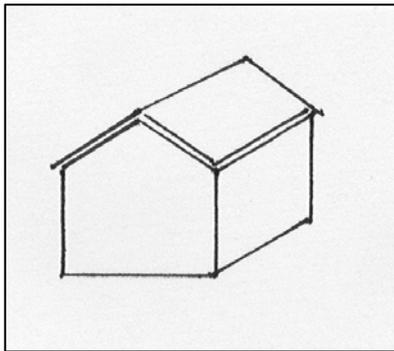


## ***Roof forms, materials, and features***

Roofs were traditionally front-gabled and covered in boards, corrugated metal, or wood shingles. Roof pitches were typically steep, to curb snow accumulation and to hasten runoff from melting snow. Several historic houses have upper-story gabled dormers with windows that provide passive solar exposure and offer stunning mountain views. Some gable ends were trimmed with decorative wood shingles, crown molding, bargeboard along the eaves, or an ornamental roof truss at the peak of the gable.

### ***Guidelines***

1. Consider the roof forms of neighboring historic buildings when designing yours. Preferred are steep gabled roofs with the gable facing the street.
2. Roofs must have a minimum pitch of 6:12. A steeper roof pitch is encouraged.
3. Consider your neighbor's views when planning building height and roof form. Consider using gabled dormer windows on your second story, which preserve views and provide passive solar exposure.
4. Acceptable roof materials include metal, asphalt shingles, and fire-resistant wood shingles. The use of wooden shingles is strongly discouraged in the interest of fire protection.
5. Gabled dormers are encouraged, but should be in scale with the residence and the neighboring houses.
6. If skylights are installed, they should be inconspicuous.



**A minimum roof pitch of 6:12 is required. A steeper pitch is encouraged.**



**A roof dormer, such as this one made to a modern addition, can provide natural lighting in upstairs spaces.**

## ***Porches***

Many residences within the Historic District have front porches, although some houses simply have a stoop cover or no porch at all. The porch size and decorative detail varies with the architectural style. Most have turned posts and many have decorative brackets and turned balusters. Beginning in the 1920s, summer homes often had porches with log or beam supports and pole railings.

Decks are a more contemporary house feature. To maintain the historic character of the neighborhood, decks should be placed toward the rear of the house.

### ***Guidelines***

1. Consider including a front porch in your design, especially if the neighboring historic houses have porches.
2. When designing a porch, keep it in scale with your house and neighboring historic houses.
3. If building a deck, place it toward the rear of the house.



**Porch example on a new house.**

**Some Rustic style dwellings have porches with log or beam supports, and pole railings.**



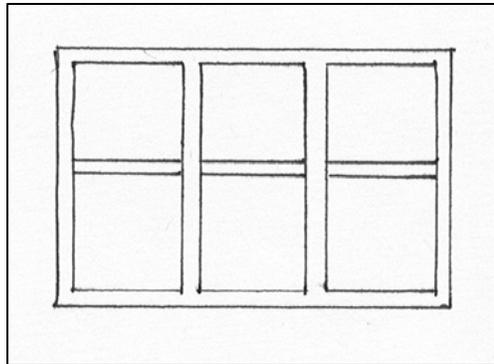
## ***Window openings and windows***

Window openings traditionally were tall and narrow — usually two to three times taller than they were wide. Historic windows were usually “double-hung” — divided into two moveable window sashes that could be each opened separately. In large side walls, several windows provided lighting. Some homes had bay windows. In the 1920s and 1930s, windows tended to be small and square, with four panes used either singly or in pairs.

### ***Guidelines***

1. Incorporate tall narrow windows in the design of a new residence especially in the walls facing the street.
2. If installing a large window, break it vertically into a multiple unit.

**If installing a large window, break it vertically into a multiple unit.**

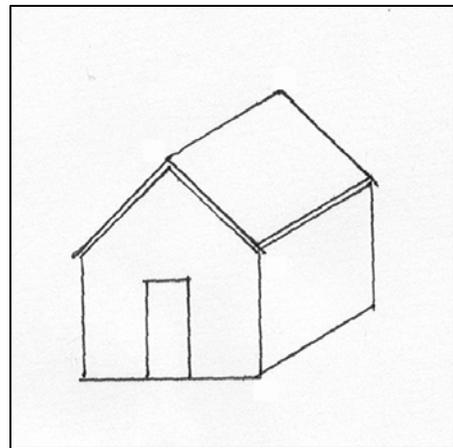


## ***Entrances and doors***

Entrances were typically in the front wall of the house facing the street.

### ***Guidelines***

1. Consider placing your entrance at the front of the house, facing the street.
2. Attached garages should have doors at the rear or setback from primary facades.
3. Include a front porch as part of the entrance.



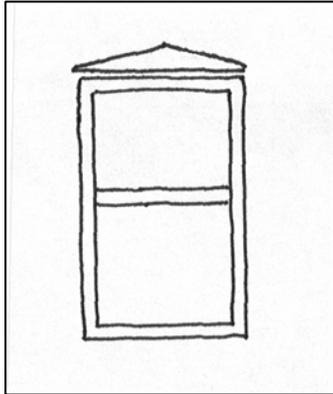
## ***Decorative elements***

Many historic homes have decorative features that reflect specific architectural styles. A previous chapter, ***Lake City's Architectural Heritage***, describes these various styles and identifies their features. If you apply ornamentation to your house, consider using a contemporary rendition of historic decoration, such as a simplified porch bracket that is less intricate than those on the historic residences.

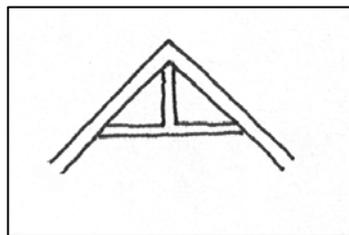
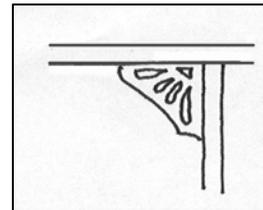
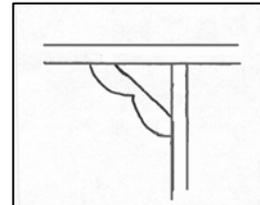
Copying decorative details from the nearby historic properties tends to detract from the authenticity of the Historic District's truly historic places. A new decorative element should be distinctly different from historic decorative details.

### ***Guidelines***

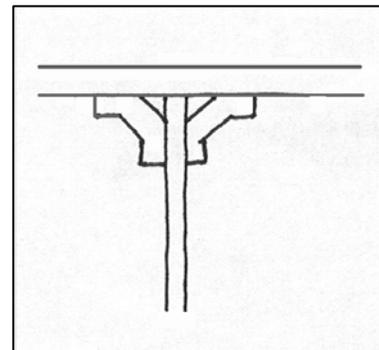
1. Duplicating historic ornamentation is not acceptable, because this detracts from the historic authenticity of the Historic District.
2. If applying decorative detail, use a simplified contemporary version of a historic detail.



**A contemporary window pediment can resemble but not duplicate a historic window**



**Contemporary gable end ornament**



**Porch bracket examples**

## ***Landscaping, fences and secondary buildings***

Cottonwoods were planted more than 100 years ago along the edge of the streets, and watered by irrigation ditches. These shade trees are a defining character of the town and must be preserved. Planting of trees is encouraged. The Town's tree board can assist with suggestions for species and placement.

In historic Lake City, many yards were enclosed in fences of short wooden picket, ornamental wrought iron, or metal wire. Most fences were low to the ground (less than 40 inches tall) and allowed views of the yard and house front. Post and pole fences and split rail fences also were used. New fences should appear similar to historic. Chain link fences visually distract from a historic house; therefore, they are not allowed in the front yard.

As Lake City residents began acquiring automobiles, homeowners built garages to shelter their vehicles. These were typically placed toward the rear of the property, usually at the alley. Garages and other outbuildings for newer homes should also be placed toward the rear of the lot, where they are less visible from the street.

### ***Guidelines***

#### ***Landscaping***

1. Consider planting trees along the fronts of property lines. The Town's tree board can assist with suggestion for species and placement.

#### ***Fencing***

2. If a fence is desired, only a short fence of decorative materials, such as wood pickets, is allowed at the front of the property, especially in blocks already having this pattern.
3. Chain link and solid wood fences are only acceptable for use in the back or side yard.



**Suggested fencing materials for new residential construction within the Historic District.**

#### ***Secondary buildings (such as garages and sheds)***

4. Auto garages should be placed toward the rear of the lot, similar to the location of historic garages.
5. Place new secondary buildings toward the rear of the lot.
6. The size and material of a secondary building should be compatible with the historic neighborhood.
7. Membrane structures, such as Weatherports™, are allowed only on a temporary basis under a 120-day permit.

## ***Historic Residences – Preservation and Alteration***

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Lake City is characterized by its numerous intact historic residences, which reflect the wide range of architectural styles popular from the 1870s through the 1930s. Lake City’s historic counterparts include the silver and gold mining mountain towns of Idaho Springs (1859), Central City (1859), Black Hawk (1860), Georgetown, (1860), Breckenridge (1860), Silver Plume (1870), Silverton (1874), Ouray (1875), Leadville (1877), Crested Butte (1878), Telluride (1878), Rico (1879), and Aspen (1880).

Several of these towns had a single boom period, so that most dwellings date to a specific decade and reflect one or two architectural styles. Many dwellings also were “vernacular” — possessing minimal ornamentation and reflecting no particular architectural style. In some towns, many houses from the late 1800s have been lost to fire, deterioration, demolition, or unsympathetic alterations and additions. Lake City possesses historic houses that reflect several architectural styles from the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The Lake City Historic District is an important community asset and the buildings within it must be preserved. To preserve your historic residence, the following are recommended:

1. Use the residence for its originally intended purpose or a use that requires minimal alteration.
2. Preserve the historic features that distinguish the residence. Refrain from removing or altering original materials and details.
3. Repair rather than replace deteriorated features, if possible. If replacement is needed, try to match new material and details to the original.
4. Preserve architectural features, such as porches, decorative woodworking, and window lintels, which are examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize older buildings.
5. In some cases, changes to a dwelling and its environment over time are evidence of the history of the house and the area. Alterations older than 50 years should be preserved.
6. Design new additions or alteration so that the essential form and integrity of the original residence remains.

## ***Architectural features***

The architectural features of a historic residence identify its style and construction period. The “character defining features” that identify a house as a certain style should be carefully preserved. They include the following, which are described and illustrated in this chapter:

- Exterior materials
- Roofs
- Porches
- Windows
- Doors
- Decorative elements
- Fences



**Multiple gables, bay windows, a turret, and ornate woodworking identify this residence as Queen Anne style.**



**Windows are a character-defining feature of historic homes in the Lake City Historic District.**

## ***Exterior materials***

Several types of exterior materials were used historically in Lake City neighborhoods. These included logs, clapboards, shiplap siding, wood shingles, board and batten, and, less commonly, brick and adobe. Pioneer cabins first were built of hand-hewn log. After the first saw mills began operating, milled logs and lumber were used for residential construction. The planing mill also produced clapboards and other horizontal wooden siding. Several log structures were covered in clapboards. Houses occasionally had foundations of native stone, but often had no foundations at all.

### ***Guidelines***

1. Preserve historic exterior materials.
2. Synthetic materials are not allowed on a historic residence or on an addition to a historic residence.
3. Repair wood features by carefully patching or reinforcing the wood. Attempt to preserve as much of the original wood as possible.
4. Replace extensively deteriorated or missing parts with a compatible substitute material.
5. On painted exteriors, prepare and re-apply paint as necessary to protect wood from sunlight and moisture.
6. Protect and maintain wood features by providing proper drainage away from the building.



**Clapboard and log are two of the earliest building materials.**