

## Meeker National Historic District presentation at Town Trustee Meeting March 20

by Robert Amick, Chair, Meeker National Historic District Task Force

Meeker National [Register](#) Historic District [MNHD] consultant Carl McWilliams, [owner](#) of Cultural Resource Historians, will provide a public presentation on the designation on Tuesday, March 20 at 7:00 P.M. at the Meeker Town Hall at 345 Market St. All are welcome and encouraged to attend to learn of the economic development, tax credit and grant eligibility benefits through landmarking and heritage tourism offered by the State and National designation.

The nomination of the downtown Meeker area as a National Historic District was endorsed by ~~the~~ History Colorado, Office of [Archaeology](#) and Historic Preservation, and was subsequently approved by the Colorado [State Review Board](#) on January 19. The nomination was then forwarded to the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, [in Washington](#), for designation as a National Historic District, which is anticipated later in the Spring. The project is a collaborative effort between the Rio Blanco County Historical Society [RBCHS] and the Town of Meeker.

[McWilliams](#) has completed extensive research and documentation on early day history of eligible contributing [buildings](#) within the MNHD including historic residences, the Hugus/A. Oldland Building, [and](#) government buildings such as the Court House. A History Colorado [HC] State Historical Fund Grant and a Freeman Fairfield Charitable Trust matching grant awarded in 2015, provided \$28,000 to the Town and RBCHS to fund the more than two-year NHD extensive research and nomination project.

There are 110 NHD's in Colorado. Such designation provides international recognition and promotion of historically significant buildings and landmarks to dramatically increase heritage tourism and economic development. Numerous international and domestic visitors are attracted to Old West Heritage Culture landmarks such as those now designated in Rio Blanco County. Designated contributing structures may also be eligible for grant funding or tax credits for [rehabilitation](#) purposes. [McWilliams'](#) well-documented history of [historic](#) buildings contributing to the MNHD will be published on the RBCHS website and [by](#) History Colorado and ~~the~~ National Register of Historic Places for public access and research.

[The district encompasses both sides of Main Street and Park Avenue between 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets. It includes 52 buildings, 31 of which are contributing to the district, and 12 of which are additionally evaluated as individually Contributing buildings include](#) the original [circa 1880's] military cantonment barracks [now housing the White River Museum, Garrison, and Jensen Residence] in the 500 block of Park St. Existing buildings previously designated include: the Meeker Hotel, and the IOOF [Oddfellows building-- now Mountain Valley Bank], [and the Hugus Block /A. Oldland Building](#). Outside of the MNHD, St. James Episcopal Church was designated in 1978 and the 1895 Coal Creek School was designated in 2014. There are numerous other ~~contributing~~ historic buildings outside the boundaries of the MNHD identified in a 2009 study by Susannah Reed Associates that may be eligible for designation [in the National Register of Historic Places or the State Register of Historic Properties](#). There are about eight HC Centennial farms/ranches designated in Rio Blanco County. Also listed is the Milk Creek Battlefield National Historic Park.

A grant application is being submitted by RBCHS to fund tasteful landmark signage and digital links depicting the colorful history of contributing buildings to further enhance the educational appeal for visitors.

[see History Colorado website links below:]

See History Colorado website-- Heritage Tourism boosts Economic Development:

<http://legacy.historycolorado.org/archaeologists/rio-blanco-county>

<http://legacy.historycolorado.org/content/chn-heritage-tourism-boosted-colorado-economy>

[http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/1620\\_EconomicBenefitsReport.pdf](http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/1620_EconomicBenefitsReport.pdf)

[http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms\\_edumat/pdfs/1620\\_TechnicalReport.pdf](http://legacy.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/1620_TechnicalReport.pdf)

<http://legacy.historycolorado.org/oaHP/centennial-farms-how-apply>

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