

# CITY OF McCALL HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN



PREPARED FOR THE McCALL HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION COMMISSION

BY PLANMAKERS

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### *City of McCall*



Don Bailey, Mayor

Jackie Aymon, Councilmember  
Laura M. Scott, Councilmember  
Nic Swanson, Councilmember  
Marcia Witte, Councilmember

Carol Coyle, City Grant Coordinator  
Garrett Mapp, GIS Analyst  
Delta James, City Planner

### *McCall Historic Preservation Commission*

Brian Corcoran, Chair  
Marlene Bailey  
Ann Braak  
Bob Fairbrother  
Jennifer Theisen

### *Idaho State Historical Society*

#### *Consultants*

John Bertram, Principal Planmakers  
Planning & Urban Design  
Ellen Fenwick, Report Preparation

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### *Cover photo courtesy McCall Public Library Collection*

Postcard MLC1.90909 by Nock ca. 1914. Notice the varied building facade shapes along Lake Street, and the covered boardwalk and second-floor balcony of the existing Lake Street Station on the left.

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## INTRODUCTION

A drive or stroll through the City of McCall reveals a rich historic heritage worthy of protection and preservation. The city is home to a variety of historic resources—log structures, wood and brick storefronts, gracious homes, and mid-century architecture—all with different landscapes that maintain a record of McCall’s growth. Faced with the loss and alteration of historic buildings, the city established a McCall Historic Preservation Commission to help preserve the community’s cultural assets.

This plan is intended to guide the commission and the city in protecting McCall’s historic and architectural character. The plan presents a vision and mission, a list and mapping of the city’s historic buildings, potential property nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, and preservation strategies and recommendations.



MLC1.011 Hotel Lakeview c 1920s postcard

*Lake Street in the 1920s. (McCall Library Collection 011)*

## RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The McCall Historic Preservation Commission and city staff have accomplished much during recent years. A strength of the community is the McCall Public Library, which perpetuates a McCall history collection in its Idaho Room. The files include a collection of McCall’s oral histories, news clippings, bound issues of the *Star News* from 1929 forward, local history books, and unpublished documents.

In 2005, the McCall Historic Preservation Commission oversaw a McCall Windshield Survey of historic buildings, and in 2007 assisted in updating the master plan document for the Central Idaho Historical Museum. To celebrate 100 years, the commission hosted the City of McCall’s centennial on July 19, 2011, and produced an *Historic Downtown Walking Tour* brochure of McCall. Recent efforts recognize the city’s history with interpretive panels located along the lakefront. The City of McCall was named an Idaho Heritage City for recognizing and encouraging the preservation and interpretation of its cultural heritage. (See the Bibliography for references on further research and study.)



*One of a number of downtown interpretive signs featuring McCall history.*

## GOAL AND OBJECTIVE FROM THE MCCALL AREA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**Goal:** To preserve, protect, and enhance areas of special interest, environmental importance, and scenic beauty.

**Objective:** To encourage the identification, preservation, and protection of special places.

## VISION

McCall will sustain its rich cultural heritage, recognizing the city's eras of development because each has a distinct and valuable character, which collectively represent the continuity of its rich history.

## MISSION

To apply professional planning services, up-to-date zoning codes, and sound land-use policies to sustain a vibrant community, a high quality of life, interesting public spaces, and historic and cultural attractions.

To promote the use and preservation of McCall's historic resources for the education and general welfare of the people.

## CITY ORDINANCE 686

McCall City Ordinance 686 passed on October 26, 1995, and provided for the "identification, evaluation, designation, and protection of building sites, areas, structures, and objects which reflect significant elements of the city's, state's, and the nation's historic architectural, archaeological, and cultural heritage." The ordinance provides definitions; Historic Preservation Commission organization and rules; designation of districts, properties, and landmarks; acquisition; historic easement; and amendments.

## MCCALL HISTORIC RESOURCES

McCall historic resources are listed in Table 1 on page 6 and identified in the map on page 9. This inventory identifies historic structures in the McCall Area Comprehensive Plan and forms the foundation of McCall's historic preservation and preservation planning.

McCall offers an excellent visitor experience featuring the rustic 1937 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) buildings and a Corliss lumber mill engine within the Central Idaho Historical Museum. This grouping of log and frame buildings within the city center provides an excellent public introduction to the city's history and architecture. The museum site, known as the Southern Idaho Timber Protective Association (SITPA) Buildings, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Likewise, the adjacent U.S. Forest Service (USFS) McCall District Administrative Site is listed on the register.



*Handsome log SITPA Fire Warden's House built in 1937 by the Civilian Conservation Corps.*

**Table 1. McCall Historic Resources Register**

<b>Building</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Historic Theme</b>	<b>Construction Date</b>	<b>National Register Status</b>
McCall District USFS Administrative Site	102 W. Lake St.	Government	1933-1941	Listed
SITPA Storage Shed	1001 State St.	Conservation/ Architecture	1937	Listed
SITPA Pump House	1001 State St.	Conservation/ Architecture	1937	Listed
SITPA Long Garage	1001 State St.	Conservation/ Architecture	1937	Listed
SITPA Machine Shop	1001 State St.	Conservation/ Architecture	1937	Listed
SITPA Garage	1001 State St.	Conservation	1937	Listed
SITPA House	1001 State St.	Conservation	1937	Listed
SITPA Fire Warden's House	1001 State St.	Conservation/ Architecture	1937	Listed
SITPA Asst. Fire Warden's House	1001 State. St.	Conservation/ Architecture	1950	Listed
Warren E. Cook House	501 Pine St.	Residence/ Commerce	1919	Eligible
Theodore Hoff House	509 Pine St.	Residence/ Commercial	1914	Eligible
Lakeport RR Depot	411 Lenora St.	Commerce	1914	Not eligible
Lakeport RR Depot Stationmaster's House	409 Lenora St.	Residence/ Commerce	1914	Not eligible
Lake Street Station	310 E. Lake St.	Government/ Commerce	1909	Not eligible
McCall City Jail	900 N. Third St.	Government	1930	Not eligible
Dr. Pflug's Clinic	801 N. Third St.	Health Care/ Commerce	1936	Not eligible
Yacht Club	203 E. Lake St.	Recreation/ Commerce	1945	Eligible
Newt Williams House	133 E. Lake St.	Residence/ Commerce	1910	Eligible
Carl E. Brown House	143 E. Lake St.	Residence/ Commerce	1920	Eligible
Community Congregational Church	901 First St.	Religion/ Cultural	1916 and 1972	Not eligible
John R. Berry House	112 Park St.	Residence	1911	Eligible
Joseph W. Kasper House	116 Park St.	Residence	1920	Eligible

Building	Location	Historic Theme	Construction Date	National Register Status
Brundage Bungalows	308 Lake St.	Recreation/ Tourism	1940s-1950s	Not eligible
North Fork Payette River Bridge	Payette Lake outlet	Transportation	1930	Eligible
Edgewater Cabins	336-356 Mather Rd.	Recreation/ Tourism	1938-1939/ 1950s	Eligible
Payette Lakes Inn	Warren Wagon Rd.	Recreation/ Commerce	1916	Eligible
Rice Meeting House	NE of McCall	Religion/ Architecture	1928	Listed
Alpine Theatre	1210 Roosevelt Ave.	Religion/ Cultural	1916	Eligible

## BUILDINGS OF LOCAL HISTORIC INTEREST

### *McCall City Jail*

The McCall City Jail was built for \$650 in June 1930, directly behind the City Hall located on the corner of Lenora and Third Streets. The jail replaced a wooden one. In 1979, the City Hall building was moved 12 miles to Roseberry, Idaho, leaving the jail as the sole reminder of the city site. Meagerly furnished with a parlor stove, a wash basin, an iron bunk for each of two cells, and a few blankets, the jail housed primarily drunkards. When a new jail was built in Cascade in the early 1970s, the McCall jail was abandoned.

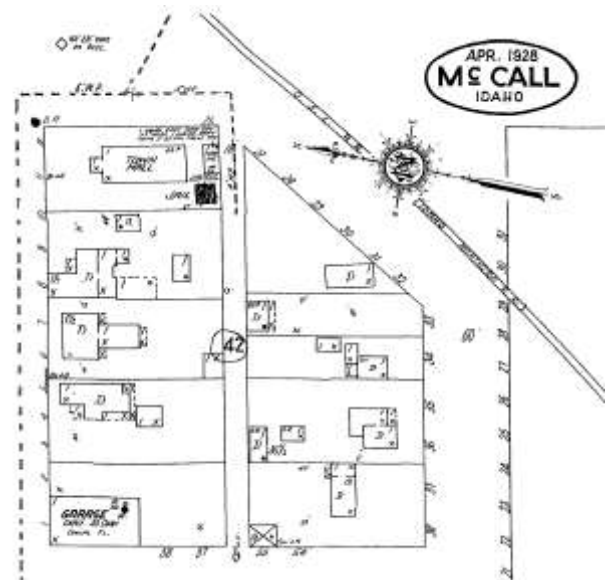
The 12-by-16-foot concrete jail was restored by the City of McCall as an historic building within McCall Community Park. Located on the alley, the centrally located jail is easily viewed and reached from Third Street. A paver-surfaced area features an interpretive sign about the jail and McCall's history. For example, the sign describes the four overlapping elements of recreation, mining, forestry, and commerce that have shaped the development of McCall, making it the economic hub for central Idaho.

### *Lake Street Station*

Built in 1909, Lake Street Station was submitted in 1981 for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The building was not accepted because it had been altered too significantly and did not retain enough of its historical integrity. However, the building is significant for its contribution to the history of McCall and the U.S Forest Service. A suggestion is to work with the property owner in gaining recognition for this early McCall building.



*McCall City Jail.*



*Map showing the McCall Town Hall (moved to Roseberry), former fire house, and today's historic McCall City Jail, updated in 1931 by the Sanborn Map Company. Notice the former Oregon Short Line Railroad (Idaho Northern Railroad) line heading to the McCall Depot.*



# McCall Historic Resources



## HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEYS

By identifying and gathering information about historic resources, surveys help residents and planners understand historically significant local resources, including individual buildings and historic districts. This knowledge allows historic resources to be considered in planning and development decisions.

Survey work generally consists of two levels of documentation. Both survey types include fieldwork and research into community history and architecture.

- **Reconnaissance level**  
These surveys, often called “windshield surveys,” are cursory looks at resources that provide descriptive information about buildings, structures, or sites based on architecture and period of construction.
- **Intensive level**  
Intensive-level surveys involve detailed research, thorough inspection, and documentation of historic properties within the survey boundaries.

Reconnaissance-level historic resource surveys typically include survey forms completed in the field, architectural descriptions, photos, a brief evaluation of the resource’s significance, survey ratings, and an evaluation of integrity (defined as the resource’s ability to convey its significance). Intensive-level historic resource surveys include the same documentation as a reconnaissance-level surveys. Additionally, they include more detailed fieldwork, research, historic context statement, and evaluation.

Evaluations of the significance of historic resources (both individual buildings and historic districts) are made by determining the resource’s historic context and determining if the property is a significant contributor to that context at a local, state, or national level. These evaluations are based largely on criteria established by the U.S. Secretary for the Interior for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

## POTENTIAL INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY NOMINATIONS TO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

### *The Yacht Club*

Located at 203 Lake Street, this 1946 brick building features nautical window openings shaped like life rings. The two-story plus basement building overlooking Payette Lake features a superb view and is significant for its contribution to the history of recreation on Payette Lake.



*The Yacht Club is potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.*

## *Newt Williams House*

The Newt Williams house was built in 1910. Located at 133 Lake Street, the Craftsman-style house features a wrap-around front porch with large, square, battered porch posts. The gable roof has modified kings post trusses, dormer windows, and exposed eaves.



*The Newt Williams House, built in 1910, is an excellent example of Craftsman-style architecture.*

## *Sylvan Beach Ice House*

The Ice House was purchased in 1966 by James W. Perry for \$600 from the Sylvan Beach Corporation. Perry later passed it on to his children, Susan Elliott and Richard Perry. They are considering having the building placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The hand-hewn shingle roof was recently reroofed with asphalt shingles to conserve the structure.

The Ice House was designed and built by A. C. Semrow, a Finnish carpenter living in Long Valley. Semrow built many of the early cabins on Sylvan Beach including two Harbert cabins, the Donald cabin, the Thometz and Georgia Davidson cabins, the Westwater cabin, the Seibert cabin, the Gregorie cabin, and the Davidson cabin known as Mary's Cabin.



*The Sylvan Beach Ice House built ca. 1932 supplied ice to the resorts cabins until 1943. Notice the shake roof and tall octagonal cupola.*

Semrow designed and built the main house on the Sylvan Beach Point property now owned by the J. R. Simplot Corporation. Working in the French Normandy style, he completed it in 1935. The inside of the cabin was made with hand-hewn beams that were burned with gas jets, then scrubbed down with wax to make them look old. Semrow built houses for celebrities such as Will Rogers in Southern California and did renovations of other cabins in the McCall area.

Originally owned by Charlie Nelson, the Sylvan Beach Resort hosted summer visitors who lived in tents on wooden platforms. Charlie Davidson, who later built Charlie's Garden, built one of the first cabins on Sylvan Beach in 1918. During 1938 and 1939, McCall and Payette Lake served as the location for the filming of the MGM movie *Northwest Passage*. The entire Sylvan Beach area and its 40-odd cabins were used to house the MGM movie crew and the principal stars. On the water's edge, not far from the Ice House, are three identical cabins used by the movie stars Alan Young, Spencer Tracy, and Walter Brennan during the movie's filming.

The Ice House and other buildings in the Sylvan Beach area could be considered an early development area based on Payette Lake's recreational development in the early part of the 1900s.

## *The Payette Lakes Inn*

Built of local Hoff Company lumber in 1914, the Payette Lakes Inn was located on the stage road from Meadows (now Miracle Heights Road) overlooking Payette Lake. Fenton C. Cottingham built and operated the inn. The chalet-style inn featured many dormers, white-railed balconies, and flower-boxes. The four floors once had 50 bedrooms, a large lobby with two big fireplaces, a dining room and kitchen, and a sun parlor that looked toward the lake connected by a 300-foot esplanade.

As people flocked to the inn to dance and dine, it became a symbol of things to come. It started out as a nonprofit social club, later including guests and featuring occasional conventions and banquets. Locals went there on special occasions. During the summer of 1939, the inn was a popular relaxation spot for the cast and crew filming *Northwest Passage*. The inn closed in the 1940s and was rescued in 1959 by a Boise valley church group, which made repairs.

The inn is significant to the history of recreation in Payette Lake, McCall, and Central Idaho. The two-acre property is currently for sale and the vacant inn is in very poor condition. If the inn were placed on the National Register of Historic Places, the owner would potentially be eligible for tax investment credits.



*The Payette Lakes Inn in its early years featured numerous gables and white-railed balconies. The chalet-style inn was a popular gambling and relaxation spot for movie people during the filming of Northwest Passage in 1939. (Courtesy: Craig Elliott)*



*The Payette Lakes Inn, located on two acres off Warren Wagon Road, is now in poor condition and for sale. If the inn were placed on the National Register of Historic Places, a new owner rehabilitating the historic building would potentially be eligible for a 20 percent tax investment credit.*

## LAKE PARK EARLY DEVELOPMENT AREA

The proposed Lake Park Early Development Area encompasses the residential neighborhood west of downtown identified in the *2005 McCall Windshield Survey*. See that document for residence photographs and descriptions and page 9 for a map showing the locations.

Although not eligible for listing as a National Register of Historic Places district, this area is emblematic of early McCall settlement and important to the city.

**Table 2. Proposed Lake Park Early Development Area**

Building	Location	Historic Theme	Construction Date
Residence	1009 Mission St.	Residence	1925
Residence	Mission St. and Park St.	Residence	1925
Residence	102 Park St.	Residence	1945
Residence	113 Park St.	Residence	1925
Residence	108 Park St.	Residence	1935
Residence	117 Park St.	Residence	1925
Residence	112 Park St.	Residence	1910
Residence	114 Park St.	Residence	1950
Residence	116 Park St.	Residence	1915
Residence	118 Park St.	Residence	1925
Residence	120 Park St.	Residence	1935
Residence	124 Park St.	Residence	1945
Residence	126 Park St.	Residence	1950
Residence	131 Park St.	Residence	1945
Residence	1000 First St.	Residence	1925
Residence	1002 First St.	Residence	1930
Residence	200 Park St.	Residence	1945
Residence	708 First St.	Residence	1910
Residence	706 First St.	Residence	1925
Residence	705 Forest St.	Residence	1930
Residence	104 Forest St.	Residence	1945
Residence	100 Lake St.	Residence	1930
Residence	102 Lake St.	Residence	1925
Residence	104 Lake St.	Residence	1930
Residence	106 Lake St.	Residence	1930
Residence	108 Lake St.	Residence	1930
Residence	110 Lake St.	Residence	1920

Building	Location	Historic Theme	Construction Date
Residence	116 Lake St.	Residence	1930
Residence	120 Lake St.	Residence	1930
Residence	143 Lake St.	Residence	1930
Residence	141 Lake St.	Residence	1925
Residence	133 Lake St.	Residence	1915
Residence	127 Lake St.	Residence	1930
Residence	123 Lake St.	Residence	1930
Residence	121 Lake St.	Residence	1925
Residence	119 Lake St.	Residence	1930

## PRESERVATION STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This plan sets a course for a bright future that builds upon the city’s rich heritage. The strategies and recommendations follow.

### *Future Mid-century Era Survey*

The McCall area contains a concentration of striking contemporary residential architecture that could potentially be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places once they become 50 years old. Those constructed before 1961 are worthy of research. Through future survey efforts, the commission can focus on educating the public on this important facet of mid-century architectural history, particularly celebrating architecture and design from the 1950s-70s.

Examples of McCall’s mid-century architecture include:

- Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church, State and Forest (alpine style, 1964)
- Snowy Peak, 1410 Mill Road (mid-century office/residential (ca. 1965) (see the photo)
- Young/Cordray House, 123 Lake St. (mid-modern residential, 1968-1969)
- McCall US Bank, Second and Lenora Streets (shed roof design, 1971-72)



*An example of mid-century architecture representing contemporary design.*

The appreciation and awareness of mid-century modernist architecture and design in Idaho is growing through education and advocacy. McCall experienced a building boom during that period and has significant architectural gems, as well as living architects and designers who contributed to the landscape.

## Restoration and Rehabilitation

The commission has an opportunity to encourage a resurgence of authenticity. This could honor successful projects and encourage building owners to consult historic photographs and retain an architect in returning the character of a building to its original character. Potential strategies include a workshop to home owners and rehabilitation consultation sessions. A good example is the rehabilitation of the Carl Brown House, which is returning the exterior facade and porch to its original character.



*The Carl Brown House is undergoing rehabilitation to bring back its original character.*

A similar workshop would encourage owners of city center buildings to rehabilitate their historic store fronts. Through education and encouraging a professional ethic for handling historic properties, the commission would lead the effort to protect and preserve the city's historic resources.

Guidelines for such efforts are available in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and the accompanying *Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (available at [www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/index.htm)).

## General Recommendations

General recommendations include the following.

- Maintain historic resource survey data as a dynamic document, updating to reflect ongoing work and new research.
- Perform an intensive-level survey of McCall's undocumented historic resources.
- Incorporate existing and future surveys into the city's geographic information system (GIS) database, creating a historic resource overlay that includes individual historic properties and historic districts.
- Preserve McCall's heritage through advocacy, education, and community involvement.
- Identify historic resources and historic districts and use this information as a tool for strong planning.
- Seek to nominate McCall properties to the National Register of Historic Places, working in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service.
- Request review and advisory recommendations by the McCall Historic Preservation Commission of the McCall historic resources listed in Table 1 that undergo new construction, alteration, or demolition.
- Apply *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and the accompanying *Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* as the formal basis for project evaluation (available at [www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/index.htm)).
- Amend city ordinances to strengthen the protection of McCall's historic resources.

- Conduct public education about historic buildings, materials, and preservation.
- Provide historic survey area maps on the city’s website with links to the McCall Public Library, Idaho State Historical Society, and State Historic Preservation Office websites and other relevant resources.
- Prepare plans to develop the centrally located McCall City Jail into an interpretive and historic site. Consider additional interpretation, city map, and racks for a walking tour brochure.
- Develop a working partnership to pursue programming, grants, and technical assistance to support McCall historic preservation. Partner with the City of McCall, McCall Public Library, Central Idaho Historical Museum, Long Valley Preservation Society, Idaho State Historical Society, National Park Service, and groups such as the McCall Folklore Society and various Valley County art associations.
- Continue to seek grant support from the Certified Local Government Program of the Idaho State Historical Society. Periodic grant request could be made to the Idaho Heritage Trust, Idaho Humanities Council, and National Trust for Historic Preservation. Other sources for grants might include institutions and foundations. City support would be used to match state grants and private contributions for preservation projects. Information about Community Enhancement Grants and SHRAB grants can be found at [www.history.idaho.gov/grants](http://www.history.idaho.gov/grants).
- Budget for preservation board members and staff to allow for continuing preservation education opportunities through conferences, seminars, and workshops.



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