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## WESTSIDE HISTORY IS NOW THREATENED

 Posted by Dave Hughes on October 23, 2009 at 8:32am [View Blog](#)


Just One of the 3,655 Westside Homes that will be cut out from tax incentives to be historically remodeled, like this Templeton House was years ago

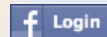
The Westside, after years of decline, was in the pits by the 1970s. It was so down that the City had to declare the whole side of town as blighted. It had to commit Federal Block Grant funds to try and remove its slum and blight, increase its tax base, and increase jobs. The city and businessmen had foolishly used the same HUD funds to tear down the big downtown buildings, destroying the cultural heart of Colorado Springs, which has never really recovered.

So a very small handful of us in 1976 with a different vision, determined to bring the Westside back, starting with the three block area between 24th and 27th West Colorado Avenue where 50 of the 92 small commercial buildings were totally vacant. Our strategy was to attract and capitalize only small and local, not big and outside, businesses. And preserve the Victorian architecture buildings of 'Old Town' to create what you know today as the vibrant National Historic District of "Old Colorado

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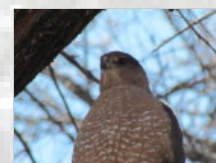
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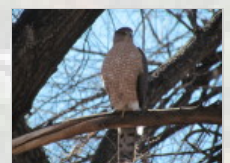

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### COOPER'S HAWK

 by Tanja Britton  
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City.”

We then used the same lending strategies, supported by the Organization of Westsiders (OWN), which is still today pursuing an Historical Overlay zone, to save, rather than destroy, replace, or leave empty the 3,655 carpenter-Victorian homes across the older Westside.

It largely worked. But the task is not complete. All that work is now threatened by the Doug Bruce inflicted budget crises of the city,

The City Manager has made it explicitly clear that if the 2C tax measure fails at the polls, that all city economic development historic preservation programs will be “eliminated.” That means discharging the only experienced city employee who provides staff support for all city historic preservation programs, including the appointed Preservation Commission – which will then lose its State certification, and thus the economic benefits of a Westside Overlay Zone.

That would kill the incentive for any owner of a residential westside home from spending over \$5,000 in historical-architectural improvements to the outside of his home, by being eligible for a 20% tax credit from the State of Colorado.

I do not want to see my 30 years of pro-bono work on behalf of the Westside go down the tubes. So either vote for 2C or make the city preserve the historic preservation programs that saved the Westside from oblivion.

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