

# Information on Applying for a State Historical Fund Grant With Colorado Preservation (CPI)

## What is the State Historical Fund (SHF)?

The State Historical fund is a program of History Colorado that receives a percentage of the casino gaming tax revenue annually collected by the State of Colorado from Central City, Blackhawk and Cripple Creek. The SHF distributes these funds through a competitive grant process to historic preservation projects throughout Colorado. Such projects include preservation planning (e.g., construction documents for future restoration work and/or historical designation), as well as actual restoration/construction work and education (interpretive signs, etc.).

## What are the eligibility requirements for applying for a SHF grant?

Some basics include:

- The property must be a designated historic landmark or considered ‘contributing’ within a designated historic district or deemed ‘eligible’ for listing. Designations can be at the local, state, or national level.
- The grant application must be a public entity such as a county or city government or a non-profit organization. Colorado Preservation (CPI), a registered 501-c3, meets this qualification term and may apply for a grant on behalf of your organization.
- Although not an official eligibility requirement, the SHF requires that the applicant or owner commit a cash match based on a percentage of the project costs. For non-profit organizations, the minimum percentage of match is 25%; for profit-based organizations, it is 50%.

## Can for-profit organizations or other private owners receive a SHF grant through Colorado Preservation?

Yes. However, grant applications on behalf of profit-based/private organizations are typically not as competitive as other grant requests to the SHF. In order for a grant request to be competitive, CPI suggests that any for-profit organization commit a cash match to exceed the minimum required (50%) and that the public have access to the facility. The biggest hurdle of a for-profit/private owner is proving *public benefit*.

## Why should I work with Colorado Preservation?

Colorado Preservation has preservation expertise and a strong track record with the SHF, both of which make for a successful grant application and a successfully completed project. Because of this, CPI often applies for and manages grants for other non-profits, even though they are technically eligible to receive a grant themselves.

Colorado Preservation walks the grant project through the entire process. We meet with potential applicants to plan the grant application and to ensure that all of the SHF grant requirements can be met. We then develop the grant, including the scope of work and budget, in close consultation with your organization for submittal to the SHF. As part of the grant development process, CPI can meet with

your project architect and/or contractor to discuss the project scope or work and budget and advise you on any issues related to the grant submittal.

As the grant administrator for awarded projects, we monitor the progress of the work and ensure that appropriate reporting and financial submittals are made to the SHF in order to draw down grant funds. We also track the account records and coordinate grant-related finances.

**Is there a cost to the applicant/owner?**

Colorado Preservation requires a management fee of 12-14% of the project total, less any contingency funds. Typically, the fee can be distributed within the budget between grant funds and cash match in the usual ration of 75:25 for non-profit owners and 50:50 for profit-based/private owners.

Colorado Preservation also offers SHF grant writing services for non-profits that do not need grant management services for a fee or \$1500.

**Will Colorado Preservation take on any preservation project?**

Colorado Preservation takes pride in the projects that it brings to the SHF for funding consideration. Although not a necessary requirement, historic resources listed by CPI’s Endangered Places Program get priority consideration. All potential projects/applicants are vetted by CPI’s professional preservation staff as well as the Preservation Services Committee of the CPI Board of Directors.

Considerations for CPI participation include (but are not limited to) the following criteria:

Public benefit	EPP Status
Importance of resource	Statewide/Regional impact
Scope of work/historic structures assessment	Financial Feasibility & Sustainability Plan
Owner cooperation & track record	Ability of owner to meet CPI contractual obligations
Ability of owner to meet/exceed match requirements	Project team & capacity

**What is necessary for a successful application?**

Successful applications for projects involving restoration/construction hard costs are able to demonstrate appropriate planning for the historic building’s needs. CPI recommends that potential applicants first undertake a Historic Structure Assessment (HSA) that will identify and prioritize those preservation needs based on urgency. Small HSA grants are available from the SHF to hire an architect to undertake the assessment (these grants are non-competitive and internally reviewed and can be applied for year-round).

Successful projects have a well-developed scope of work that correctly applies national historic preservation standards. The project’s budget is closely related to the scope of work and has contractor bids to support the projected numbers. CPI can assist and advise in developing these items.

Successful applicants generally have a great deal of public benefit that they can clearly convey to the grant reviewer. Public benefit is as little as visual access to the exterior of a building but often includes social services, educational opportunities (ie workshops, tours, etc.), and/or public access within the building or site.

Successful applicants typically provide a minimum cash match for a grant although a higher percentage will make the grant more competitive. The application must also include several letters of support; a minimum of six letters from various sources. And finally, to be competitive, a grant application must demonstrate urgency.

### **What will Colorado Preservation need from me to finalize the grant application?**

Applicants must commit to providing the following items to CPI *a minimum of 6 weeks* prior to the deadline for grant submittals:

- Project scope of work and time table
- Project budget including estimates and bids from contractors.
- Brief written description of your organization's history and mission
- Letters of Support (6-8)

### **How will the grant be dispersed and what kind of bookkeeping records will CPI need?**

As the grant recipient, Colorado Preservation is legally and contractually bound to the State of Colorado to ensure that the scope of work outlined in the grant is completed and that grant AND cash match funds have been correctly used. Due to this responsibility, we require that all project funds – both grant and cash match – be held and disbursed solely by CPI.

- At the time of the award, the property owner must enter into a grant management agreement with Colorado Preservation and pay the contracted cash match at the time of execution of the agreement.
- Colorado Preservation retains the grant proceeds and cash match in a restricted account dedicated to the project and pays invoices submitted by the consultants and contractors for services related to the grant. We require invoices from your contractor matching the specific tasks noted in the project scope of work.
- Financial reports are created showing how grant and cash match funds were paid out. If the projects comes in under budget, all remaining cash match is returned to the property owner and grant funds returned to the SHF based on the match percentage.

### **Other things you should know:**

**Schedule:** Grants are submitted two times a year; April 1 and October 1 respectively. For most grant types, applications are notified on or around four months after the deadline, with the grant contract being finalized roughly two months after the notification. *No work may begin until the grant contract is fully executed.* All grant related work must be completed within 18-24 months from the time the contract is executed with the State.

**Competitive bidding:** The SHF has certain rules requiring competitive bidding for professional services and contractors. Specific requirements are related to the dollar value of the grant and are detailed at [www.historycolorado.org/grants/available-grants](http://www.historycolorado.org/grants/available-grants).

Preservation Covenants of Easements – Since the SHF distributes public monies, they have certain rules requiring preservation covenants or easements, which place restrictions (property protection) on changes to the building. The time frame of these restrictions is proportional to the grant dollar value. For more information, go to [www.historycolorado.org/grants/available-grants](http://www.historycolorado.org/grants/available-grants).

**Who do I contact to obtain further information?**

For specific information regarding the SHF, contact the State Historical fund office at (303)866-2825. For questions and information regarding Colorado Preservation’s assistance with a SHF grant application, contact the Preservation Services Department of Colorado Preservation at (303)893-4260, ext. 236.