

Memorandum

REPORT TO: City Commission

FROM: Rebecca Harbage, Deputy Director of Community Development
Erin George, Director of Community Development

SUBJECT: Landmark Program and Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District (NCOD)
Design Standards Project Updates and Discussion

MEETING DATE: July 28, 2026

AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Policy Discussion

RECOMMENDATION: Receive updates from staff and provide direction on next steps

STRATEGIC PLAN: 4.2 High Quality Urban Approach: Continue to support high-quality planning, ranging from building design to neighborhood layouts, while pursuing urban approaches to issues such as multimodal transportation, infill, density, connected trails and parks, and walkable neighborhoods.

BACKGROUND: The City continues to work on updating its Historic Preservation Program, including two projects which have been running concurrently: the Landmark Project and an update to the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District (NCOD) Design Guidelines.

The Landmark Project began in 2023 with an original goal of creating a Local Landmark Program to recognize buildings, sites or districts with local historic or cultural significance that may not meet the criteria to be listed on the National Register. The project scope also included revisions to Municipal Code section 38.240.020, relating to certificates of appropriateness (COA), demolition, and deviations. The City hired a consultant, Community Planning Collaborative to assist with the project. Community engagement efforts took place in summer 2024 and a Phase I Policy Report was adopted by City Commission in May 2025, which included specific recommendations for Phase II. These recommendations included guidance for necessary code changes, and recommended an overhaul of the NCOD Design Guidelines. Since that time, the project team have been discussing portions of the potential code changes with the Historic Preservation Advisory Board and making progress towards a draft ordinance.

The NCOD Design Guidelines were originally adopted in 2006 to help staff and applicants understand and apply the US Secretary of the Interior (SOI) Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties. The SOI Standards were updated in their entirety in 2017. Bozeman's Guidelines remain unchanged since 2006, aside from an added chapter regarding the B3 district in 2015.

Late last year, the City began a comprehensive update of the Guidelines to update out-of-date information, improve clarity, strengthen vague statements and ensure the Guidelines appropriately balance national best practices with local goals. A separate consultant, The Lakota Group was hired to assist. Community engagement efforts took place in spring 2026 and a summary was presented to HPAB at their [July 15th meeting](#) and posted on the project's [Engage page](#). Unfortunately due to unprofessional conduct, the City recently terminated the contract with The Lakota Group.

During this work session, staff will update City Commission on progress to date for both projects, discuss input from the community and HPAB, and receive Commission direction on scope, timing and next steps for both projects.

UNRESOLVED ISSUES: Next steps, updated direction and timing for Landmark and NCOD projects

ALTERNATIVES: To be determined by City Commission

FISCAL EFFECTS: Funding for both projects was included in the FY26 budget and carried over into the FY27 budget

Report compiled on: July 20, 2026