

National Historic Landmark (NHL) Denver Civic Center

In October 2012 Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar officially designated Denver's Civic Center a National Historic Landmark (NHL). This makes it the first NHL in the city of Denver. The NHL district extends from the State Capitol on the east to the Denver City and County Building on the west (see attached Map). State properties included within the boundary include: the State Capitol and its grounds; the State Office Building (northeast corner of Colfax and Sherman); the old State Museum Building (southeast corner of E. 14th and Sherman); and Lincoln Park.

Denver Civic Center was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1974, with a boundary revision and additional information completed in 1988. The proposed NHL boundary is smaller than the NRHP district boundary, focusing only on those resources associated with the national significance of Civic Center and those constructed within the City Beautiful era period of significance, 1904-35. The City Beautiful movement promoted a variety of civic improvements throughout American cities in the early twentieth century.

The National Park Service, which administers the NHL program, explains that "*National Historic Landmarks* are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States." Presently, NHLs comprise less than 3 percent of all properties listed in the National Register. The San Francisco Civic Center is the only other resource of this type currently recognized as an NHL.

Denver Civic Center's *national* significance includes its role as:

- A western example of a fully-realized City Beautiful era civic center.
- An exceptional late American Beaux-Arts design representing the work of several nationally and regionally prominent planners, architects, artists, and landscape architects.
- A holistic ensemble of built and landscape elements, significant in the areas of architecture, planning, art, and landscape design.

What does NHL designation mean?

- A prestigious recognition of the national importance of a property.
- Similar to properties listed on the National Register, no federal restrictions on use or management of property; however, projects potentially affecting NHLs are subject to review if they involve federal licensing, permitting, or funding.
- Owners qualify for special federal historic preservation funding, including Save America's Treasures and Preserve America Grants, when funds are available.
- A bronze plaque bearing the name of the National Historic Landmark and attesting to its national significance will be presented to the owner upon request.

A brochure explaining the NHL program is available at: <http://www.nps.gov/nhl/publications/Brochure.pdf>