

CHDC Meeting Date: August 4, 2026

**Agenda Item # Four**

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address</b>                | Installation of sculptures at eight locations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. St. Mary's Art Center – 55 R St</li> <li>2. Fourth Ward School Museum – 537 South C St</li> <li>3. Silver Terrace Cemetery – 381 Cemetery Rd</li> <li>4. Piper's Opera House – 12 North B St</li> <li>5. Gold Hill Depot – 1420 Main St</li> <li>6. The Pit Stop – 610 C St</li> <li>7. Donovan Mill – 900 Main St</li> <li>8. Silver City Schoolhouse – 385 High St (behind fencing)</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Applicant/Agent:</b>       | Visit Carson City – Eric Brooks: Arts & Culture Program Manager                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Purpose:</b>               | Serve as public art wayfinding markers, celebrating Nevada's pioneer, mining, and railroad heritage. To draw heritage tourists deeper into the history of Comstock.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Proposed Scope of Work</b> | Install 8, free-standing, interpretive railroad spike sculptures in Storey and Lyon Counties. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modeled after railroad spikes from the V&amp;T Railroad</li> <li>• Approximately 4' high above grade</li> <li>• 6-8" tapered shaft width</li> <li>• 12"x12" base footprint</li> <li>• Reinforced concrete pier footer with a 16-24" diameter and 8-12" depth</li> <li>• A welded steel framework</li> <li>• Clad in Corten (weathering) steel</li> <li>• Initial color in a warm steel gray with an early surface oxidation</li> <li>• A deep rust-brown/amber patina will develop over period of time</li> <li>• Engraved areas in a natural bare steel with laser engraving</li> </ul> |



# Dust & Wonder Trail

## Application for Certificate of Appropriateness

### Supplemental Project Description & Supporting Documentation

|              |                                                                                   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Organization | Comstock Historic District Commission                                             |
| Contact      | Joe Curtis   775.742.0138   P.O. Box 128, 20 N. E Street, Virginia City, NV 89440 |
| Project Type | New Installation — Public Art / Wayfinding Sculptures                             |
| Project Name | Dust & Wonder Trail Interpretive Railroad Spike Sculpture                         |

### Project Overview

The Dust & Wonder Trail requests approval to install eight (8) interpretive railroad spike sculptures at arts, culture, and historical locations throughout Storey County. These sculptures are part of the Dust & Wonder Trail, a regional cultural corridor connecting historic and cultural sites across Carson City, Carson Valley, Silver City, and Virginia City.

The Dust & Wonder Trail was formally established in the Summer of 2025 through a collaboration between Visit Carson City, Visit Carson Valley, and the Virginia City Tourism Commission. The project was made possible through a Travel Nevada Destination Development Design (3D) grant award covering all design, fabrication, and transportation costs.

The railroad spike sculptures throughout Storey County will serve as public art wayfinding markers, celebrating Nevada’s pioneer, mining, and railroad heritage and drawing heritage tourists deeper into Storey County’s historic districts.

### 1. Architectural Design & Measurements

#### Sculpture Form

The sculptures are modeled after a railroad spike sourced from the V&T Railroad, an object directly tied to Nevada’s 19th-century railroad and mining heritage. Its vertical, tapering form is visually legible as a wayfinding element while maintaining a silhouette that does not replicate or visually compete with historic structures. The design is abstract and contemporary in scale, clearly distinguishable as public art rather than a reproduction of any historic building or feature.

#### Dimensions

|                      |                                                     |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Overall Height       | 48 inches (4 feet) above grade                      |
| Shaft Width          | Approximately 6–8 inches square (tapers toward top) |
| Base Plate Footprint | Approximately 12 x 12 inches (above grade)          |

|                            |                                                       |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Below-Grade Footing</b> | Reinforced concrete pier, 16–24” diameter, 8–12” deep |
| <b>Sculpture Weight</b>    | Approximately 150 lbs.                                |

## Interpretive Panel Content

Each sculpture incorporates laser-engraved and cut text panels featuring:

- Site-specific historical narratives about each location, written in collaboration with the venue. These will be engraved on the top of the sculpture.
- One signature word encapsulating the location, translated into Indigenous language(s) (Numu, Neme, and/or Wá:šiw), Chinese, Celtic, French, Welsh, German, and/or Italian to honor the multicultural labor forces that shaped the American West. The one word will be cut out of each side of the sculpture, backed with stainless steel.
- A QR code made of anodized aluminum links to the Dust & Wonder Trail’s interactive digital map, connecting all 30+ trail locations.

## 2. Materials

### Sculpture Body

|                        |                                                                                                |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Structural Core</b> | Internal welded steel framework (structural tube/plate steel)                                  |
| <b>Exterior Skin</b>   | Corten (weathering) steel — ASTM A588 or equivalent                                            |
| <b>Base Plate</b>      | Welded steel plate, typically ½”–¾” thick, with pre-drilled anchor bolt holes                  |
| <b>Fasteners</b>       | Galvanized and stainless steel, anchor bolts (½”–¾” diameter), washers, lock washers, and nuts |

### Foundation / Anchoring

|                          |                                                                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Footing Type</b>      | Reinforced concrete pier, below grade                                               |
| <b>Diameter</b>          | 16–24 inches                                                                        |
| <b>Depth</b>             | 8–12 inches (adjusted for frost depth and soil conditions)                          |
| <b>Reinforcement</b>     | #4 rebar cage (verticals with ties)                                                 |
| <b>Concrete Strength</b> | 3,000–4,000 PSI                                                                     |
| <b>Anchor Method</b>     | Cast-in-place J-bolts or epoxy-set threaded rods embedded 8–12 inches into concrete |

All materials are non-combustible, non-toxic, and fully removable. The sculpture does not require utility connections of any kind. No permanent alterations to the historic structure or its foundation are required.

### 3. Colors & Surface Finish

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The sculpture will not be painted. The Corten steel exterior is left to weather naturally, developing its characteristic warm rust-brown patina over time. The stainless steel will stay a bright silver, adding greater contrast as time goes by. This oxidized finish is self-sealing and requires no ongoing maintenance.

|                          |                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Surface Treatment</b> | Natural weathering — no paint or applied finish                                                  |
| <b>Initial Color</b>     | Warm steel gray with early surface oxidation (as shown in submitted photo)                       |
| <b>Weathered Color</b>   | Deep rust-brown / amber patina (develops over 12–24 months of outdoor exposure)                  |
| <b>Engraved Areas</b>    | Natural bare steel revealed by laser engraving; will develop a contrasting patina tone over time |

The natural Corten patina palette with warm earth tones, rust, and amber is contextually compatible with the rustic and agrarian character of Storey County’s historic districts. The finish references the industrial heritage the sculpture commemorates without introducing bright or artificial coloration.

### 4. Proposed Location on Properties

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The sculptures are proposed to be sited on the grounds of art, culture, and historical venues. The exact placement will be determined in coordination with the venue and the Comstock Historic District Commission.

- Visible to pedestrians and trail visitors without obstructing sightlines to the historic buildings
- Positioned to avoid interference with existing pathways, landscaping, snow removal or site features
- Set back sufficiently from the historic structure so as not to create a visual impression of attachment or alteration to the building
- Accessible for visitors to interact with the QR code and interpretive panels
- A site plan identifying the exact proposed location is attached in this application

### 5. Artist

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The Dust & Wonder Trail sculptures are fabricated by Jeff Schomberg, a Reno-based sculptor and master metal fabricator specializing in large-scale, structurally engineered public art. Following a nationally advertised Request for Proposals, Schomberg was selected by the Dust & Wonder Trail public art committee.

Schomberg is best known for his collaboration with artist Laura Kimpton on the internationally exhibited Monumental Word Series, including works such as LOVE, JOY, BELIEVE, and COURAGE, large-scale steel sculptures installed at Times Square (New York City), the National Mall area (Washington, D.C.), San Francisco's Union Square, and Reno City Plaza. His extensive experience with civic installations in historically significant districts directly informs his approach to this project.

## 6. Project Timeline

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|                              |                                              |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Fabrication</b>           | Currently underway (July 2026)               |
| <b>Earliest Installation</b> | September 1 (contingent on all approvals)    |
| <b>Target Completion</b>     | No later than October 30, 2026               |
| <b>Interpretive Content</b>  | Being finalized in collaboration with venues |

## 7. Historic Preservation Compatibility

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The sculptures are designed to be fully compatible with their placement in historic districts and are developed with awareness of review standards. Key compatibility considerations include:

- The sculpture is a freestanding, independent object and does not attach to, alter, or obscure any historic building or site feature
- The abstract industrial form is clearly distinguishable as contemporary public art and does not attempt to replicate or imitate historic architectural elements
- All materials are non-combustible, non-toxic, removable and the installations are fully reversible with no permanent impact on the historic fabric of the site
- The Corten steel patina palette is visually compatible with the earth tones and agrarian character of Storey County's historic streetscape
- The sculpture's interpretive content actively celebrates and promotes Storey County's significance of the Comstock Lode and the region's railroad and mining heritage
- The Dust & Wonder Trail and Visit Carson City will assist with all cities, state, county, and/or national regulatory compliance and permitting requirements

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*The Dust & Wonder Trail and Visit Carson City respectfully request the Comstock Historic District Commission's approval for these Certificates of Appropriateness. We welcome the opportunity to present additional information, answer questions, and appear before the Commission at its convenience.*

A photograph of the fabricated prototype sculpture and proposed locations are attached to this application.

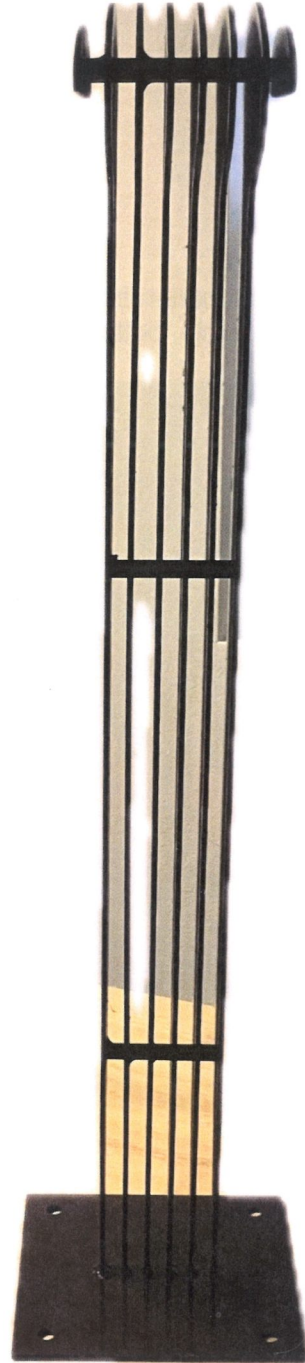
**Dust & Wonder Trail**  
**Application for Certificate of Appropriateness**

*Supplemental Project Images and location*

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Solid side



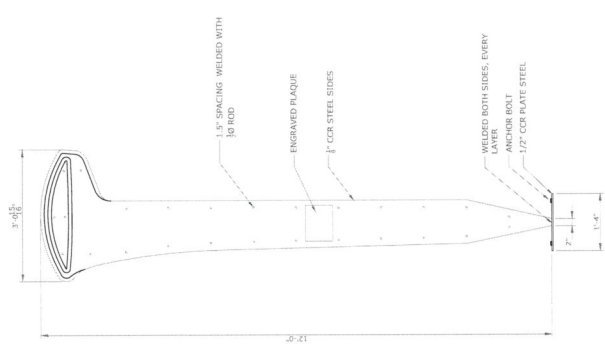
See through side



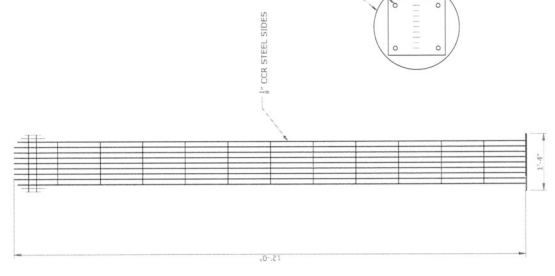
**ECCENTRIC DESIGNS LLC**  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS  
NY, LIC. 982  
775-842-4054

**12' TALL RAILROAD SPIKE**  
DOCUMENTS

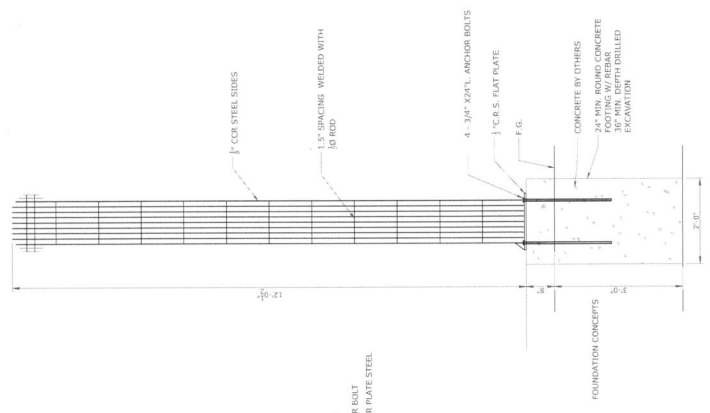
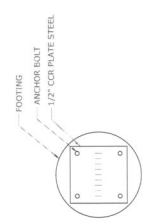
|               |         |
|---------------|---------|
| Drawn By: SBJ | 2.12.20 |
| Checked By:   |         |
| Scale:        |         |
| Sheet No:     |         |



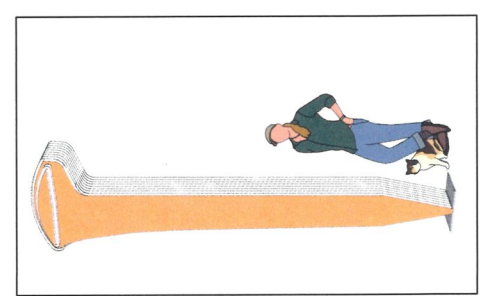
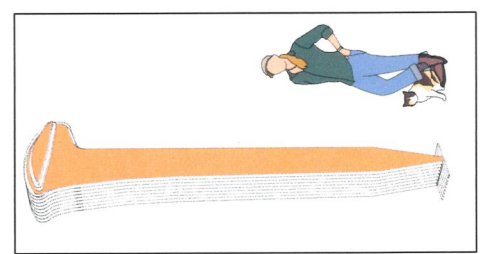
① SPIKE SIDE  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$



② SPIKE FRONT  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$



③ FOUNDATION  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$

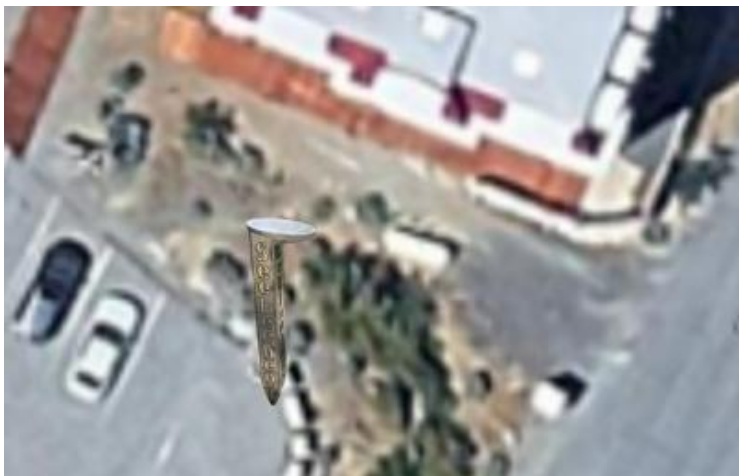


PRELIMINARY NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

1. St. Mary's Art Center - 55 R St. Virginia City, NV



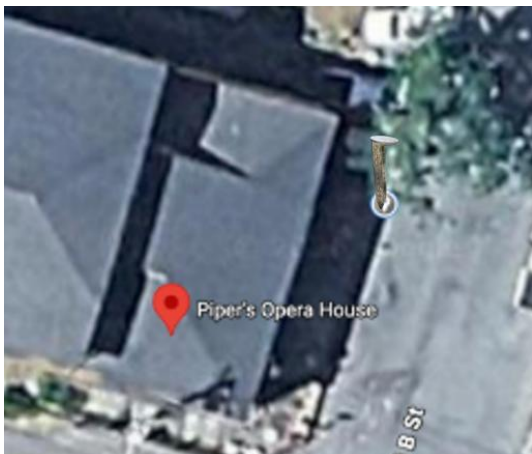
2. Historic Fourth Ward School Museum – 537 C St. Virginia City, NV



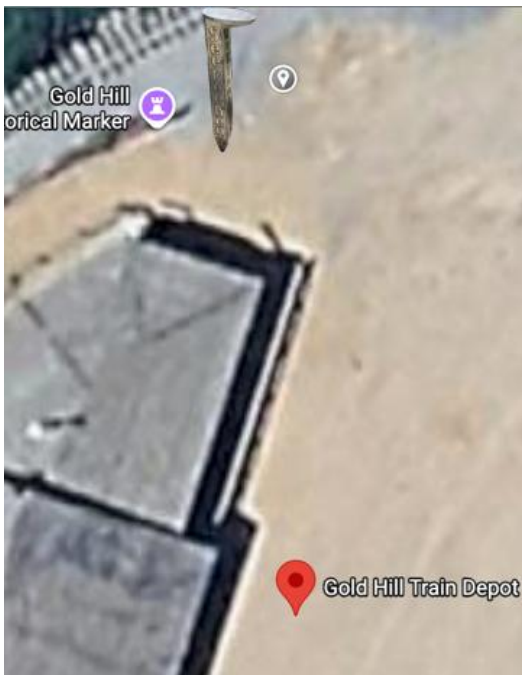
3. Silver Terrace Cemetery – 381 Cemetery Rd. Virginia City, NV



4. Piper's Opera House – 12 N. B St. Virginia City, NV



5. Gold Hill Depot – 1420 Main St. Silver City, NV



6. The Pit Stop – 610 S. C St. Virginia City, NV



7. Donovan Mill – 900 Main St. Silver City, NV 89428



8. Silver City Schoolhouse – 385 High St. Silver City, NV 89428  
(The sculpture will be behind the fence.)



Submitted by: Eric Brooks | 775. 600.3782 | ebrooks@visitcarsoncity.com  
716 N. Carson City Suite A Carson City, NV 89701

## Dust & Wonder Trail

### Application for Certificate of Appropriateness

*Supplemental Project Images and locations 4' Sculptures*

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Example 1: Installed at Brewery Arts Center – Carson City, NV



Example 2: Installed at Stewart Indian School Museum and Cultural Center

Nicholas Brothers, P.E.  
20 Middlefield Pl  
Washoe Valley, NV 89704  
775-530-8735  
nbrothers775@gmail.com

3/13/2026

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**To Whom It May Concern,**

As a licensed Civil Engineer in the State of Nevada, I have reviewed the design and installation details of the "Railroad Spike" sculpture proposed for installation. Based on the evaluation in accordance with **ASCE 7-16** and the anchor bolt requirements provided, I hereby certify the following:

- The sculpture has been evaluated for applicable **dead loads and wind loads** per **ASCE 7-16**.
- The anchor bolt system shall consist of **(4) 3/4-inch diameter anchor bolts**, installed with a minimum embedment depth of **2 feet**, and are designed to resist the calculated **uplift, shear, and overturning forces** with appropriate factors of safety.
- Pier foundation shall be not less than **3 feet in depth**.
- Based on the information reviewed and assuming the sculpture and anchorage system are installed in accordance with the layout and description as provided by the architect, the sculpture is considered **stable under the design loading conditions**.

This certification is provided solely for the purpose of documenting the structural adequacy of the anchorage and does not constitute an inspection of the final installation. Final responsibility for compliance with installation specifications remains with the contractor and/or installer.

Sincerely,  
Nicholas Brothers, P.E.  
CE 023679 Nevada Civil Engineer



The following are drafts of the language to be used per interpretive railroad spike locations.

## Pints, Prints, & Paints

In 1860 Tahoe Beer began flowing from the ground floor, while Masons and civic leaders gathered to discuss the future of a growing city.

Tahoe Beer was enjoyed at stops along the V&T Railroad and shipped as far as San Francisco, CA.

Later, the Nevada Appeal printed news and stories for communities across the region.

Since 1975, Brewery Arts Center, the cultural heart of Nevada's capital, continues the tradition of bringing people together through creativity, connection, and inspiration.

## Voices That Still Echo

Native culture and language outlived federal assimilation programs that forcibly removed Indigenous children from their families and placed them in boarding schools.

Originally known as the Carson Indian Training School, Stewart Indian School operated from 1890 until 1980.

With policy shifts starting in the 1930's, students engaged more freely with education and skills training while maintaining some cultural identity.

Today the campus is led by Indigenous voices, ensuring the complex stories are shared and remembered.

## Rhyolite Mansion

At the east entrance to Mills Park, Seely Loop, is the 1,000 sqft home of Burton and Pearl Wungnema, composed of rhyolite and sandstone, hand-quarried from the Carson River and Brunswick Canyon with the help of Burton's father, Earnest.

This striking masonry work was crafted by master Hopi stonemasons known for building numerous structures throughout the region from 1925 - 1955.

The home was completed in 1948, with an original west-facing-view of the V&T's engine repair shops and maintenance yard.

## Carson City to the World

Carson City was the geographic center of the entire Virginia & Truckee Railroad's 80 mile expanse of track.

The Carson City Depot, constructed in 1872, was the vital freight and industrial hub connecting Nevada's silver boom to the American West and the world.

Washington Street operated as the East-West main line of the railroad and trains carrying passengers, ore, & mail would pass with no gates or signals anywhere in town.

Willow, Water & Wonder  
Basket masterpieces created by  
Dat-So-La-Lee (Louisa Keyser), a  
Washoe weaver who, with creativity,  
culture and tradition, left a legacy of  
functional art objects.

Her degikup baskets epitomize the skill  
of Washoe weavers during the early  
1900s; her pieces can be seen in  
museums across the country, including  
the Smithsonian Institution and  
Nevada State Museum.

She resided in this house from 1914  
until her death in 1925 at the age of  
96. The tradition of weaving lives on  
today amongst Washoe Women.

## Built Around the Oven

Two Italian brothers immigrated from the Lucca Province of Tuscany, Italy, to a 400-acre ranch along the Carson River.

Pietro and Salvatore Pierini nurtured a leased property into an agricultural enterprise that included farming, dairying, and livestock.

A brick oven and a milk processing house (circa 1920) are the only remnants of their communal food and gathering space that helped anchor fellow Italian immigrants into the region.

## The Forgotten Main Street

A single cottonwood tree is all that remains of Carson City's Chinatown, marking the site of where Yee Bong Café once stood.

Chinese workers came to Nevada to work on the Central Pacific Railway, completed in 1869, and stayed to work on the V&T short-line railroad.

Although Chinatown emerged out of discrimination and segregation, it was an important center of commerce, supplying goods and services to the entire community.

The neighborhood's western edge ran along V&T tracks toward Minden.

## A Vision for Downtown's Heart

The largest private collection of Nevada-related art inventories at over 700 pieces, collected by Bob McFadden, a businessman, preservationist and advocate for Carson City's cultural heritage.

Most notably, he led a restoration of the St. Charles Hotel built in 1862. A former stagecoach stop, and Twain's spot for eavesdropping and whisky.

This plaza is dedicated to Bob's lifelong commitment of transforming downtown into a vibrant destination for residents and visitors of all ages.

## Sandstone, Springs & Statehood

Built from hand-hewn sandstone, approximately 100' long and two stories tall, the Warm Springs Hotel and natural hot springs bathhouse was one of the most significant early buildings in Eagle Valley.

Serving as the civic and commercial anchor, Nevada's first Territorial Legislature met here in 1861.

In 1862 the hotel was leased to the territory as a prison, marking the beginning of what would become the Nevada State Prison until permanently closing in 2012.