

**PRESERVING A  
HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD**



**THE STORY OF  
THE OLD NORTH END  
IN COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO**

**By Robert D. Loevy**

An official publication of the Old North End Neighborhood, this book, authored by Dr. Bob Loevy, a long-time ONEN resident, tells the story of how the Old North End Neighborhood (and its predecessor the North End Home Owners' Association) worked for over 60 years to improve the neighborhood and ward off the forces of urban decay.

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# INTRODUCTION

The Old North End is a neighborhood of some 80 square blocks in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Many of the houses were built between 1890 and 1910 and represent the characteristic and colorful residential style often called Victorian. There are also Craftsman style two-story homes constructed in the early 20th century, and some more modern homes built in the 1950s and 1960s. The neighborhood is almost completely residential with only an occasional commercial enterprise here and there. The neighborhood is located just 12 blocks north of downtown Colorado Springs, so it has appeal to those who would like to live close to the center of the city.

But the Old North End has a problem. Four of the six streets that run north-south through the neighborhood are arterial streets carrying heavy automobile and truck traffic. In other cities this has been a condition that leads to rapid urban decay. Because of the noise generated by heavy vehicle traffic, many property owners converted the larger homes into commercial properties by breaking them up into individual apartments. Other property owners sought to take advantage of the heavy traffic passing down the street by tearing down the Victorian houses and putting in commercial uses, such as convenience stores, law offices, restaurants, motels, etc.

One converted apartment building customarily leads to others, and the early commercial intrusions into the neighborhood make it easier to have more businesses come in. Some of these new businesses can be unsavory uses such as liquor stores and bars serving alcoholic beverages. The final result is that what started out as a fine inner city residential neighborhood can end up in rapid social and economic decline.

The story goes that, in the early 1960s, top officials in City government in Colorado Springs were predicting the rapid decline of the Old North End, particularly along the four most heavily traveled streets – N. Cascade Avenue, N. Nevada Avenue, N. Weber Street, and N. Wahsatch Avenue.

Somehow the Old North End in Colorado Springs escaped the grim fate of progressive urban decay that destroyed so many similar neighborhoods in cities throughout the United States. And that is what this book is about. It seeks to tell the story of how, thanks to neighborhood leadership and widespread neighborhood support for historic preservation, the Old North End has been saved. Much of the Old North End stands and looks in the early 21st century the same as it did 100 years previously in the early 20th century. The preservation of the neighborhood was not an accident. It took many years of hard work by many different people to achieve this goal.

This is a long and detailed story. There was no magic formula or instant solution that preserved the historic character of the Old North End. It was more the result of many efforts, over many years, by many different people that brought the Old North End to its present condition as a well-preserved Victorian neighborhood.

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This book is based mainly on materials in the Organizational Records of the Old North End Neighborhood archived at Penrose Library in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Oral histories, reports, meeting minutes, organization newsletters, correspondence, photographs, and interviews all were used.

Originally the Old North End was called the North End. This book therefore uses the original name – North End – until 1998, when the name was officially changed to *Old* North End.