



Historic Routt County Strategic Plan 2024-2027

Updated 02.27.2024



The following document is Historic Routt County's strategic plan for the next three years. The goals and strategies were developed at a retreat with the board members and the executive director.

Background

Routt County's wealth of cultural and historic resources provides the foundation for the region's authentic rural character. The social and visual landscape has, for centuries, attracted many to the area. Routt County stands apart from many other counties in Colorado because of the intentional focus to preserve open spaces and maintain a rural setting. The development patterns of early ranching in the Yampa Valley means that remaining historic structures and artifacts widespread throughout the County, in addition to the numerous, prominent historic buildings in the towns of Hayden, Oak Creek, Steamboat Springs and Yampa as well as in Clark, Hahn's Peak and Phippsburg.

Over the years, the Routt County community has embraced the understanding that historic and cultural resources deserve recognition and contribute to the County's sense of belonging and community. However, with increased growth and development as well as new residents coming to live in Steamboat Springs and throughout the community, some of the County's most valuable historic assets are in danger of being erased.

Vision, Mission, Priorities

The following section provides a summary of Historic Routt County.

Who We Are: Historic Routt County is community funded non-profit dedicated to promoting widespread appreciation of the cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits of historic preservation.

Mission: We partner with the community to document and safeguard Routt County's irreplaceable historic structures and unique landscapes through advocacy, preservation assistance, and education.

Vision: We envision a community where historic structures and landscapes inspire, educate and connect residents and visitors to the Yampa Valley.

How Do We Accomplish Our Mission?

1. **Identification and Advocacy:** We identify historic buildings and landscapes and advocate for their preservation, closely working with property owners.
2. **Project Partnerships:** We develop partnerships and help identify grant opportunities to help property owners implement preservation projects.
3. **Education and Community Engagement:** We educate the community through events, workshops, newsletters and social media.
4. **Stewardship:** We create stewardship volunteer opportunities to maintain historic structures and landscapes that have been preserved.
5. **Promote the Benefits of Preservation:** We encourage the towns of Clark, Hahn's Peak, Hayden, Oak Creek, Phippsburg, Steamboat Springs, Yampa and Routt County to improve incentives and benefits for preservation, and simplify the regulatory processes for landmarking and adaptive reuse.

Strategic Plan

The following strategic plan outlines the broad goals and strategies to ensure the viability and sustainability of Historic Routt County and to increase its support and financial foundation. [A more detailed workplan](#) with specific tactics has been created for the Executive Director in order to track progress.

Priorities

I. Identification and Advocacy for Historic Properties

Goal 1 : By 2026, identify all the priority historic properties and landscapes in Routt County

Strategies:

- Take a proactive approach in identifying all the historical and cultural physical structures and landscapes that meet broadly accepted, objective criteria for preservation in Routt County.
- Digitize all records of historic properties
- Work with property owners of identified historic properties to make designation easier.

Goal 2: Advocate for the benefits of historic preservation and ensure that preservation is an important consideration in local government policy, process, and decisions.

Strategies:

- Support the historic preservation policies of the Routt County Master Plan and subsequent land use zoning, subdivision and building codes
- Advocate for a funded County to fund a historic preservation staff position

II. Project Partnerships

Goal: By 2026, expand number of partnerships to work on projects that preserve historic properties and landscapes.

Strategies:

- Develop criteria for working on projects
- Clarify HRC grant management capabilities to partners
- Work with partners to identify potential projects
- Create strong relationships with municipalities (SS, Hayden, Oak Creek, Clark, Yampa, Hahn's Peak and Routt County)
- Support Routt County municipalities with historic preservation in their master/community plans and codes
- Promote economic development benefits of historic preservation with organizations such as the Chamber, Board of Realtors, architects, developers, contractors, and property owners
- List all existing and potential partners on website
- Work with Routt County Historic Preservation Board
- Work with the City of Steamboat Springs Historic Preservation Commission
- Work with Yampa Valley Sustainability Council to identify landscapes to preserve and how conservation easements can help
- Consider ways to work with Steamboat Ski Resort
- Partner with USFS, UC Denver, other non-profits and organizations

III. Education and Community Engagement

Goal: By 2026, increase participation/followers of HRC by 25%

Strategies:

- Continue to use communication tools to educate community about HRC (Annual state of historic preservation report)
- Update HRC website
- Continue sending monthly HRC newsletter
- Strengthen social media presence
- Consider hosting events at historic properties to show significance
- Make preservation interesting to younger audiences. Work with all three school districts to develop programs, lesson plans or field trips that would complement existing history, geography, or civics standards/curricula.
- Tell stories that inspire people and create a sense of belonging
- Consistently share properties that have been preserved, list on website
- Create list of architects/builders that specialize in historic preservation
- Build continuing education program on historic preservation for architect, builders and trades people.
- Explore historic preservation tours to generate visibility and funds.
- Differentiate HRC from the Tread of Pioneers

IV. Stewardship

Goal : By 2025, have a robust pool of volunteers for maintenance projects around the county

Strategies:

- Increase volunteer pool
- Continue to work with US Forest Service on maintaining historic structures
- Work with other Routt County historic preservation groups/museums to preserve existing historic structures

V. Capacity Building/Organizational Health

Goal: By 2024, increase the capacity of HRC in order to implement strategic priorities

Strategies:

- Recruit additional board members to increase reach and expertise
- Increase # of staff positions to implement strategic priorities
- Clarify measures of success

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- Clarify expectations of board members
 - Create record keeping policy and how to implement
 - Evaluate organizational capacity annually
 - Be the organization that has expertise and brings value

VI. Fundraising

Goal: By 2025, increase funds raised by 25%

Strategies:

- Convince County Commissioners to keep mill levy levels
- Continue pursuing grants
- IHost events for fundraising
- Increase individual donors
- Continue selling license plate holders
- Designate two times a year for fundraising (May (Historic Preservation Month and December (Yampa Valley Gives Day)
- Increase ways to give to HRC
- Increase # of donors on Yampa Valley Gives Day

Conclusion

With HRC board commitment and implementation, as well as increased funding to assist the Executive Director, this plan can be executed in three years.