



## City of Loveland

Long Range Planning Division

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### Loveland City Council Staff Report

From: Matt Robenalt, Long Range Planning Division  
Meeting Date: May 18, 2004  
Re: Application for Historic Landmark Property Designation

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#### **SITE DATA**

**Address:** 800 N. Lincoln Avenue, Loveland, Colorado

**Request:** Application for Historic Landmark Property Designation

**Historic Name:** First German Congregational Church

**Architectural Style:** Gothic Revival

**Current Building Sq. Ft.:** Main Floor = 4580 sq. ft  
Balcony = 2400 sq. ft  
Basement = 4300 sq. ft  
Total = 11,280 sq. ft  
*(Estimate provided by owner)*

**Construction Date:** Original Structure = 1915

**Legal Description:** Lots 25 -30 Block 1, Orchards Addition to the City of Loveland, County of Larimer, State of Colorado

**Owner(s):** First Congregational Church

**Applicant:** First Congregational Church, represented by Clarence E. Carnes – Chairman of Trustees

**Application Summary:**

On April 19, 2004, the Loveland Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council designate the property at 800 N. Lincoln Avenue as a Loveland Historic Register Landmark. Approved HPC Resolution No. 04-01 is provided as an attachment.

The nomination includes one building. Larimer County Assessor records identifies the property by the following address: 800 N. Lincoln Avenue, Loveland, Colorado.

**History:**

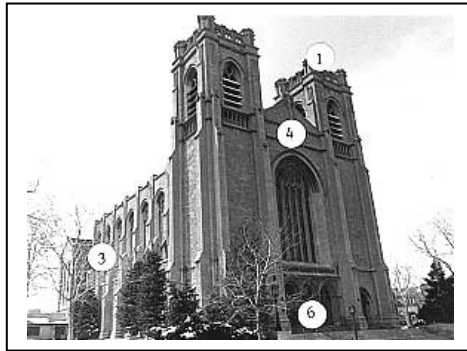
Loveland's First German Congregational Church was organized in 1901, by Reverend M.E. Eversz, D.D. and Reverend Adam Traudt as the third German Congregational Church in Colorado. The previous two German Congregational Churches formed in Colorado were located in Denver. By 1925 there were 31 German Congregational Churches throughout Colorado, and these churches were heavily attended by Germans from Russia, or Volga Germans.

Volga Germans are the descendants of German farmers and craftsmen who emigrated to the Russian steppes, along the Volga River, between 1764-1767 at the invitation of Catherine the Great to help reform the Russian economy. About one-hundred years after being invited into Russia, the Volga Germans began to experience a negative shift in how they were treated by the Russian government, which led many of these colonists to come to America and settle in the wheat growing and beet field areas of the Midwest. The emerging sugar beet industry attracted many of the Volga Germans to Colorado, and specifically to the Loveland area.

The original First German Congregational Church was built in 1902-03. This small congregation of about 26 members later joined the German Congregational Zion Church of Loveland in 1910 when a larger church was built at a location on 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Lincoln Avenue. Within five years, the size of the congregation grew to over 250 members and a larger building was needed. A site for the new church was selected at the corner of E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street and N. Lincoln Avenue. Under the supervision of a Denver contractor (name unknown), and with the assistance of local hired help and the donated labor of church members, the First German Congregational Church was constructed for a cost of approximately \$22,000 on the E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street and N. Lincoln Avenue site. The building was dedicated in November 1915. In 1965 the congregation voted to join the United Church of Christ, and they recently celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their founding.

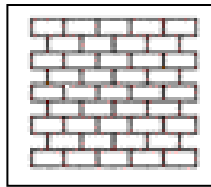
**Architectural Description:**

The First German Congregational Church exhibits elements of the Gothic Revival architectural style. The architect of the building is unknown. The Colorado Historical Society Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering indicates that the Gothic Revival style is best characterized by pointed-arched windows. Other elements of the Gothic Revival style include massive towers, either flat or topped by a spire, deeply recessed openings, steeply pitched roofs, pointed arches, and masonry construction. See Photo #1.



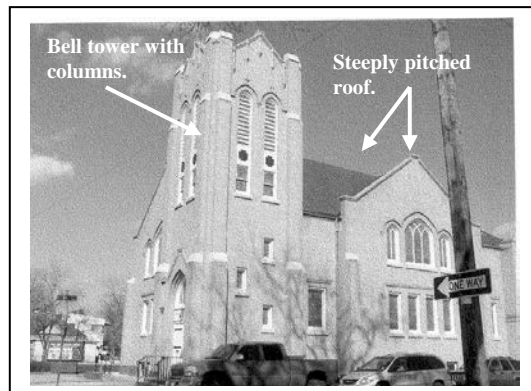
**Photo #1.** Example of Gothic Revival style.  
 Source: Colorado Society Guide to Colorado's  
 Historic Architecture and Engineering.

The First German Congregational Church is two stories in height, with a tall bell tower at the southwest corner. The building has a concrete foundation, faced with purple-tinged bricks laid in a common bond. A common bond is a variation of the running bond, which uses a stretcher course with the joints breaking at the center of each brick immediately above and below. This bond is frequently used for partitions, veneer, and chimneys. See Figure 1 below.



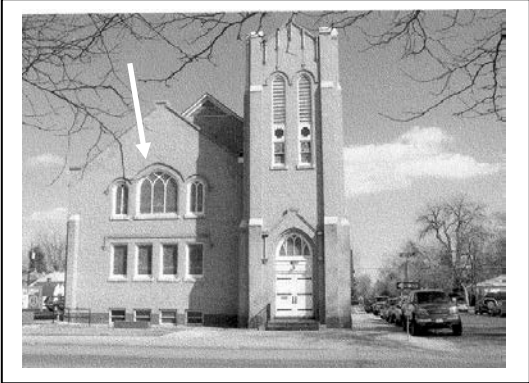
**Figure 1.** Example of  
 common bond.

The church's exterior walls are comprised of light-brown colored brick, laid in a running bond. These bricks were obtained from the Denver Brick and Pipe Company. The bell tower, also made of the same light-brown bricks feature brick buttresses, or columns, at the corners. Another Gothic Revival characteristic of the First German Congregational Church includes its steeply pitched, gable-on-hip roof. See Photo #2.

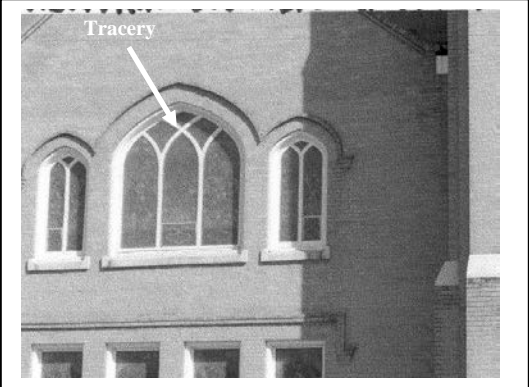


**Photo #2.** View from southwest.

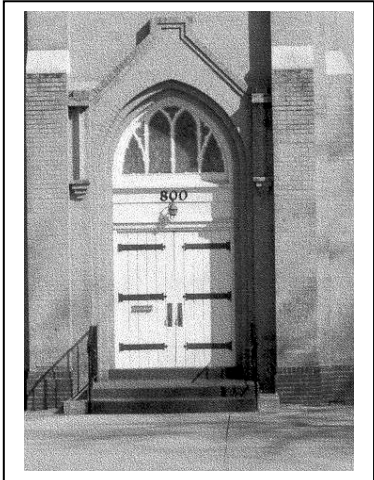
The First German Congregational Church also includes large arched, Gothic stained glass windows with simple tracery located on the west and south elevations. Tracery is ornamental work with branching lines, and is typically found in the head of a Gothic window. The main entry doors, located on the west elevation beneath the bell tower, are contained in a gothic brick arch and topped by a stained glass transom. The church also contains two secondary entrances located on the south and north elevation. See Photo #3, Photo #4, and Photo #5..



**Photo #3.** West elevation features include stained glass windows, and main entry doors with stained glass transom.



**Photo #4.** Stained glass windows with tracery, and brick arches.



**Photo #5.** Main entry doors, contained in gothic brick arch, with a stained glass transom.

### **Determination of Significance and Integrity**

*Significance* should be used as the starting point in determining eligibility for placement on a historic register. Significance has two distinct attributes – the “area of significance” which answers the question of context, or what is significant about a resource in terms of its association to agriculture, architecture, commerce and industry, education, politics and government, and transportation. The First German Congregational Church is significant for its link to the historical contexts of “Cultural Life” as defined in the Historical Contexts (1997) document by Jennifer H. Strand, Ph.D. for the Loveland Museum Gallery.

The second attribute of the *significance* of a structure is its “period of significance” which places the resource on a historic timeline and answers the question of when a resource was significant. As noted in a previous section of this staff report, the First German Congregational Church is greater than 50 years old.

*Integrity* refers to the ability of a structure to convey its original design or some later period of significance through the intactness of its historic form, original or historic use of materials, setting and site. Integrity has seven (7) particular aspects: location, setting, feeling, design, materials, workmanship, and association with some attribute of historic significance.

A historic building, for example, that retains its original or historically significant setting with little or no visible modifications that diminish the ability to relate its historic association demonstrates greater integrity than a building that has lost many of physical historical elements. A building with high physical integrity retains the following original or historically significant elements: massing; architectural detail; surface treatment; and windows and doors.

According to the list of features described in the Architectural Inventory Form Resource No. 5LR10201, and which is verified by current photographs, the First German Congregational Church exhibits excellent integrity, and has retained nearly all of its aspects of integrity. The church retains nearly all of its original features and detailing that characterize it as a unique example Gothic Revival styles of architecture, except for the alteration at the south elevation secondary entrance.

According to the Architectural Inventory Form Resource No. 5LR10201, the First German Congregational Church should be considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and is likely Loveland’s most outstanding example of Gothic Revival architecture.

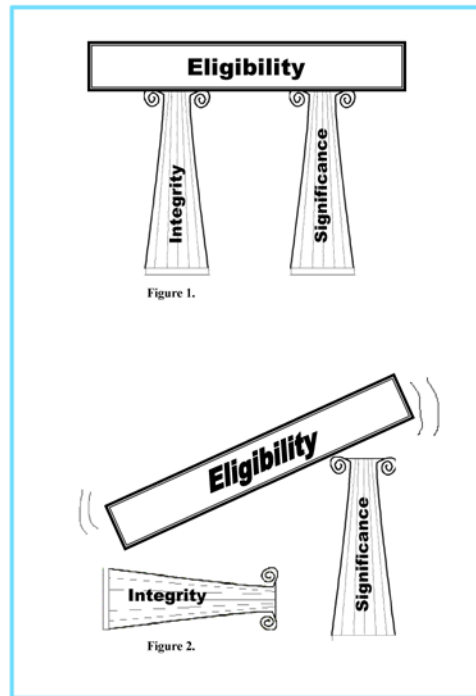
### **Staff Recommendation**

To be considered eligible for designation as a historic landmark on the Loveland Historic Register, a property must be at least fifty (50) years old and must meet one (1) or more of the criteria for architectural, social cultural, or geographic/environmental significance as identified in Loveland Municipal Code 15.56.090. The First German Congregational Church satisfies the age requirement and meets the following criteria for designation as a Loveland Historic Register landmark of property:

- a) Architectural
  1. Exemplifies specific elements of an architectural style or period.
  2. Demonstrates superior craftsmanship, or high artistic value.
  3. Represents a built environment of a group of people in an era of history.
- b) Social/Cultural
  4. Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic or social heritage of the community.
- c) Physical Integrity
  1. Shows character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the community, region, state or nation.

2. Retains original design features, materials, and/or character.
3. Retains its original location or its same historic context if it has been moved.

Given available information for the property at 800 N. Lincoln Avenue, the First German Congregational Church exhibits both adequate *integrity* and *significance* to support its eligibility for designation as a Loveland historic landmark. This determination is based on the Colorado Historical Society's recommendations for determining landmark eligibility (see Figure 1 and Figure 2, below). The Historic Preservation Commission recommends approval by the City Council of this request for designation of the First German Congregational Church, located at 800 N. Lincoln Avenue, as a Loveland Historic Register landmark property.



**Attachments:**

- A. HPC Resolution 04-01
- B. Site Map, prepared by staff
- C. Site Photos, submitted by applicant
- D. Nomination Application submitted applicant