



## STAFF REPORT

This document is the staff's comparison of the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation, Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures and Districts, the Landmark Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 30, Revised Municipal Code) and other applicable adopted area guidelines as applied to the proposed application. It is intended to provide guidance during the commission's deliberation of the proposed application. Guidelines are available at [www.denvergov.org/preservation](http://www.denvergov.org/preservation)

<b>Project:</b>	#2026-COA-192	<b>LPC Meeting:</b>	April 7, 2026
<b>Address:</b>	1265 N Mariposa Street	<b>Staff:</b>	Brittany Bryant
<b>Historic District:</b>	La Alma Lincoln Park Historic Cultural District		
<b>Year structure built:</b>	unknown, pre 1900s (Period of Significance: 1873-1980)		
<b>Council District:</b>	#3 - Jamie Torres		
<b>Applicant:</b>	Denver Parks and Recreation   Livable Cities Studio		

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### Project Scope Under Review:

Park Improvements

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### Staff Summary:

The applicant, Denver Parks and Recreation, in partnership with Livable Cities Studio, is requesting approval to undertake several improvements to La Alma Lincoln Park within the La Alma Lincoln Park Historic Cultural District. La Alma Lincoln Park has served as a public park since the establishment of permanent settlement within Hunt's Addition and has long functioned as a central gathering space for residents. The park has a rich history, including the city's first outdoor heated pool constructed in 1908 (no longer extant), separate playgrounds for boys and girls dedicated in 1909 and 1910, and a Mission-style bathhouse built in 1910 with indoor showers, toilets, and 150 lockers. In the 1920s, the City invested in planting and landscaping, and in 1926 the Neighborhood House was constructed on the northeast corner of the park to provide childcare. Investment in the park continued during the Depression, including construction of an Amphitheater in 1936 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

In 2023, a [Vision Plan for La Alma Lincoln Park](#) was completed, reflecting community input and priorities and serving as a conceptual guide for future improvements. The Vision Plan includes features such as a cultural story and exercise loop, restoration of the amphitheater and creation of a new plaza, installation of a roller loop and picnic grove, improvements to sports fields, and enhanced lighting and safety. As of 2025, implementation of the Vision Plan is underway. The Landmark Preservation Commission has previously reviewed alterations to contributing elements within the park, including changes to the amphitheater (#2025-COA-0000680) and the site wall along N Osage Street (#2025-COA-0001104).

The applicant is now seeking approval for additional scopes of work, including new pathways that will form a cultural story loop with concrete site walls featuring tiles and stainless steel letters (pages L619-L622), canopy shade structures at the south end of the park adjacent to the pool and in the forecourt of the rec center in an area being called La Alma Plaza (pages A100-A-200, A-300, A601-A602, A-800), new playground equipment (page L635-L638), several gathering spaces and terraced seating (pages L616 and L618), new community and picnic tables (page L630), a new basketball court (page L630) and tennis court (page L633), a roller loop (page L639), and a wavy track (page L640). New lighting provided by Xcel Energy will be installed throughout the park (pages EL100-EL602). These improvements aim to honor the park's historic significance while advancing the community's vision for its continued use, accessibility, and enjoyment.

The guidelines provide limited direction specific to park spaces. Applicable guidance is primarily found within the landscape and lighting sections. Certain elements within the park, particularly artistic or interpretive features, fall outside the scope of guidelines and Landmark review. Additionally, the guidelines do not specifically address recreational features. However, the proposal maintains and preserves the park’s historic features, ensuring that its character-defining elements remain intact. Furthermore, the OS-A zoning designation allows many improvements within the park to proceed without traditional permit review.

**Excerpted from Appendix A: La Alma Lincoln Park Historic Cultural District Customized Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures & Districts, September 21, 2021**

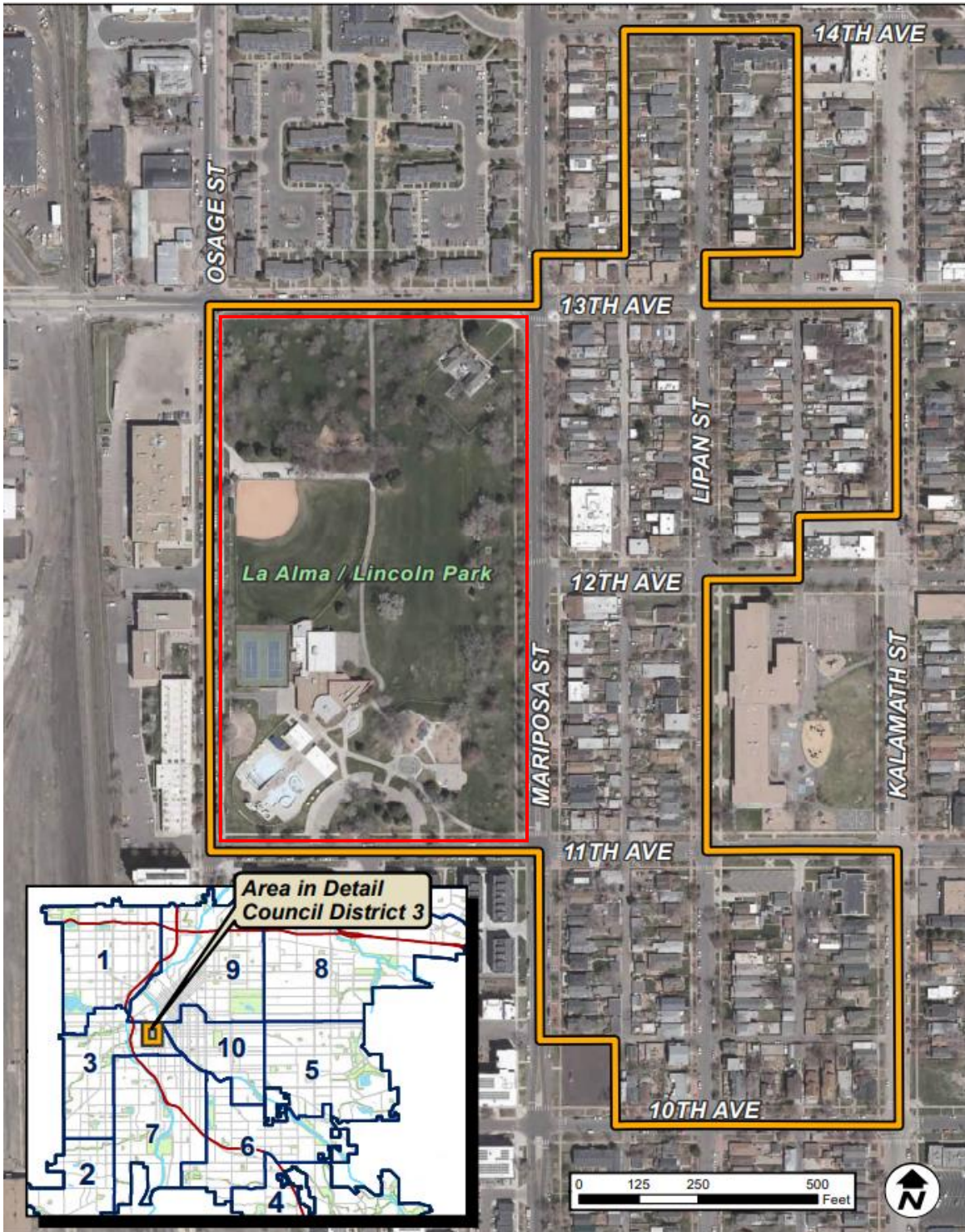
Guidelines	Meets Guidelines?	Comments
<p><b>5.2.2 Plan new site features to respect the character-defining features of the historic district.</b></p> <p>a. When introducing a new site feature or modifying an existing feature, such as a stairway, fence or retaining wall, respect historical patterns in terms of placement, proportions and design compatibility with surrounding historic context.</p> <p>b. When designing a new walkway, use colors, styles and finishes similar to those seen in nearby historic walkways.</p> <p>c. Avoid introducing new readily visible site features, such as curb cuts, which were not historically present on the property, or prevalent in the historic district.</p> <p>d. Use decorative modular pavers, a cellular paving system or recycled historic site materials (such as stone or brick) to minimize the visual impacts of a larger paved surface area.</p> <p>e. Avoid introducing topographic features, such as berms, that were not historically present, especially if other front yard areas on the street do not include similar features.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The proposed park improvements are designed to respect the character-defining features of the La Alma Lincoln Park Historic Cultural District while reinforcing cultural connections through activation of the park.</p> <p>The cultural story loop will include four walls located throughout the park, each featuring a Spanish phrase with an English translation accompanied by an interpretive panel. These walls will be constructed of concrete and incorporate decorative tile and stainless-steel lettering in vibrant colors.</p> <p>Concrete within the La Alma Plaza and Paseo spaces will be sandblasted with special markings, such as eagle and diamond patterns, to further reflect cultural connections. The canopy shade structures will utilize a color palette that draws from Emanuel Martinez’s La Alma mural on the recreation center, creating visual continuity within the park.</p> <p>Most site features are proposed at grade or are designed to support gathering and recreational activities, such as basketball and tennis, reinforcing the historic use of the park as an active community space.</p> <p>The Commission has previously reviewed and approved the alterations to the Amphitheater and the contributing site wall along N. Osage Street associated with the fire lane shown in this packet.</p>
<p><b>5.5.3 Design site lighting to be compatible and subordinate to historic buildings and the surrounding historic context.</b></p> <p>a. Base site lighting designs on historic site or building lighting patterns if they are known.</p> <p>b. Scale new site lighting fixtures to the building and to be subordinate to adjacent historic structures.</p> <p>c. Use low, shielded, fixtures with down-lighting, or light bollards within landscaping</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Light fixtures will be installed throughout the park, with two fixture styles proposed: a smaller, pedestrian-scale fixture mounted on a 14-foot pole and a larger cobra-head fixture mounted on a 25-foot pole.</p> <p>The human-scale fixtures will provide pedestrian-friendly lighting, while the taller fixtures will offer broader site illumination.</p>

<p>to illuminate pedestrian walkways if needed.</p> <p>d. Use modest site lighting to illuminate building entrances and entries into parking areas.</p> <p>e. Use fixtures that provide even lighting for a plaza, courtyard or patio area.</p> <p>f. Do not install site lighting that conveys a false sense of history, such as faux historic street lights. g. Do not provide greater illumination in parking areas than at building entrances or for pedestrian walkways. h. Do not use site lighting that is brighter than historic building lighting.</p>		
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**Basis:** La Alma Lincoln Park is an important contributing feature of the La Alma Lincoln Park Historic Cultural District, and continued investment and improvements to the park reinforce its role as a vital gathering space for residents. Alterations to significant contributing elements within the park have previously been reviewed and approved by the Commission.

Suggested Motion: I move to APPROVE application #2026-COA-192 for the park improvements at 1265 N Mariposa Street, as per La Alma Lincoln Park customized design guidelines 5.2.2 and 5.5.3, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.

La Alma Lincoln Park Historic District with La Alma Lincoln Park outlined in red



1904 Sanborn Map with La Alma Lincoln Park outlined in red



END