

## How is a *Cultural District* Different from a *Historic District*?

Denver currently has 55 **historic districts** located across the city. These historic districts highlight Denver's historic and architectural development. In addition to these historic districts, Denver has one **historic cultural district** – the Five Points Historic Cultural District.

Many of Denver's historic districts are notable for their architectural significance, either as good examples of historic architectural styles, or for the number of architect-designed homes within the district's boundaries.

However, many areas of Denver make special contributions to the city's cultural character, but until now they have rarely been recognized for their cultural significance. **Cultural districts** honor the cultural history of a community and acknowledge the important contributions these neighborhoods have made to Denver. These districts encompass different places and sites that represent the traditions, beliefs, customs and practices of a community. Cultural districts may have distinctive architectural features, but it is their cultural legacy which gives Denver its unique character.

To highlight and honor Denver's diverse cultural heritage, Landmark Preservation staff is working with neighborhoods to explore how cultural districts can better represent Denver's unique story. These cultural districts will still have a level of design review overseen by the City & County of Denver's Landmark Preservation staff. However, design review for cultural districts will have flexibility through customizable design guidelines that acknowledge the individual character of the neighborhood and the changes that have occurred over time.

### Case Study: La Alma Lincoln Park

La Alma Lincoln Park is a good candidate for a cultural district as it tells a layered story of Denver's history. From the early residents who worked for the nearby railroads and other industries, to the Chicano Movement of the 1960s, the neighborhood's built environment reflects its evolving cultural significance. **Character defining features** like the numerous murals throughout the neighborhood, tell an important story about the cultural practices of the community.

To ensure the cultural character of the neighborhood is protected while encouraging thoughtful and sensitive changes that are compatible with the neighborhood, **customized design guidelines** will be created. For example, customized design guidelines for La Alma Lincoln Park may encourage the preservation of existing murals throughout the district or allow a variety of front yard fences in the district. These design guidelines may also allow greater flexibility for porches and window changes, which are two common changes in the district.

***Denver Landmark would like to invite you to join a stakeholder group to help work on these customized design guidelines. Please email Kara Hahn at [kara.hahn@denvergov.org](mailto:kara.hahn@denvergov.org) to join the group this summer!***



Lincoln Park, La Alma mural on the Rec Center. Artist: Emanuel Martinez



1300 block of Lipan