

November 7, 2002

Rapid City Council
Legal and Finance Committee
300 Sixth Street
Rapid City, South Dakota 57701

Dear Committee Members:

The Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission has been awarded funds to nominate a project within Rapid City to the National Register of Historic Places. The Commission would like to nominate Halley Park located between St. Joseph Street and West Main Street from West Boulevard to West Street. We would like to discuss the possibility for nomination informally with the Legal and Finance Committee and the Rapid City Council and, hopefully, get support for proceeding with the nomination of the park.

Rapid City currently has many commercial buildings and residences listed on the National Register. Rapid City also currently has two historic districts, but the City doesn't have any parks, landscapes, or open space areas listed on the National Register.

Over the past several years, there has been a movement nation-wide to begin recognizing the importance that landscapes and parks have on our nation's history. This has been started with new programs such as the Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS), the Historic Landscape Initiative, and the Save America's Treasures (SAT) grant program.

The Rapid City Historic Preservation Commission feels Halley Park is a very important piece of Rapid City's history and deserves to be recognized for it. The land for park was partially donated and partially sold to the City in 1915 by James Halley, thus establishing Rapid City's first park. The shape of the park can be attributed to the historic hay hauling routes into and out of Rapid City. The park contains the former Indian and Pioneer Museum (currently listed on the National Register) and the Rufus (Pap) A. Madison log cabin (Rapid City's oldest known structure). The museum was constructed in the park in 1936 and the Pap Madison log cabin was moved there in 1926. The formal rose gardens were established in 1935 and were sponsored by the Cosmopolitan Club.

The Historic Preservation Commission has reviewed the park with the State Historical Society and they feel the project has merit and have offered to assist in drafting the nomination for us. If nominated to the National Register, the park would be eligible for

grants which could assist in ongoing maintenance, preservation efforts, and reintroduction of key elements within the park.

I have included some background information for your review. This information was taken from a report "Historic Parks – Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Brookings – South Dakota" prepared by Wyss Associates, Inc. in 1982. Please note that one of the recommendations for Halley Park was to nominate it for the National Register.

Thank you for your time and anticipated cooperation on this matter. If anyone has questions, please feel free to contact me at 605-348-2268 or email me at mikeb@wyssassociates.com. I look forward to discussing this with you at your next meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Bender". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael A. Bender, ASLA
Landscape Architect
Historic Preservation Commission Member