

Canyon County

Historic Preservation Commission

FY2026 Grant Recommendations



Canyon County

Historic Preservation Commission

IN REVIEW

BACKGROUND:

Idaho Code 31-864 grants the Board of County Commissioners the authority to levy not more than twelve one-thousandths percent (.012%, or about 1 cent) on each dollar of market value for assessment purposes of taxable property within the County for the support of historical societies, museums, and historic preservation projects. These funds are dedicated to a grant award program. Canyon County is the ONLY county in Idaho to do this.

Since it was reinstated in 2013, the Canyon County Historic Preservation Commission, by direction of the Canyon County Board of Commissioners, has awarded approximately \$2.4 million to historical societies, museums, libraries, and other organizations in Canyon County.

CANYON COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION MEMBERS:

George DeFord, Jr., Owner and attorney at DeFord Law
Nikki Gorrell, Associate Professor of Anthropology, College of Western Idaho
Dr. Rachel Miller, Klara K. Hansberger Assistant Professor of History, College of Idaho
Bruce Poe, Principal Architect, Modus Architecture
Dr. Justin Vance, Dean, School of Arts and Humanities, College of Western Idaho
Zach Wesley, Civil, Prosecuting Attorney
Chelsee Boehm, Historic Preservation Officer

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG)

Canyon County is CLG - a program provided through an amendment to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The CLG designation gives local governments a specific, formal role in historic preservation. As a CLG, Canyon County maintains a relationship with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and is eligible to apply for grants from SHPO - federal dollars that they receive from the National Park Service.

CANYON COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION GRANT AWARD PROGRAM

Under the direction of the Board of County Commissioners, the Canyon County HPC reviews, recommends, and administers the Canyon County historic Preservation Grant Award Program. This program gives funds to qualified, nonprofit organizations in Canyon County who have a mission of conservation, protection, and maintenance of historic information, materials, or properties. In general, the Historic Preservation tax levy funds can go to...

- (1) Support of historical societies which operate primarily within the county; or
- (2) Support of museums operated within the county; or
- (3) Support of historical restoration projects undertaken within the county; or
- (4) Marking and development of historic sites within the county.

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Grant Review Process

Applications are reviewed to ensure that each meets the qualifications of the historic preservation levy. Applications require proof of 501(c)(3) or nonprofit status. When a project involves physical improvements to a building, structure, or facility, they must also provide proof of ownership. This helps guarantee that awards are not given to projects under bank loans that could default.

Each project is encouraged to provide financial estimates/bids, letters of commitment for maintenance and long-term sustainability of the project, letters of commitment for grant matches, letters of support, drawings/plans, and photos. The review process provides the HPC a chance to ask questions about the proposal, allow for clarifications, or request additional before the final.

HPC Members evaluate applications based on answers to the following questions:

1. How does this project address a historic preservation issue in Canyon County?
2. Describe the urgency of this project due to potential resource damage or other impacts that may cause an opportunity to be lost.
3. Describe the project. Include drawings, plans, photos, schedules, proof of ownership of the project property, and compliance with applicable laws. (Americans with Disabilities Act, National Environmental Policy Act, Uniform Building Code, etc.)
4. How did you plan this project? (Did you use consultants? Who are the consultants and their qualifications? Did you get financial bids/quotes? Do you have applicable training pertaining to this project?)
5. Why is the project needed and how does it benefit the citizens of Canyon County?
6. If this application is part of a multi-year, phased project, please include information about the use of past award funds and include a complete and detailed plan of future phases and financial needs through to project completion with an anticipated timeline of these phases.
7. Will a fee be charged to the public to use your project when completed? If yes, explain.
8. How will the resulting project be available to the citizens of Canyon County? (What is the availability plan? How often will it be available? How will people be made aware that it is available?)
9. If your project is located within a museum or restricted facility, please answer the following:
 - Regular Hours of Operation
 - Total Hours Per Year the Facility is Available to the Public
 - Number of Visitors Per Year
 - How is availability publicized?
10. If this application is one of multiple applications, please indicate the priority of the application.

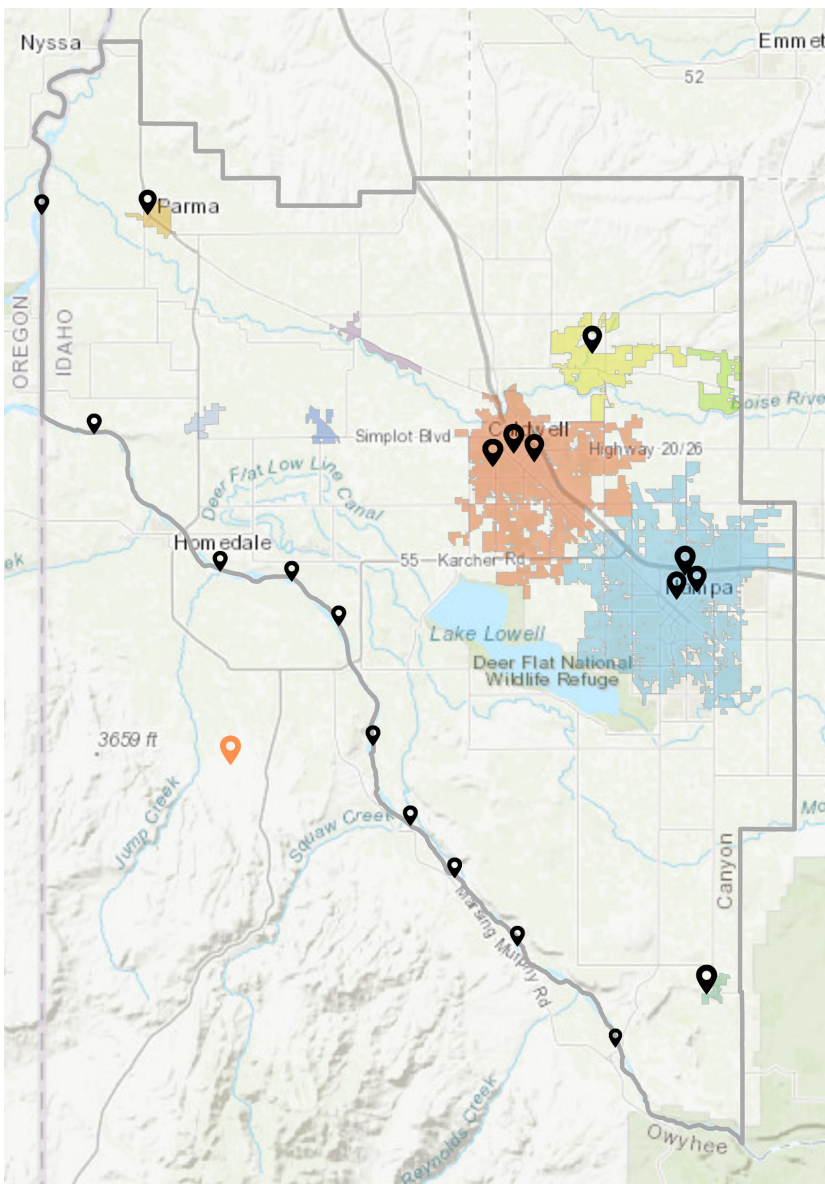
Canyon County

Historic Preservation Commission

FY2026 Applications

The Canyon County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) received and reviewed **16 applications from 11 different organizations** requesting fiscal assistance for a total of **\$173,463**. This year, the HPC saw applications **from four applicants who have never applied before!**

Last year, the HPC received 8 applications from 9 organizations for \$139,180.



Applicant Distribution

Caldwell

- Idaho PEO Chapter House
- Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History
- Whittenberger Planetarium

Nampa

- American Legion
- Canyon County Historical Society
- Nampa Public Library

Melba

- Melba Valley Historical Society

Middleton

- Historical Society of Middleton

Parma

- Parma Library

Multiple Locations

- Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway
- Idaho Civil War Volunteers

American Legion, Post 18 (1 of 2)



Constructed in 1931, this building is on the National Register of Historic Places.

It represents the work of prominent architectural firm, Tourtellotte and Hummel.

Repair and restoration of the building has been ongoing for several years. Hummel architects, descended from the firm that designed the building, created a preservation plan in 2021.

Applicants estimate 3,000+ visitors each year.

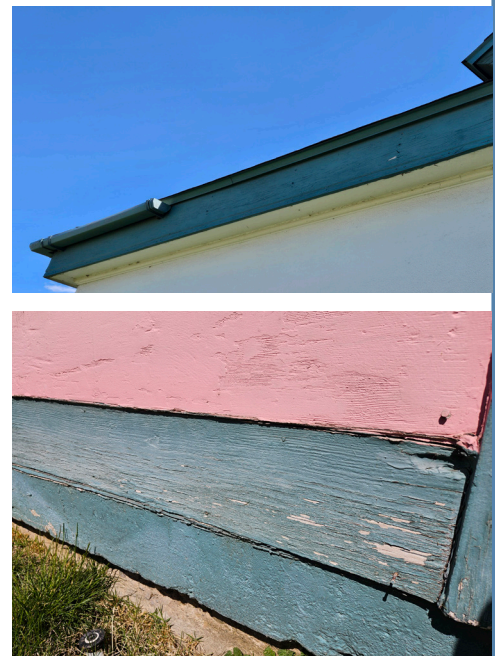
Chateau Exterior Paint & Restoration (#1 Priority for Organization)

Complete exterior painting, fascia board repair under the roof and add rain gutters to reduce water damage to the fascia boards, exposed wood trim and under the foundation.



Amount Requested: \$21,725
Amount Recommended: \$21,725

Priority: URGENT
HPC RANKING: #1 of 16



American Legion, Post 18 (2 of 2)



Photo by Patricia Wright, 1980. Idaho State Historical Society, SHPO

Chateau Due Diligence Survey (#2 Priority for Organization)

Hire professionals to complete a due diligence survey, who will investigate, identify and make recommendations for the long-term priorities for the building's care, including extensive mechanical and electrical upgrades.

Amount Requested: \$10,400
Amount Recommended: \$10,400

Priority: HIGH
HPC RANKING: #6 of 16

Canyon County Historical Society (1 of 2)

The Nampa Train Depot, first used in 1903, is listed on the National Register for its significance in transportation as part of the Oregon Short Line. Its architectural style is described as, "an interesting eclectic combination of Romanesque Renaissance and Baroque elements."

Now over 120 years old, the building is owned by the Union Pacific and leased to the Canyon County Historical Society - who operates it as a museum. They see an estimated 3,300 visitors per year.



Photo by Roadsidepictures. Courtesy flickr.

Nampa Train Depot Museum Heating & Air Conditioning (#1 Priority for Organization)

Replace the train depot's furnace and one of two air conditioning units with new assemblies, and remove current faulty units that are 25+ years old.

"Critical to the museum's operation is a well-functioning heating and cooling system for the comfort of the visitors and of the all volunteer staff

The heating and cooling system is also needed for the preservation of temperature-sensitive artifacts and ephemera."



Photos from CCHS Facebook

Amount Requested: \$9,187
Amount Recommended: \$9,187

Priority: URGENT
HPC RANKING: #2 of 16



Canyon County Historical Society

(2 of 2)

Train Depot, 1908. Photo courtesy the Canyon County Historical Society



Nampa Train Depot Restroom Restoration (#2 Priority for Organization)

Hire a professional contractor to restore both restrooms from their current 1960s decor to match the building's 1903 opening date.

Current conditions in the bathroom, including mid-20th century fixtures, gaps in ceiling, and uneven walls.



Amount Requested: \$17,900
Amount Recommended: \$17,900

Priority: MEDIUM
HPC RANKING: #12 of 16

Historical Society of Middleton

The Historical Society of Middleton (HSM) formed in 2013 to create a Middleton history museum.

The Lee Moberly Museum is housed in a 1912 structure built by Idaho Power to convert electricity from Swan Falls Dam for residential and commercial use. It was added to that National Register in 1973.

In part with assistance from Canyon County HPC funding, the society has renovated the building, created exhibits, and opened it to the public.



Interpretive Sign for Trolley Station Grounds

Design and install an interpretive sign, 24" x 36", on the south side of Trolley Station Event Center grounds, near public parking, describing the role of the Interurban Railway in Treasure Valley history, and its impact on Middleton.



Existing sign at the museum. New sign would accompany this one.



Amount Requested: \$5,900
Amount Recommended: \$5,900

Priority: MEDIUM
HPC RANKING: #10 of 16

Idaho Civil War Volunteers



The Idaho Civil War Volunteers are a "group of educational volunteers who are passionate about history and eager to share their knowledge with the public." They provide educational programs about the history of the American Civil War and 1800s America.

They participate in events around the Treasure Valley, with their largest being Civil War Days at Eagle Island State Park.

Cannon Carriage for a Model 1841 Mountain Howitzer

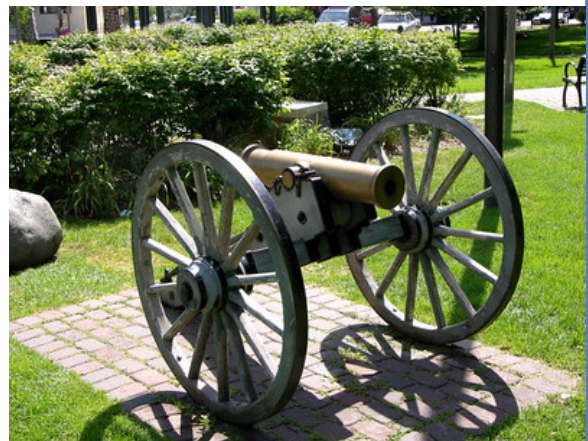
Purchase a carriage for a Model 1841 Mountain Howitzer cannon barrel the ICWV already has to support ICWV in their public education mission.



Amount Requested: \$8,300
Amount Recommended: \$8,300

Priority: LOW
HPC RANKING: #16 of 16

Current state of cannon, and an example of what it would look like on carriage



Idaho PEO Chapter House (1 of 2)

The PEO, or the Philanthropic Educational Organization, is a non-profit organization aimed at helping women. The Idaho PEO Chapter House is within the 1910 Dorman Mansion - listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Chapter House is only one of two remaining PEO Chapter Houses in the US, and the only one offering independent living.



Exterior Painting for PEO Chapter House/Dorman Mansion (#1 Priority for Organization)

Paint the exterior of the 1910 Dorman Mansion, a historical home in Caldwell, to preserve its architectural integrity and historical significance.



Some of the issues with the exterior paint on the Dorman Mansion



Amount Requested: \$16,505
Amount Recommended: \$16,505

Priority: HIGH
HPC RANKING: #8 of 16

Idaho PEO Chapter House (2 of 2)



Photo by Madeline Kelley Buckendorf, Idaho State Historical Society, SHPO

PEO Chapter House Dining Room Renovation (#2 Priority for Organization)

Renovate the dining room of the PEO Chapter House/Dorman Mansion to reflect the original style of the historic 1910 home.



Current condition of the dining room, including water damage, wear on the walls, and mid-20th century updates.

Photos courtesy Idaho PEO Chapter House



Amount Requested: \$10,720
Amount Recommended: \$10,720

Priority: MEDIUM
HPC RANKING: #14 of 16

Melba Valley Historical Society

The Melba Valley Historical Society operates the Melba Valley Museum, housed in the former Gardner Hotel/International Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) building. Constructed in 1919 as a hotel, the building was purchased by IOOF Lodge #150 in 1927.

Transferred to the IOOF's allied women's group, the Rebekahs in 1996, the building was given to the Melba Valley Historical Society to house a museum.

The structure was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2024.



Interpretive Panels for Melba Valley Museum

Install interpretive panels with information (text, photos, and other graphics) about the history of the Melba Valley in a recently-upgraded lot adjacent to the Melba Valley Museum.

Upgraded lot where the signage would go.

Amount Requested: \$18,370
Amount Recommended: \$18,370

Priority: MEDIUM
HPC RANKING: #11 of 16



Nampa Public Library Foundation

Photos courtesy Nampa Public Library



The Nampa Public Library has a special local history section on its third floor. Among other materials, it has 723 microfilm boxes (dating from 1905 to 2020) available for researchers.

Volunteers used a microfilm reader to digitize newspapers using a microfilm reader, conduct research for local history projects.

Microfilm Reader

Purchase a new microfilm reader to replace the broken and unfixable one, which has halted the public from utilizing the microfilm for research and stopped staff and volunteers from digitizing the newspapers to make them readily available.

The NPL is one of few organizations in the Treasure Valley that offers access to microfilm reader for free. The reader has been broken for six months, significantly reducing access to historic newspapers.

Amount Requested: \$10,000
Amount Recommended: \$10,000

Priority: HIGH
HPC RANKING: #5 of 16



Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History

The Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History, on the College of Idaho campus, has one of the largest collections of fossil plants west of the Mississippi.

The fossil materials "represent the history of Idaho, as well as the history of research and collection of fossils in the state."



Fossils of Southern Idaho Exhibit and Fossil Preservation

Better preserve Idaho's fossil heritage by improving fossil storage capabilities by purchasing new cabinets, and creating an improved exhibit space with new and rehabilitated cases.



Current shelves - which show bowing due to weight



Amount Requested: \$15,046
Amount Recommended: \$15,046

Priority: HIGH
HPC RANKING: #4 of 16

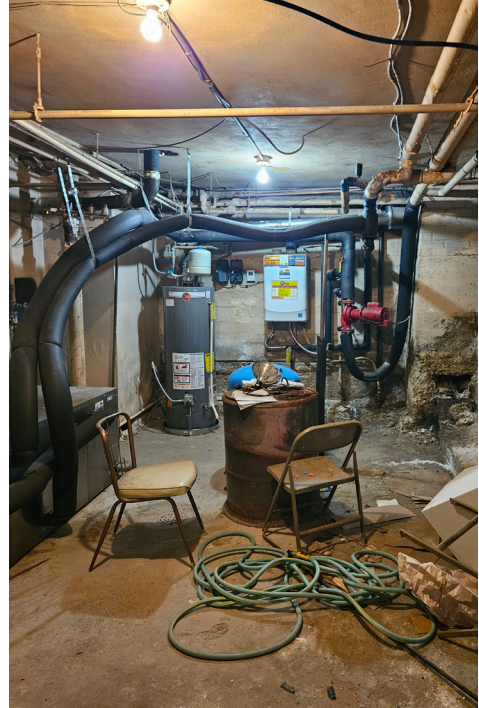
Patricia Romanko Public Library (1 of 2)

via Preservation Idaho

In partnership with the Parma Public Library and the City of Parma, Preservation Idaho will be the acting nonprofit organization for any grant awards.



Photo by Steve Trout



Due Diligence Survey of Library Building (#1 Priority for Organization)

Hire a team of preservation experts to evaluate the condition of the historic First National Bank (aka Patricia Romanko Public Library) and create a due diligence survey of the work required to ensure the preservation of this valuable historic resource.



Current conditions at the Parma Library

Amount Requested: \$13,900
Amount Recommended: \$13,900

Priority: HIGH
HPC RANKING: #3 of 16

Patricia Romanko Public Library (2 of 2)

via Preservation Idaho



Photo by Steve Trout

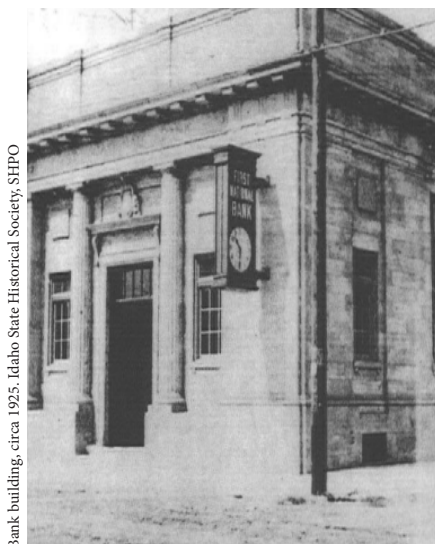
Built in 1918, the First National Bank building was gifted to the City of Parma in 1974.

Home to the Patricia Romanko Library, it is a cornerstone for the community. In addition to books, the library provides programming for all ages, public computers and internet access.

The building is one of only a few historic buildings/sites still in Parma. It was designed by one of Idaho's significant architectural firms - Wayland and Fennell.

National Register of Historic Places Nomination (#2 Priority for Organization)

Hire a preservation expert to provide a complete National Register of Historic Places nomination for the First National Bank in Parma, and to work through the research, writing and nomination process.



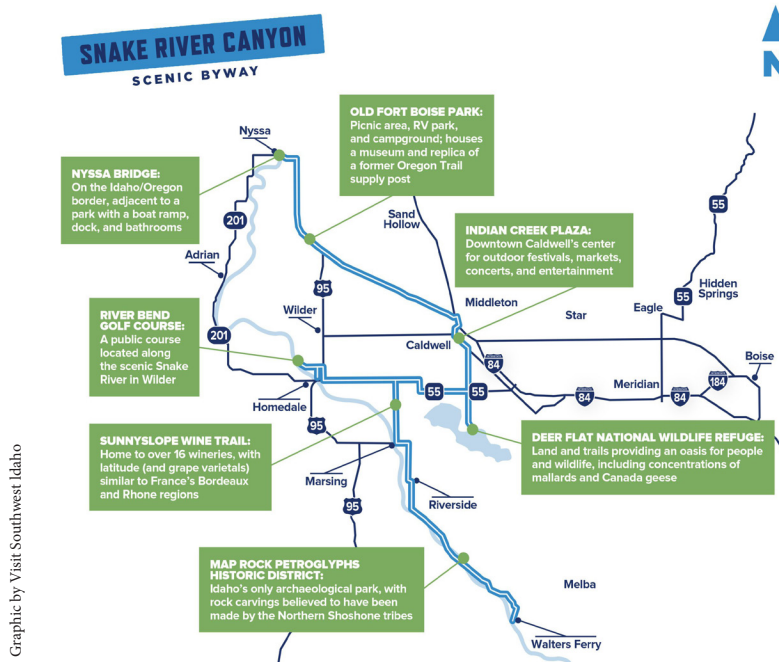
Bank building, circa 1925. Idaho State Historical Society, SHPO

Amount Requested: \$7,960
Amount Recommended: \$7,960

Priority: HIGH
HPC RANKING: #7 of 16

Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway

(1 of 2)



The Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway is 53 miles along Idaho Highway 45 from Walters Ferry to Nyssa, OR.

With increased growth and development, the SRCSB board seeks to raise awareness of cultural and historic sites, encourage understanding of their value, and advocacy for their preservation.

Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway Audio Tour (#1 Priority for Organization)

Record a GPS-based audio tour for the SRCSB, highlight the archaeology and history of Canyon County, with an emphasis on agriculture to promote historic education, knowledge and exposure to Canyon County residents, students, and beyond.



Map Rock - one of the sites that would be highlighted by the audio tour

Amount Requested: \$3,000
Amount Recommended: \$3,000

Priority: MEDIUM
HPC RANKING: #9 of 16

Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway

(2 of 2)

Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway

Payette was established in 1891 and honors François Payette, an early fur trapper. Abundant crops of fruit, onions, corn and potatoes are produced in this area rich in agricultural heritage.

Parma is located near the confluence of the Boise and Snake rivers. A full-size replica of Old Fort Boise (1834 - 1854) is located in Parma.

Wilder is known for many crops, especially hops grown for craft beers. Look for hops growing on high trellises. Visit the Wilder historic museum.

Map Rock is the most well-known petroglyph panel in Idaho. Petroglyphs are images carved, pecked, or incised into stone. It is commonly believed that the petroglyphs were created by the Shoshone-Bannock people prior to Euro-American contact.

Fruitland was named by an early community of settlers that planted fruit orchards on the banks of the Snake and Payette rivers. Stop and enjoy the Old Fruitland Park in historic downtown Fruitland.

Greenleaf is named for Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier. The quaint community was settled by Quakers in the early 1900s. Visit the Greenleaf historic museum.

Sunnyslope area enjoys ideal soil and weather conditions for bountiful orchards and a thriving wine industry.

Walter's Ferry is one of 23 historic ferry crossings of the Snake River. 1890 painting by Agnes Bowen.

Byway Loop Routes

See: SnakeRiverCanyonScenicByway.org

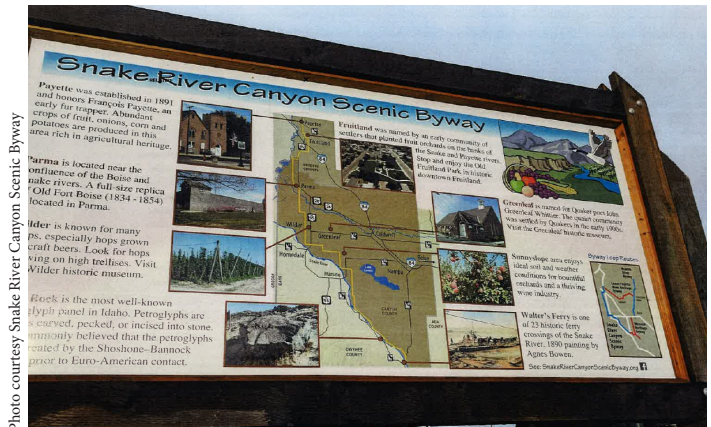
Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway Sign Project (#2 Priority for Organization)

Place additional map boards on the scenic byway to enhance participation and promote education and tourism.

Several signs for the SRCSB are already in place - including ones in Greenleaf, Payette, and Fruitland. Additional signs would be added at Celebration Park, near Walter's Ferry, and in Marsing.

Amount Requested: \$4,000
Amount Recommended: \$4,000

Priority: MEDIUM
HPC RANKING: #13 of 16



Whittenberger Planetarium



The Whittenberger Planetarium, in the Boone Hall at the College of Idaho, provides public outreach and educational programs to the surrounding communities.

Since 1970, the planetarium has hosted school groups, public programs and other events to people in the surrounding community.

The 55-year old Spitz A3P projector allows for visual storytelling and serves as "an invaluable tool for modeling celestial movements in a way that cannot be equally demonstrated by any other means.

LED Moon Projector Conversion

Upgrade the Moon projector on the Spitz A3P projector at the Whittenberger Planetarium at the College of Idaho to an LED light source.



Spitz A3P at the Whittenberger Planetarium

Photo courtesy Boise State University



Photo from Planetarium Museum

Planet Projector Analogs on a Spitz A3P. Only about 500 models of this projector were ever made.

Amount Requested: \$550
Amount Recommended: \$550

Priority: LOW
HPC RANKING: #15 of 16

Recommendations

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends funding **\$173,463** in FY2026.
Funding Falls into these four Priority Categories

		Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
	Urgent Priority Projects	\$30,912	\$30,912
	High Priority Projects	\$73,811	\$73,811
	Medium Priority Projects	\$59,890	\$59,890
	Low Priority Projects	\$8,850	\$8,850
	Total	\$173,463	\$173,463

Recommendations

Organization	Project (Organized by Overall Rank)	Amount Requested FY2026	Priority	Amount Recommended FY2026	Cumulative Total
American Legion Post 18*	Chateau Exterior Paint and Restoration	\$21,725	URGENT		
Canyon County Historical Society*	Nampa Train Depot Museum Heating & Air Conditioning Project	\$9,187	URGENT	\$9,187	\$30,912
Parma Library	Due Diligence Survey	\$13,900	HIGH	\$13,900	\$44,812
Orma J. Smith National History Museum	Fossils of Southern Idaho Exhibit and Fossil Preservation	\$15,046	HIGH	\$15,046	\$59,858
Nampa Public Library Foundation	Microfilm Reader	\$10,000	HIGH	\$10,000	\$69,858
American Legion Post 18*	Due Diligence Survey	\$10,400	HIGH	\$10,400	\$80,258
Parma Library	National Register Nomination for Parma Library	\$7,960	HIGH	\$7,960	\$88,218
Idaho PEO Chapter House*	Exterior Painting of Dorman Mansion	\$16,505	HIGH	\$16,505	\$104,723
Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway	Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway Audio Tour	\$3,000	MEDIUM	\$3,000	\$107,723
Historical Society of Middleton*	Interpretive Sign for Trolley Station Grounds	\$5,900	MEDIUM	\$5,900	\$113,623
Melba Valley Historical Society*	Interpretive Panels for Melba Valley Museum	\$18,370	MEDIUM	\$18,370	\$131,993
Canyon County Historical Society*	Nampa Train Depot Restrooms Restoration Project	\$17,900	MEDIUM	\$17,900	\$149,893
Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway	Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway Sign Project	\$4,000	MEDIUM	\$4,000	\$153,893
Idaho PEO Chapter House*	PEO Chapter House Dining Room Restoration	\$10,720	MEDIUM	\$10,720	\$164,613
Whittenberger Planetarium	LED Moon Projector Conversion	\$550	LOW	\$550	\$165,163
Idaho Civil War Volunteers	Cannon Carriage for Model 1841 Mountain Howitzer	\$8,300	LOW	\$8,300	\$173,463
Total		\$173,463		\$173,463	
represents buildings on the National Register of Historic Places					