

Downtown Ellensburg  
National Register District  
Expansion Update  
Public Meeting

Thursday, April 4, 2019

5:45 pm

Teanaway Room, Hal Holmes Ctr.

Ellensburg's first National Register of Historic Places District was the Downtown District. The project originated with interested local residents during the celebration of the nation's Bicentennial in 1976.

The nomination was submitted to the US Dept. of the Interior, Nat'l Park Service on September 17, 1976. It was approved by the Washington Dept. of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and the federal government and entered into the National Register of Historic Places on July 1, 1977.



**Davidson Bldg. (1889)**

The National Register of Historic Places was authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act (1966) thru the National Park Service to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate and protect the nation's historic and archeological resources.

The National Register protects buildings, sites, districts, structures, and objects.

Since 1966, 93,000 properties have been listed in the National Register representing 1.8 million contributing resources.

Federal preservation tax credits have leveraged more than \$45 billion in private investment as well as National Park Service grant programs like Save America's Treasures and Preserve America.



**Kleinberg Bldg., 1889**



A **historic district** is: a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

There are two in Ellensburg; the other one is the First Railroad Addition National Register District (established 1980), which is also a local Landmark District (established 2001).



**Ramsey-Condit House,  
215 E. 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. (1908)**

In the 40 plus years since the downtown District was established, a number of notable historic buildings that weren't eligible to be included in the district in 1977, due to being less than 50 years old, have become candidates for inclusion. This includes the Art Moderne-style Liberty Theatre, which had been standing only 40 years when the downtown District was established.



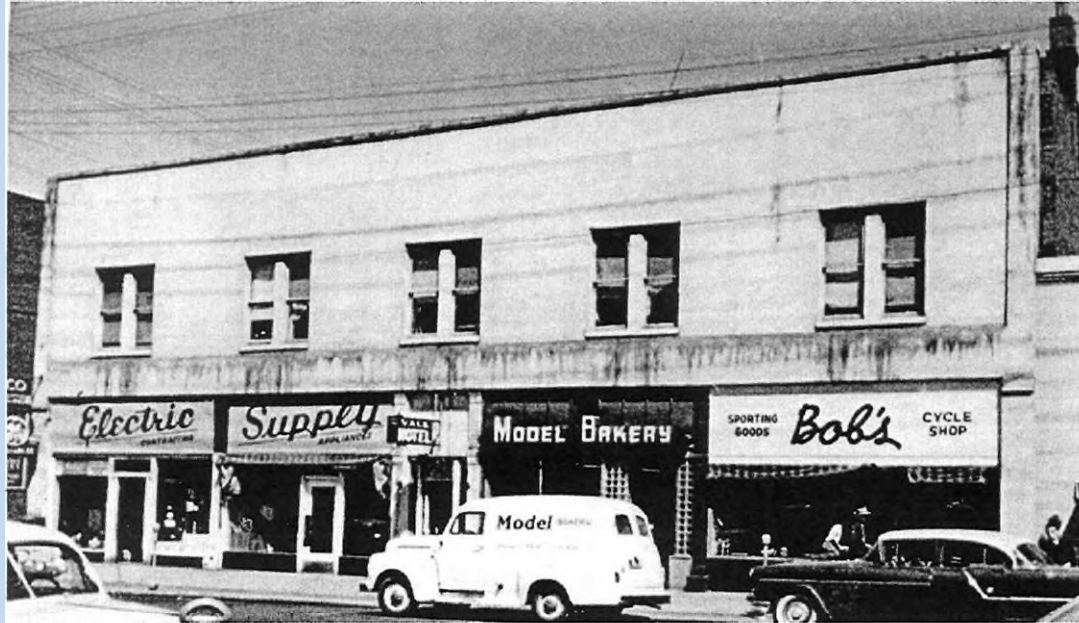
**Liberty Theatre, soon  
after it's opening in 1937**



The Updated nomination also includes properties excluded from the original nomination due to earlier alterations that rendered them “noncontributing” to a district. Some of these, such as the Elmira Hotel (1889), are being rehabbed to restore the historical integrity and are now contributing buildings to the proposed expanded district.



**Elmira Hotel, early 1900s**

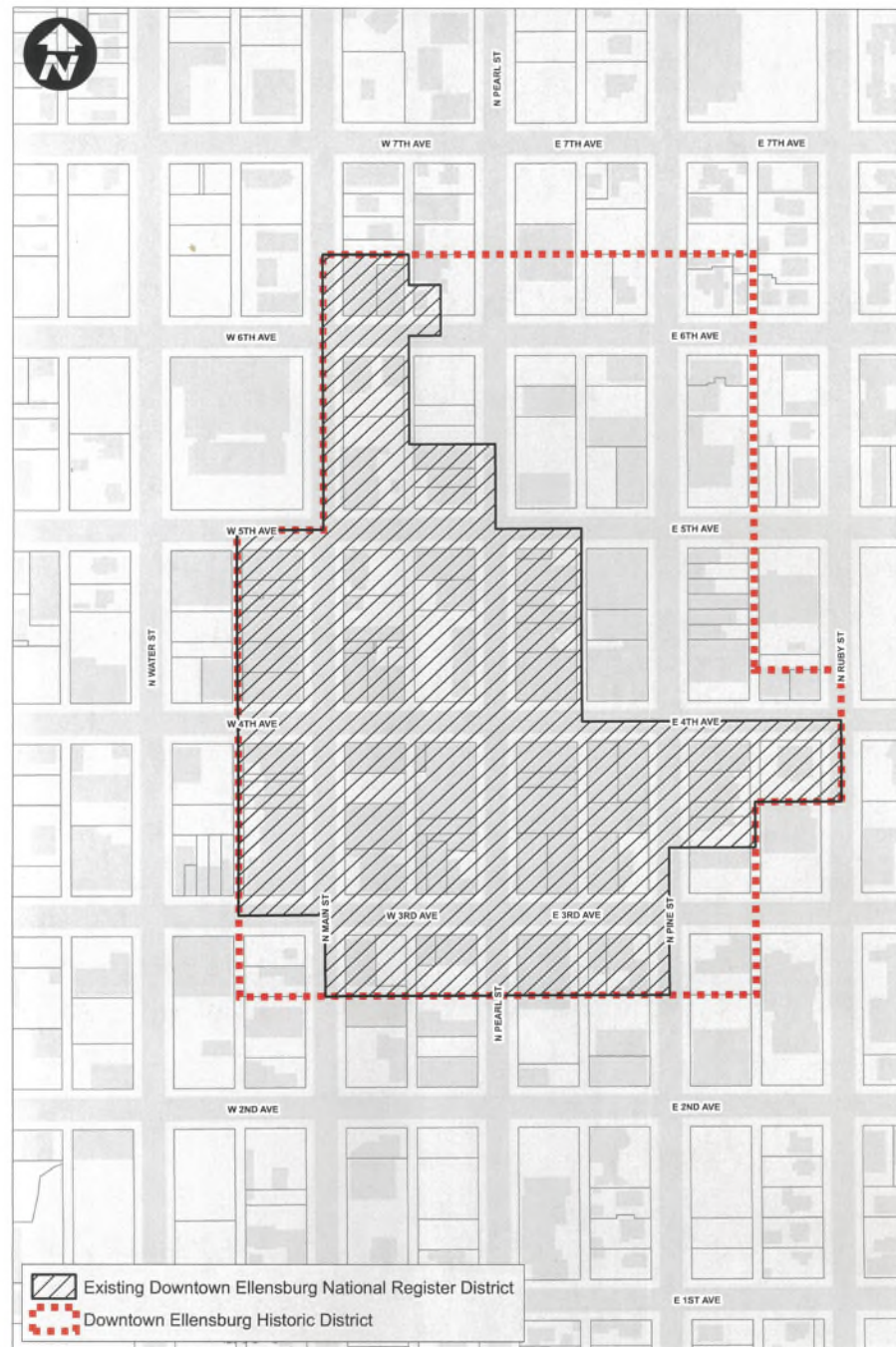


**Changes to the Elmira Hotel**  
1950s remuddling, above; as it undergoes rehabbing, 2019, below



In 1980, the local Ellensburg Landmark District was established. It was codified in the new City Code in 2013 as ECC 15.280. The Downtown Landmark District included most of the properties (including the Elmira Hotel and the Liberty Theatre) that the proposed expansion of the National Register District would encompass.

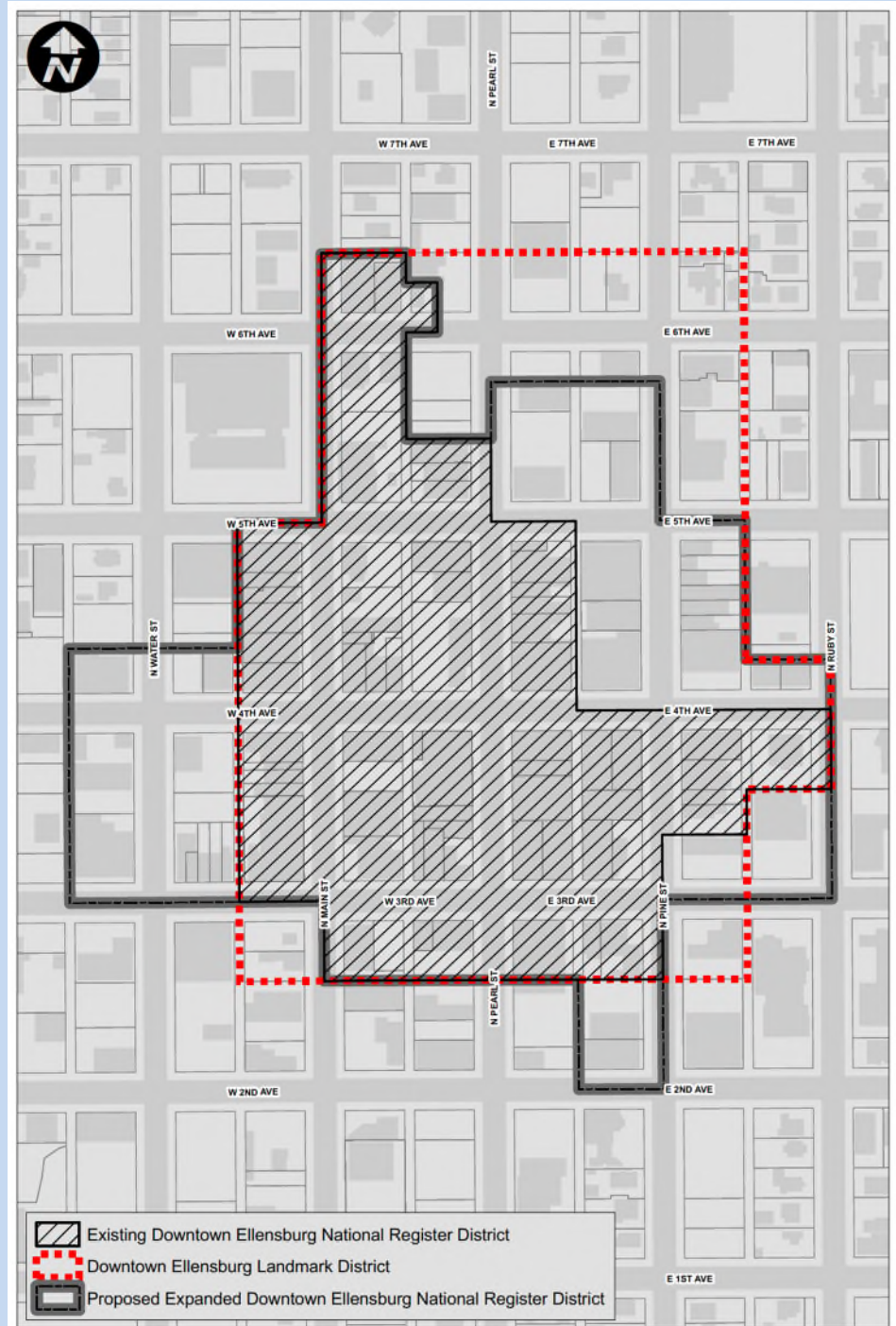
Current Downtown Ellensburg National Register and local Landmark District Boundaries





However, properties owners who are receiving the benefits of being in the local Downtown Landmark District, like eligibility for City Historic Preservation Grant monies or Special Valuation for Historic Properties tax abatements, do **not** receive federal level benefits, unless their properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, **also**. It is important to keep the National Register District up-to-date, so that eligible properties may receive federal tax breaks and other federal benefits as well.

### Proposed Expanded Downtown National Register District Boundaries



# Benefits of listing in the National Register of Historic Places

- Eligibility for certain tax provisions -- Owners of properties listed in the National Register may be eligible for a 20% investment tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures such as commercial, industrial, or rental residential buildings. This credit can be combined with a straight-line depreciation period of 27.5 years for residential property and 31.5 years for nonresidential property for the depreciable basis of the rehabilitated building reduced by the amount of the tax credit claimed. Federal tax deductions are also available for charitable contributions for conservation purposes of partial interests in historically important land areas or structures.
- Consideration in planning for Federal, Federally licensed, and Federally assisted projects: -- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires that Federal agencies allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on all projects affecting historic properties either listed in or determined eligible for listing in the National Register. The Advisory Council oversees and ensures the consideration of historic properties in the Federal Planning process.
- Qualification for Federal grants for historic preservation, when funds are available.
- Honorific national recognition of a historic resource.

## Next steps

- Staff will complete editing and corrections to the National Register Expansion Nomination Update by April 12, 2019.
- Once the document is completed it will be posted on the City's webpage here: <https://ci.ellensburg.wa.us/706/Ellensburgs-Historic-Districts>
- Interested persons may submit comments to City staff by noon on April 19, 2019.
- Staff will send the proposal, along with all comments, to DAHP on Friday, April 19, 2019.



# Next steps (continued)

- Public notice of the hearing before the Washington State Advisory Council on Historic Preservation will be posted in the *Daily Record* and **interested persons may send comments to them directly as well**. The public notice will occur at least 30 days, but not more than 75 days before it meets. This meeting will be in Olympia in **June**; the exact date and time is to be determined. The DAHP contact person is State Architectural Historian Michael Houser. He can be reached at 360-586-3076 or [Michael.Houser@dahp.wa.gov](mailto:Michael.Houser@dahp.wa.gov). City Staff will post the date and time when we receive the information. However, the DAHP webpage for it is:  
<https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-registers/washington-state-advisory-council-on-historic-preservation>
- The June Advisory Council hearing in Olympia will be open to the public. The recommendation of the Advisory Council will be forwarded on to the keeper of the National Register in Washington, DC for a final decision.