

August 12, 2025

Emily Cline-Gibson
Historic Preservation Planner
City of Louisville
749 Main Street
Louisville, CO 80027

RE: 1155 PINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION APPLICATION - CABOOSE

Dear Ms. Cline-Gibson,

Please find our historic preservation application for The Louisville Caboose at 1155 Pine St in Louisville. Following the Historic Structure Assessment, conducted by DAJ Design, the owners of the caboose have elected to preserve and restore it in as close to its known original condition as possible. Below are the objectives for our application:

Objectives

- Requesting Landmark status for The Louisville Caboose.
- Requesting grant funding for historic preservation of the caboose.

Initially built circa 1913–1915 as a Rock Island Railroad B-2 boxcar, the railcar was converted into a caboose in 1942 in support of the war effort during WWII. Once decommissioned, it later became part of the Gandy Dancer Restaurant in Louisville in 1973, as well as several other restaurants to follow. After living at the intersection of Main St. and South Boulder road for nearly 50 years, it was saved from demolition in 2020 through a community-led effort by our clients, and ultimately relocated to its current site in December 2023.

Positioned along a short section of recreated historic Colorado & Southern Railway tracks, the caboose is intended as a cultural centerpiece for the proposed “Historic East Gateway” to downtown Louisville

Architecturally, the caboose retains its classic early 20th-century railroad style, featuring a steel ‘exoskeleton’ structure, cupola, and original Bettendorf trucks. Despite several different uses over its lifetime the structure remains largely intact. At present, the caboose is gutted inside, with 237.5 sq ft of open interior space and no utilities. Its condition varies: the steel frame is sound, the roof was replaced in 2025, but much of the original wood cladding, windows, and exterior details are missing or deteriorated and in need of restoration or replacement.

Once restored, The Louisville Caboose will serve as a landmark and historic interpretation feature, with adaptive reuse potential to be determined in alignment with city regulations and the vision for the historic East Gateway to downtown our clients are attempting to create.

Below is an outline of the scope of work for the historic preservation portion of the project. Included in this outline are descriptions illustrating the typical conditions found in other Louisville historic preservation projects with budget costs associated with those scopes of work. The average budget costs are derived from our extensive experience in conducting local historic preservation work.



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Proposed Work for Grant Application



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- Replace all wood elements on the entire caboose (excluding original ceiling wood inside), using historically appropriate, clear, vertical grain old-growth Alaskan Yellow Cedar or Douglas Fir 2x6 tongue-and-groove milled lumber, likely from a mill in the Pacific Northwest.
- All eighteen windows reconstructed and installed, emulating the original ones in fit and finish.
- Recommended removal and restoration of both doors with new windows and hardware. Use tempered glass where required for both doors and windows.
- Paint exterior with appropriate, oil-based paint
- Properly seal all external junctions where water could infiltrate
- Both for safety, as well as for an adaptive future reuse, consider bringing electricity to the structure. Even a small, code-compliant electrical box with outlets could provide basic circuits for exterior and interior lighting to both light the structure at night as a display piece, as well as increase safety.
- Depending on the adaptive future reuse, consider welding the body of the caboose to the trucks so it is firmly fixed in place.
- Cupola should have proper surface preparation and a new coat of paint. Ideally Epoxy 2K primer topcoated with weather-resistant industrial grade paint.
- Add gutters if possible to route precipitation away from the walls and base of the structure, which could contribute to degradation over time
- Reconstruct the catwalk along the roof using applicant's documentation and remaining pieces as templates from it. Wood for the catwalk should be the same as specified for the other facets of the caboose - correctly cut clear, dense, old-growth, vertical grain Alaskan Yellow Cedar or Douglas Fir.
- Affix the ladders to the catwalk once it's been reconstructed.
- Add landscaping buffer around perimeter to limit erosion and provide context signage.
- Add gutters to route precipitation away from the walls which could contribute to degradation over time.
- Media-blast, powder coat, and install the original smokestack in its proper location on the roof.
- Use the existing step-up ladder as a template, have the other three ladders made to match in original fit and finish.
- Paint or powder coat all 'grab-irons' and reinstall with proper square head hardware.
- Source original corner lamps for the caboose and replace with as close to original units as possible.
- Depending on adaptive future reuse, add gas, water and sewer connections.
- Design and install interpretive signage for historic education

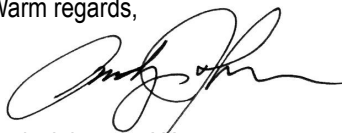
The below table outlines The Louisville Caboose project costs delineating the cost differences between total budget costs, typical grant fund requests per item, proposed qualifying costs under the “extraordinary circumstances” provision per item, the grant request amount, and the owner matching funds per item:

Proposed Budgets Qualifying for Grant Funding

Qualifying Items	Total Budget	Fund Request for Typical Items	Qualifying for Extraordinary Circumstances	Grant Request	Grant Match
Demolition	\$8,500	\$5,000	\$3,500	\$1,750	\$1,750
Site Grading, Drainage, Railbed Construction	\$21,400	\$5,000	\$16,400	\$8,200	\$8,200
Floor Reconstruction	\$14,500	\$8,000	\$6,500	\$3,250	\$3,250
Envelope - Exterior Walls	\$68,000	\$12,000	\$56,000	\$28,000	\$28,000
Roof & Waterproofing	\$17,800	\$4,000	\$13,800	\$6,900	\$6,900
Windows & Doors	\$28,000	\$12,000	\$16,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Catwalk & Ladder Reconstruction	\$12,500	\$0	\$12,500	\$6,250	\$6,250
Structure Move	\$29,600	\$0	\$29,600	\$14,800	\$14,800
Non-Historic	\$155,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Proposed Work	\$355,300	\$46,000	\$154,300	\$77,150	\$77,150
Percent of project funded by the Historic Preservation Fund:				21.71%	

In summary, the requested grant amount is \$77,150 between funding for typical items and qualifying extraordinary circumstances. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Warm regards,



Andy Johnson, AIA



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