



**THE HISTORY OF THE CIVIL
RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO**

**Voting Rights in Fort
Collins (1867–1982)**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Cover: "Help US to Win the Vote," 1914 (Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/97500240/>)

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STATEMENT OF CONTEXT

This document is part of the Fort Collins *Civil Rights Movement Historic Context Study*. Based on the National Park Service (NPS) thematic framework *Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites* and associated theme studies, this multi-part historic context study focuses on the experiences and activism of seven marginalized groups: women, Indigenous peoples, African Americans, Hispanic people, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, LGBTQIA+ people, and religious minorities.

Voting Rights in Fort Collins, Colorado covers the period from 1867, when the Territorial Suffrage Act was enacted, through the 1982 extension of the seminal Voting Rights Act of 1965. This historic context narrative examines federal and state legislative and judicial activity before turning its attention to voting rights in Fort Collins.

Earlier documents that have informed this narrative include the NPS theme study, *Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights*, which examines court cases and legislation related to voting rights for multiple demographic groups. The “Voting Rights for Women” section of this context draws extensively from another NPS document, *The Nineteenth Amendment and Women’s Access to the Vote Across America*¹ and a previous historic context narrative by Leslie Moore, *From Parlors to Polling Places: Women’s Suffrage in Fort Collins*, which details the activities of local leaders in the suffrage movement from the late nineteenth century through the 1920s.

The struggle to secure “the franchise” is described herein for each of the subject groups in turn, with a summary of federal legislation and judicial activity, state legislation and judicial activity, and finally, civil rights activism nationally, at the state level, and in Fort Collins. The history of federal activity is largely based on the aforementioned previous NPS theme studies. The history of state activity is based on the Moore document, as well as Pauli Murray’s 1951 compendium, *States’ Laws on Race and Color*. Finally, this historic context narrative contains a discussion of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and amendments to this legislation through 1982, as the act is the preeminent legislation regarding suffrage on the federal level, and as such, effects all the groups examined in this study.

This document concludes with the associated property type definitions listed in the NPS theme study and significant sites associated with voting rights within the city limits of Fort Collins as they exist in 2023.

Note: The non-White/Anglo population in Fort Collins was relatively small during the period of time covered in this historic context. As a result, the history of local activism predominantly focuses on organizations of White women (such as the League of Women Voters) and Hispanic people (particularly local chapters of the League of United Latin American Citizens, or LULAC, and the Partido Nacional de La Raza Unida). Additional research and contributions by community members are requested to supplement the information gathered to date from archives and community stories.

VOTING RIGHTS FOR WOMEN

During the early years of European settlement in what would become the United States, married women — even if free — had no personal rights. Once a woman married, her husband possessed all legal authority over her, including the legal right to all monies she earned or inherited. Married women could not own property, sign contracts, obtain a divorce, or exercise parental rights over their children. Single women in the country had almost the same economic rights as men, following the tenets of English common law on which initial United States laws were based. A single woman could own property, sign a will or contract, and have rights over her (illegitimate) children. However, single women were not given access to the same social, political, and educational privileges as men.² Moreover, the cultural ideals presented to women in the early nineteenth century encouraged a single woman to prepare for marriage, in which she would maintain a home for her husband and children and serve as a moral leader for her household.³

State legislation, beginning in 1839, began to provide married women with limited rights to own property, write a will to distribute their property after death, enter into contracts, and (in some cases) sue for divorce. These laws were intended to protect women and children and allow wives to prevent their husbands from selling property that she brought into the marriage or upon which women and children depended during the marriage. Around 1844, more states began to adopt Married Women's Property Acts, although these varied widely from state to state, and several states did not recognize that women were entitled to a separate legal status until the late 1800s.

The ability of women to change their situation was a linchpin of the suffrage movement, but attaining the right to vote did not immediately solve this problem. As late as 1981, the U.S. Supreme Court declared that Louisiana's community-property system giving a husband full control over marital property was unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.⁴

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Voting in the United States was originally limited to White men who owned property.⁵ The path to suffrage for all groups except White/Anglo men was long, and voting would not become a universal right in the United States until well into the twentieth century. Suffrage rights varied from state to state and, in some cases, from city to city, a result of the United States Constitution (as ratified in 1787) not providing the federal government with clear authority over voting in the new nation.⁶

Great shifts in property requirements for voting took place well into the nineteenth century, and some states established taxpaying requirements in place of property ownership. Some of these requirements repressed voting, however, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, most of the economic barriers to voting at the state level had been removed for White/Anglo men.⁷ Also during that time, municipal governments adopted local voting regulations that mirrored the suffrage laws of their state. Since suffrage laws varied greatly from state to state, so did municipal voting requirements.⁸ Nevertheless, women had the right to vote in some state elections as early as 1838 and in municipal elections as early as 1887, and numerous states and territories granted women full suffrage prior to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.⁹



Figure 1. Woman suffrage protestor, ca. 1915 (Library of Congress)

The Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, introduced in the U.S. Congress in 1878 and finally adopted on June 4, 1919, was the result of decades of organizing and protesting by women all over the country. It states that “the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” The amendment was not fully ratified until August 18, 1920, when Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify it, creating the required three-fourths majority approval at the state level.¹⁰ Colorado ratified the Nineteenth Amendment on December 15, 1919.¹¹

U. S. SUPREME COURT AND FEDERAL CASES

During the 1800s, women sued for their right to vote at the state level, with no success, in states such as California, Pennsylvania and Illinois. Two early cases, in New York and Missouri, brought the fight for women’s suffrage to the federal level.¹²

- In 1873, U. S. Circuit Court for the Northern District of New York considered *United States v. Susan B. Anthony*. Anthony and 14 other women were arrested after voting in a federal election in Rochester, New York, and charged with violating Section 19 of the Enforcement Act of 1870: voting without a legal right to do so. When requesting the case be moved from the district court to the circuit court, U. S. Attorney Richard Crowley announced that charges against Anthony would be a test case; eventually, he announced that the other women arrested would not be prosecuted. Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Ward Hunt presided over the case in circuit court. Anthony lost after Hunt ruled that none of her defense’s arguments were correct, and women did not have the right to vote at the federal level. Anthony was not allowed to appeal a conviction in a federal criminal case at that time, so her arguments did not reach the U.S. Supreme Court.¹³
- In 1874, the case of *Minor v. Happersett* was brought by Virginia Minor, a White U.S. citizen and resident of Missouri over the age of 21. Minor sued Reese Happersett, the Registrar of Voters who denied her attempt to vote in a federal election, arguing that because the Fourteenth Amendment said that “All persons born or naturalized in the United States” are citizens of the United States and that states could not infringe on a citizen’s “life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction, the equal protection of laws,” she, as a citizen, was entitled to vote. The state constitution of Missouri at that time declared that only male citizens of the state were entitled to vote, and the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the judgment of a lower court that the Missouri Constitution was not void, and therefore the Fourteenth Amendment did not give women the right to vote.¹⁴

COLORADO STATE STATUTES AND LAWS

In 1861, the Colorado territorial legislature expanded property and earnings rights for married women. Full suffrage for women was considered at Colorado's 1876 constitutional convention, when it was admitted to the United States as a state, but the topic was tabled in order to avoid discord and left to be dealt with by the incoming General Assembly, although a compromise gave Colorado women the right to hold elected school positions and to vote in school elections.¹⁵

Finally, in 1893, following the passage of a referendum in the state legislature, the people of Colorado voted in favor of granting women's suffrage statewide, joining other Western states that had previously empowered women to vote. Three women were elected to the state House of Representatives the following year. More than 50 years later, in 1944, women's right to serve on a jury passed by popular vote.

Current research has yet to locate Colorado Supreme Court cases pertinent to women's suffrage for the period of significance, probably because women were fully enfranchised in Colorado by 1893, so no legal challenges were necessary.

Full suffrage for women was considered, but not enacted, when Colorado became a state in 1876. Women in Colorado achieved the right to vote in 1893.

THE NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

In July 1848, a women's rights convention took place in Seneca Falls, New York. Organizers included Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who drafted a "Declaration of Sentiments," modeled after the Declaration of Independence. This early meeting of activists for women's rights is considered by many to be the beginning of the women's suffrage movement.¹⁶ The path to voting rights for women was long and winding and encompassed the work of women, and men, from all over the country.

Within the United States, the abolitionist and women's suffrage movements were intertwined, as evidenced by the early activism of Mott, Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucy Stone. Anthony was a Quaker and a staunch abolitionist; along with Stanton and Stone, she formed the Women's Loyal National League in 1863 to work for a constitutional amendment to abolish slavery. These women also created the American Equal Rights Association (AERA) to secure voting rights for everyone. When activists led by Anthony's longtime friend Frederick Douglass prioritized voting rights for Black men in championing the Fifteenth Amendment, some women strongly disagreed with sacrificing the enfranchisement of women. Anthony, Stanton, and others subsequently left AERA and formed the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) in 1869.¹⁷ Another organization, the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) was formed the same year by Lucy Stone and others. The two organizations had different strategies: while NWSA advocated for a federal amendment that would secure women's right to vote, AWSA fought for suffrage on a state-by-state basis.¹⁸ Several states granted women the right to vote before the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, including Wyoming in 1869 and Colorado in 1893.

NWSA and AWSA merged in 1890, becoming the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Alice Stone Blackwell, daughter of Lucy Stone, was in charge of the merger and Stanton and Anthony served as co-presidents. NAWSA, along with local and state groups around the nation, advocated for suffrage by means of federal legislation.¹⁹ In 1912, Alice Paul and Lucy Burns were appointed to the NAWSA Congressional Committee. Paul and Burns wanted to campaign for a federal suffrage amendment and employ more militant tactics than NAWSA was comfortable with. Their NAWSA colleagues disagreed with that approach, leading Paul and Burns to form the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage (CU) in early 1913, although they continued to serve on the NAWSA Congressional Committee until that December. In March 1913, CU organized a march in Washington, D.C., the day before the inauguration of Woodrow Wilson. The event, with approximately 8,000 participants, was met with staunch opposition; some women were physically assaulted, while police refused to intervene.

Subsequent national attention to the march and its fallout led NAWSA to sever its relationship with CU by early 1914. However, CU gained the support of the Woman's Party of Western Voters, and by 1916, the two organizations merged to form the National Woman's Party (NWP). The platform of NWP was "to remain nonpartisan with the ultimate goal of a constitutional amendment ensuring suffrage for all women." NWP led picket lines outside the White House, with activists arrested and given progressively lengthening jail sentences. In January 1918, President Woodrow Wilson endorsed the women's suffrage amendment; however, the bill failed to pass in the Senate by two votes. NWP returned to the picket lines until the Nineteenth Amendment was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in May 1919 and the U.S. Senate on June 4, 1919.²⁰

THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT IN COLORADO

The Non-Partisan Equal Suffrage Association (NPESA) was the most influential organization in the state in the campaign for women's suffrage. NPESA could trace its roots back to January 10, 1876, when women holding a convention at Unity Church in Denver established the Territorial Woman Suffrage Society (TWSS); this meeting coincided with the state's constitutional convention. TWSS would become the Women's Suffrage Association of Colorado in 1877, when the State of Colorado put women's suffrage to a popular vote; the association disbanded after the measure was soundly defeated at the polls. In 1890, the organization was revived as the Colorado Equal Suffrage Association (CESA); it was thought that replacing the word *woman* with the word *equal* would more widely appeal to voters. CESA organized women to vote and elect the first female school board member in Denver, suffragist lone Hanna. With a referendum in 1893 for women's suffrage once again on the Colorado ballot, CESA reorganized and changed its name to the Non-Partisan Equal Suffrage Association (NPESA), again to broaden its appeal to include all groups who supported the right of women to vote.²¹

NPESA reached out to NAWSA leaders for assistance with the 1893 campaign. Carrie Chapman Catt traveled throughout Colorado, organizing local suffrage groups, and visited Fort Collins, speaking at the Opera House located at 123 North College Avenue. On November 8, 1893, the referendum granting Colorado women the right to vote passed, with 54.8% in favor and 45.2% opposed.²²

THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT IN FORT COLLINS

In 1876, Albina Louisa Washburn,²³ a homesteader and school teacher of the Big Thompson Valley in the Loveland area, introduced a resolution at the National Grange Convention in Chicago declaring that women must be given the right to vote. Washburn forced a vote by state delegations, with 24 “No” votes, and 9 representatives (including those from the then-new state of Colorado) voting “Yes.”²⁴ In Fall 1876, Washburn attended a convention of the AWSA in search of financial support for suffrage efforts in Colorado.²⁵ Women organized and focused on an 1877 state referendum granting them full suffrage; however, the measure was defeated handily, 14,053 votes to 6,612.²⁶

Washburn moved to Fort Collins after her husband died and started a local cooperative exchange in 1897 on the corner of Matthews and Myrtle Streets.²⁷ In 1898, she rented rooms in the Jefferson block (which she called Jefferson Hall) to establish a store, the “Cooperative Exchange No. 1 of Fort Collins,” along with a dining room and reading room.²⁸ The 1900 U.S. Census lists her occupation as “radical reformer.”²⁹



Washburn was also active in the Socialist Party and attended that group’s January 1902 state convention in Denver as a delegate. By July 1903, she had moved to San Diego, California, and was publishing a paper, the *Cooperative Exchange*.³⁰ In December 1910, she moved back to Fort Collins to live with her daughter, Winona Washburn Taylor.³¹

Carol Nichols Churchill, who published the *Queen Bee* in Denver and advocated for women’s equal rights, traveled to Fort Collins in March 1881. Churchill advertised an initial meeting to organize a women’s suffrage group, held at Fort Collins Grange No. 7,³² which led to the establishment of the Fort Collins Equal Suffrage Association (FCESA). Elizabeth Stone was one of the first Fort Collins women to host a meeting of the FCESA, at her home at 327 Jefferson Street.³³ Middle- and upper-class women often formed clubs and held meetings in their homes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; it was not considered proper at that time for women to meet in public places.³⁴

At that time, many women across the United States were concerned about alcohol consumption, a problem that they had no power to address through the ballot box. In 1879, Frances Willard, the national president of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), declared that women’s suffrage was integral to the fight for prohibition. A local chapter of WCTU was started in Fort Collins by 1880.³⁵ Founding members of WCTU included Alice E. Edwards and Lucy Richards McIntyre, who was also a leader of the local suffrage movement. McIntyre served as the president and secretary of WCTU; wrote opinion pieces and letters to the editor of the *Fort Collins Courier*; and held meetings at her house at 137 Matthews Street. One letter to the editor pointed out that educated women had no voice in making the laws they had to live under, while men of any class were free to vote. Another Fort Collins woman, Sarah Jane Leffingwell Corbin, was also active in both movements and hosted many group meetings at her house at 402 Remington Street.³⁶ The Fort Collins branch of WCTU held a victory party in January 1921, at the Second Presbyterian Church (corner of Cherry and Whitcomb Streets, no longer extant), which included a discussion of the relationship between the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments.³⁷ WCTU continued to be active in Fort Collins, and to meet at the Presbyterian Church (which later moved to the corner of Grant Avenue and Maple Street) into the 1960s.³⁸



Figure 2. Lucy McIntyre, ca. 1911
(Fort Collins Museum of Discovery)

The original FCESA disbanded at some point (date unknown), and a new Fort Collins Equal Suffrage Association formed in September 1893. Men, who were included in the membership, began making speeches in Larimer County in support of women's suffrage, including at the Fossil Creek Schoolhouse, the Leonard School House, and schoolhouses in Districts 10 and 101.³⁹ One of these orators was Harlan Thomas, architect of buildings at Colorado Agricultural College (CAC), which became Colorado State University (CSU); Thomas' designs include the current CSU Industrial Arts building.⁴⁰

After the statewide referendum granting women the right to vote passed in November 1893, the new FCESA held a celebration at the Opera House on College Avenue. Later, FCESA sponsored a four-week course where local women could become better acquainted with politics, in partnership with the First Christian Church, where Sarah Corbin was a congregant; at that time, the church did not yet have a building and held its meetings in a tent.⁴¹ Each of Fort Collins' four wards had a polling location in April 1894, when women cast their first votes in Fort Collins. First Ward residents voted at the Commercial or Northern Hotel (166–180 College); Second Ward voted at the Opera House (123 North College Avenue); and Third Ward voting took place at an office at what is now 120 South College Avenue. Fourth Ward's polling place was located at the Remington School, on the southeast corner of Remington and Olive streets.⁴² The Remington School was condemned in 1968 and demolished; at that time, the building's address was 318 Remington Street.⁴³

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women Voters (LWV) was first proposed by Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), at the 1919 NAWSA convention. Formed as an organization within NAWSA, the National League of Women Voters was formally organized in Chicago on February 14, 1920, with Maud Wood Park as its first president.⁴⁴ LWV is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that focuses on voter registration, voting rights, and providing information to voters about candidates and issues. The Colorado League of Women Voters (CLWV) was organized in 1928 to strive for "a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate."⁴⁵

Today, the national LWV organization acknowledges that Carrie Chapman Catt was "a complicated character, a political operative, and by modern standards, yes, racist." (Catt claimed — while campaigning for women's suffrage — that it would strengthen White supremacy.) LWV also recognizes that it was late to support civil rights for all Americans, not developing a discrimination policy until 1966.⁴⁶ The organization now acknowledges the impactful work of Black suffragists, including Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells, and Mary Church Terrell, and the effect that Jim Crow laws had on preventing Black women from voting, even after passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.⁴⁷

On May 7, 1951, a local chapter of the LWV was formed in Fort Collins when 30 local women and four Colorado LWV leaders gathered at the Colonnades Restaurant's tearoom at 415 Remington Street and elected Dorothy Heynau the group's first president. The Fort Collins League of Women Voters (FCLWV) was open to all women citizens of voting age "who subscribe[d] to its principals (sic)." The organization was established on a provisional basis for its first year, while it planned to conduct studies of government on the federal, state and local level.⁴⁸ FCLWV held its orientation

meeting at the office of Eugenia Symms in Ammons Hall (NHRP 1978⁴⁹) on the CSU campus.⁵⁰ The local League was following its motto: “jumping to conclusions is not nearly as good as digging for facts.” It undertook a “Know your Town” study and also decided on in-depth examination of three topics in its first year: the federal budget and fiscal measures favoring a stable and expanding federal economy; the Colorado Constitution, considering revisions that may be needed; and the problems of local government.

To accomplish its proposed work, FCLWV organized into four units, each tasked with studying a certain topic and meeting twice a month.⁵¹ Current newspaper research shows that in the 1950s and 1960s the FCLWV continued employing units for study, and these groups met most often at members’ homes. In the coming decades, the local League would continue to examine issues as they affected Fort Collins and the nation, sponsor candidate’s events for the public, and take positions on issues in a nonpartisan manner.⁵² At its 1970 annual meeting, FCLWV listed its topics for study, including housing, welfare, poverty, environmental planning, education, and taxation.⁵³ At some point before 1994, FCLWV became the Larimer County LWV (LCLWV). Today, LCLWV’s agenda includes researching and supporting gun violence prevention, in partnership with the state League. LCLWV also has a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) team and a stated goal of cultivating membership and encouraging civic engagement across the diverse populations of Larimer County communities.⁵⁴

The Colonnades Restaurant (415 Remington Street)⁵⁵ appears in Fort Collins newspaper research from 1950 through at least 1971; a cursory look at events from this time period shows the location to have hosted numerous women’s clubs for meetings, speaking engagements, and luncheons, with activity peaking in the mid-1950s. This building has been demolished.

AFRICAN AMERICAN VOTING RIGHTS

Free Black men had been able to vote in some states at the founding of the United States, but by 1855, only five states allowed African Americans to vote. Two years later, a Supreme Court case denied African Americans the vote on the federal level.⁵⁶

In 1857, the U. S. Supreme Court declared in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* that African Americans were not citizens and therefore were not protected under the U.S. Constitution, whether or not they were legally free. The decision declared the Missouri Compromise, which had abolished slavery in the Upper Louisiana Territory, unconstitutional, stating that the agreement violated the property rights of the owners of enslaved persons. Before that ruling, enslaved people had had the right to sue for their freedom in Missouri, where the case originated.⁵⁷

Prior to the Civil War, enslaved African Americans had no rights or control over their lives; they were considered property, and as such, could be bought and sold at any time. By 1860, enslaved populations were largely held in Southern states below North Carolina, as well as in Texas and Arkansas, reflecting the importance of cotton and sugar as agricultural crops. Smaller numbers of enslaved people were present in the Upper South, along what would become the border between the North and South during the Civil War.⁵⁸ Many free Black people living in the South were impelled to move north by the imposition of increasing restrictions, including being required to pay higher taxes, and the loss of suffrage.⁵⁹ Some states in the South had previously embraced universal White male suffrage, with no property ownership or tax requirements, but Black men were still excluded from the vote.⁶⁰

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Following the Civil War, at the beginning of Reconstruction, a flurry of legislative activity addressed equal suffrage on the federal level. The Fourteenth Amendment, passed by Congress in 1866 and ratified by the required number of states in 1868, provided equal protection to all citizens of the United States and established that all people born or naturalized in the country were citizens, including formerly enslaved people, negating the decision issued in the *Dred Scott* case. ⁶¹

The Territorial Suffrage Act, ratified in January 1867 over President Andrew Johnson veto, prohibited U.S. territories from denying suffrage based on race or the previous condition of servitude.⁶² As seen later in this document, the activism of Black men in Denver, Colorado, helped shape awareness of equal suffrage in the territories at the federal level.

The Reconstruction Act of March 1867, ratified despite another Johnson veto, required Southern states to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment in order to rejoin the Union, as well as include suffrage for Black men in their state constitution.⁶³

The ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870 gave African American men the right to vote and superseded any state laws related to Black voting.⁶⁴ Even with a Constitutional amendment, however, the voting power of Black men and other marginalized groups was suppressed by state governments through the use of poll taxes, literacy tests, and other means.⁶⁵ Poll taxes required a voter to pay a fee at a county assessor's office before an election. A potential voter in the mid- and late-nineteenth century could also be subjected to a literacy test, requiring a demonstrated ability to read in order to vote.⁶⁶ Poll taxes became illegal on the federal level with the passage of the 24th Amendment in 1964;⁶⁷ other suppressive tactics, including literacy tests, were addressed in the 1965 Voting Rights Act and its subsequent amendments.⁶⁸ White primaries, another form of voter suppression in which Black people were shut out of the Democratic Party primary process in the South, were ultimately declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1944. White primaries, another form of voter suppression in which Black people were shut out of the Democratic Party primary process in the South, were ultimately declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1944.⁶⁹

The Enforcement Act, first passed by Congress in 1870, required that elections be conducted without regard to race. Other Enforcement Acts followed in 1871, including those specifically targeting the Ku Klux Klan, which — along with other violent White supremacist groups — was active at this time, particularly in the South. Despite these federal actions, however, states and territories created their own laws, and the enfranchisement of Black people continued to be suppressed in most of the United States.⁷⁰

Between 1870 and the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, progress toward voting rights for all citizens on the federal level was sporadic. Rulings on amendments to the U.S. Constitution and state actions on voting rights were litigated through cases tried at the federal level and before the Supreme Court. In 1890, Congress attempted to strengthen federal powers over suffrage with the Federal Elections Bill, also called the Lodge Force Bill. The bill passed the House but died in the Senate in 1891.⁷¹

In 1957, President Dwight D. Eisenhower initiated the first Civil Rights Act since Reconstruction. Its passage established the Civil Rights Section of the Department of Justice, as well as a federal Civil Rights Commission.⁷² The 1960 Civil Rights Act, which penalized attempts to disenfranchise voter registration, was enacted to address loopholes in the 1957 legislation. This was followed in 1964 by the landmark Civil Rights Act, which prohibited discrimination in public places and in employment; it also called for the integration of schools. The Twenty-Fourth Amendment, ratified in 1964, finally enshrined a federal ban on poll taxes.⁷³

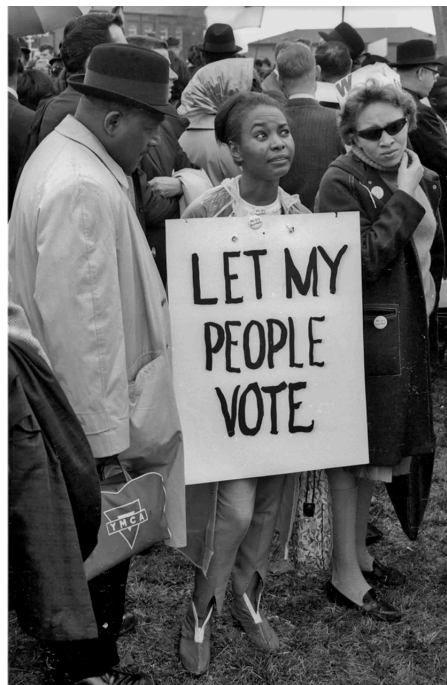


Figure 3. Day 5 of the march from Selma to Montgomery, Ala., in March 1965 (Dan Budnik/Contact Press Images)

U. S. SUPREME COURT CASES

What follows is a brief overview of cases that shaped the path of equal suffrage for African Americans, prior to the passage of the Voting Act of 1965. Cases following the Civil War demonstrate the variation in state laws and civil rights among states of the Union.

During the nineteenth century, the U.S. Supreme Court largely upheld the rights of states and local governments to prevent African Americans from voting.

- 1876: *United States v. Reese*, 92 U.S. 214, Kentucky. First case after the Enforcement Act and the ratification of the 15th Amendment. Court found that the 15th Amendment did not confer the right to vote; The ruling gave states the ability to use tests to exclude African Americans from voting.
- 1876: *U.S. v Cruikshank*. A case based on the atrocities of the Colfax Massacre, which involved the murder of scores of African Americans outside the Colfax, Louisiana courthouse. Justices ruled that protections of the Fourteenth Amendment did not apply in this case, as it protected individuals from actions of the state only, not other individuals.⁷⁴
- 1884: *Ex parte Yarbrough*. The U.S. Supreme Court found that the federal government could charge citizens (in this case, Ku Klux Klan members) who interfered with a federal election.
- 1898: *Williams v. Mississippi*, 170 U. S. 213, Mississippi. The Court validated Mississippi's literacy test, finding it lawful under the Fifteenth Amendment. The court ruled that the literacy test did not discriminate on the basis of race, meaning the tests served as legitimate means of discerning voter eligibility.

Around 1940, the Court's decisions began to swing the other way, finding many state voting laws unconstitutional.

- Oklahoma was the last state to have an amendment to its constitution granting the right to vote only those whose grandfathers had voted before 1866, making Black persons ineligible. (This is called "the grandfather clause.") The Supreme Court struck down this amendment in 1915 with its decision in *Guinn v. United States* (238 U. S. 347, Oklahoma).
- 1939: *Lane v. Wilson*. The Court declared a 1916 Oklahoma statute, enacted to disenfranchise those who had not voted in the 1914 election, unconstitutional. This form of voter suppression was legal in Oklahoma for more than 20 years.⁷⁵
- 1944: *Smith v. Allwright*, 321 U.S. 649, Texas. Supreme Court finds White primaries in Texas unconstitutional, after a previous decision (*Grovey v. Townsend*) claiming the opposite; this was the final of three decisions involving Texas White primaries.⁷⁶
- 1949: *Schnell v. Davis*, 336 U.S. 933, Alabama. The U.S. Supreme Court sustains a federal decision (*Davis v. Schnell*, 81 F. Supp. 872, Southern District, Alabama) restricting voter registrars from using a literacy test to arbitrarily discriminate against Black voters.
- 1960: *United States v. Raines*, 362 U.S. 17, Georgia: the Supreme "Court upheld the constitutionality of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 that authorized the attorney general to seek a federal court injunction against persons who deprived others of the right to vote because of their race."⁷⁷

- 1960: *Gomillion v. Lightfoot* 364 U.S. 339, Alabama : the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the gerrymandering by the state legislature of the city of Tuskegee, Alabama violated the Fifteenth Amendment, denying African Americans equal representation. The state redrew the boundaries of Tuskegee to include almost no Black citizens, assigning the great majority of Black voters to counties surrounding the city.⁷⁸

COLORADO STATE STATUTES AND LAWS

The Organic Act of 1861, which created the Colorado Territory, limited voting to “every free White male citizen of the United States above the age of twenty-one;” previous laws in the Jefferson Territory, a precursor to the Colorado Territory, had done the same.⁷⁹ The Jefferson Territory was established in the Pikes Peak region after voters rejected statehood in favor of territorial status. The territory had incorporated the city of Denver and established a judicial system and laws by January 1860, but it was never recognized by the U.S. Congress.⁸⁰

Black residents in the Colorado Territory played an important role in regard to wider suffrage for Black men at that time. Their activism began due to an amendment to Colorado’s voting law of 1861, passed in 1864 by the Colorado territorial legislature, stating that voting in the territory was open to all “male inhabitants, over the age of twenty-one years, not being negroes or mulattoes” and who had resided in the territory thirty days or more.⁸¹ A group of African American men from Denver, including orator William Jefferson Hardin, worked to bring federal attention to suffrage for Black men in the territory, intertwining the issue with Colorado statehood. In 1865, the Governor of the territory, Alexander Cummings, forwarded to Secretary of State William Seward a petition to the U.S. Congress containing the signatures of 137 Black people, opposing voting restrictions for Black men.⁸² A second petition, presented in 1866, also sought to allow Black children to attend public schools.⁸³

COLORADO SUPREME COURT CASES

Current research has not located any statutes or laws that affected African American voting rights on the state level during the period of significance.

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN COLORADO

White suffragists were not the only activists concerned with the structure of the Fifteenth Amendment. Sojourner Truth had concerns about the fate of Black women should only Black men be granted the right to vote. Specifically, she was concerned that gender discrimination in Black communities would parallel discrimination in White communities if the Amendment granted only Black men the right to vote.⁸⁴

Just as White women had organized for women's suffrage, African American women also formed their own organizations, including the National Association of Colored Women (1896)⁸⁵ and the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs.⁸⁶

Elizabeth Piper Ensley was an African American suffragist who moved to Denver in 1892 and worked on the women's suffrage campaign that succeeded in 1893. Ensley founded the Colored Women's Republican Club and the Association of Colored Women's Clubs;⁸⁷ she was the only African American woman in the initial Colorado Equal Suffrage Association (later known as the NPESA).⁸⁸ She later served as the second vice president in the Colorado State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs.⁸⁹

African American women were disenfranchised on the bases of both their sex and their race; even after the Nineteenth Amendment was enacted in 1920, Black women in Colorado were subject to poll taxes and other means of voter suppression, just like Black men.

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN FORT COLLINS

Currently, very little is known about the activism of African American women in Fort Collins during the period before 1920. The Black population at that time was very small. While initial research has uncovered at least one local Black woman, Edith Jennie Goodall, who was active in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the National Association of Colored Women, and the National Negro Educational Congress, there is no specific available evidence linking her to the suffrage movement in particular. Further research and assistance from the public may provide additional information on Goodall and other early twentieth century Black women in Fort Collins.

INDIGENOUS VOTING RIGHTS

The history of Indigenous voting rights is situated within the context of the federal government's attempts to force Native Americans to assimilate, which included requiring tribal peoples to become U. S. citizens in order to vote.⁹⁰ Just as many other civil rights issues were intertwined with one another, voting rights for Indigenous people were predicated on their ability and agreement to attain U.S. citizenship and their right and requirement to own property. In short, Indigenous people were forced to adopt or submit to European methods of governance and ideas about property ownership in order to have a voice at the polls, although doing so did not guarantee their ability to vote, due to other forms of discrimination.

The United States government forced tribal peoples in the eastern U.S. to territories west of the Mississippi River through the Indian Removal Act of 1830, which allowed the federal government to exchange land in eastern tribal territories for lands west of the Mississippi. However, the U.S. Congress went on to displace Native Americans already in the West through multiple pieces of legislation that redistributed their land to private interests and land-grant universities. State and federal laws also forced Indigenous people onto reservations throughout the West. In 1851, the Treaty of Fort Laramie committed to preserving land for the Cheyenne and Arapaho.⁹¹ However, just ten years later, the Treaty of Fort Wise reduced the lands granted to tribes in the previous treaty.⁹² In 1867, a treaty with the Cheyenne and Arapaho forced those people out of Colorado and into Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). The following year, a treaty with the Ute people established a tribal reservation in the western third of Colorado,⁹³ but in 1879, the federal government claimed a large portion of that land, forcing the Utes to relocate to Utah or possibly a smaller area in Colorado.⁹⁴

Enacted by the U.S. Congress on June 2, 1924, the Indian Citizenship Act granted citizenship to all Native Americans born in the U.S., although the law did not govern the right to vote, which was left up to the states. Some states did not grant Native Americans the right to vote in U.S. elections until 1957.



Figure 4. Native Americans register to vote on September 27, 1948, in New Mexico, (Bettmann/CORBIS)

STATE STRATEGIES FOR RESTRICTING INDIGENOUS VOTING

During the nineteenth century, violent clashes were common between Indigenous people and the European Americans making incursions into their lands, and the territorial or state governments representing those settlers were disinclined to extend the franchise to tribal members whom they considered to be their enemies. States employed five basic strategies to prevent Indigenous people from voting:

- Voting was restricted to only those Native people who had assimilated into the dominant society, abandoning their culture, language, and ways of life. In some cases, this extended to exclude “maintaining tribal relations,” although at least one state argued that people could not sever their tribal ties without federal approval.
- The inclusion of the words “Indians not taxed” in the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution enabled states to argue that if Native Americans were exempt from paying taxes — for example, if a state government did not have the power to tax reservation land — they could not vote. This was enforced by multiple states even though they allowed nontaxed White people to vote.
- States described Native American tribes as being “under guardianship” to the federal government, based on the 1831 U.S. Supreme Court case, *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*. Chief Justice John Marshall ruled that tribes were entities subject to the decisions of the federal government; Marshall called tribes “domestic dependent nations.” The decision did not define the legal status of Native Americans not associated with a tribe.⁹⁵ States subsequently conflated the federal obligation to tribes with the common-law guardianship used to exercise public powers to protect incapacitated individuals. Lower courts gradually clarified the definition of “guardianship,” state-by-state, through the middle of the twentieth century.
- State residency requirements were often used to disqualify Natives people from voting if they lived on reservations, where the state exercised no authority.
- Finally, states argued that tribal sovereignty — the ability of tribes to maintain their own systems of government and provide services to their members — should be taken to mean that Native Americans had no desire or right to participate in state or county government (including voting).

These arguments were addressed and dismissed by the U.S. Congress in Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the 1975 and 1982 amendments to that Act.⁹⁶

COLORADO STATE STATUTES AND LAWS AND SUPREME COURT CASES

Colorado joined other western states including Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming in denying Native Americans the right to vote by requiring all voters to be U. S. citizens.⁹⁷ No other relevant Colorado state laws were identified.

FORT COLLINS ACTIVITY

Most civil rights activity for Native Americans in Fort Collins appears to be associated with the American Indian Movement (AIM), an organization concerned with the civil rights of tribal peoples throughout the United States. In 1971, AIM was part of the Third World Coalition, along with CSU’s Black Student Alliance (BSA) and United Mexican-American Students (UMAS), which demanded changes to what it viewed as discriminatory policies on campus.⁹⁸ In 1975, Chick Ramirez, a former director of the Denver chapter of AIM spoke at CSU on “The Native American Today.”⁹⁹ None of AIM’s activities at CSU, however, appear to be related to voting.

HISPANIC/LATINO(A) VOTING RIGHTS

When the United States government took possession of Mexico's northern provinces following the Mexican American War of 1846–1848, few Mexican people lived as far north as present-day Fort Collins. That area had been home primarily to Indigenous tribes, who effectively prevented Mexican colonization before European settlers arrived. The U.S. government's removal of Indigenous people and seizure of their lands opened the American Southwest to settlement by others. Before 1900, most of the Mexican population of the United States was limited to those states which had previously been part of Mexico: Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, southern Colorado, and California. After the turn of the century, people of Mexican descent were increasingly drawn north into Colorado to work on the railroads and in mines, factories processing ore and other extracted minerals into cement and metal, and agriculture.¹⁰⁰ Immigrants from Mexico to the United States were attracted by security and employment opportunities, particularly as the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920) motivated Mexican citizens to flee violent armed conflicts between the upper-class, Spanish-descent *criollos* and the part-Indigenous mestizos. Even after the Mexican Revolution had ended, immigration from Mexico to the United States was bolstered during the 1920s, when the U.S. government began to restrict immigration from Europe. Throughout the twentieth century, employers' demands for a low-cost workforce and government policies such as the guest-worker Bracero Program, which brought 400,000 Mexicans to the U.S. between 1943–1950, began cycles of immigration, illegal immigration, and deportation that have continued to the present day.¹⁰¹

Although Hispanic people did face harassment and other obstacles, they were not systematically excluded from the polls or from participating in the political process in the same ways that African American and Indigenous people were.¹⁰² In Colorado, the State Constitution required state laws to be printed in English, as well as Spanish and German, from 1876 until 1900.¹⁰³

HISPANIC VOTING ACTIVITY IN FORT COLLINS

The national organization of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) was formed in 1929 in Corpus Christi, Texas, and led the Hispanic civil rights movement throughout the mid-twentieth century.¹⁰⁴ The National Council of La Raza (now UnidosUS) was born out of the Chicano movement in the 1970s and worked to elect Hispanic people to political office.¹⁰⁵ NCLR was and is separate from the Partido Nacional de La Raza Unida (National United Peoples Party) political party, also organized in Texas in 1970, which focused on getting out the vote as well as electing Hispanic officials. Note that both the organization and the political party are often referred to with the shorthanded name "La Raza." In Fort Collins, only La Raza Unida was active.

Both LULAC and the La Raza Unida party played an important role in the civil rights movement in Fort Collins. In 1969, a chapter of LULAC was active in Fort Collins.¹⁰⁶ The following year, La Raza Unida announced 12 members running for state, county, and local offices, including two citizens of Fort Collins: Andres Gavaldon for district attorney in the Eighth Judicial District and Fred Tabias Gallegos for Larimer County Clerk. The Third State Assembly of the La Raza Unida Party took place at the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Hall at the corner of Grant and Maple streets.¹⁰⁷ That building had, until relatively recently, been a church, the Second Presbyterian Church (234 N. Grant Ave.), which was constructed in 1922 as the second location of

this congregation (the first being at Cherry and Whitcomb Streets). In 1941, the church changed its name to Grant Avenue Presbyterian Church; its 45-member congregation merged with the 22-member Spanish Presbyterian Church in 1950 but retained the Grant Avenue name.¹⁰⁸ The aging, shrinking congregation disbanded in 1969,¹⁰⁹ and it appears that LULAC occupied the building, then known as “LULAC Hall,” in 1970.¹¹⁰ Both LULAC and La Raza Unida held meetings in that building in 1970, prior to the 1975 Amendment to the Voting Rights Act that provided additional protections for Hispanic persons. (The former church building has since been converted to condominiums.)

The La Raza Unida Party was active in Fort Collins by at least 1970, holding meetings in Fort Collins to select and announce candidates and to discuss the party’s platform.¹¹¹ La Raza candidates last ran in local elections, according to records located to date, in 1974.¹¹²

Based on stakeholder information and current research, LULAC was mainly concerned with education and policing issues in Fort Collins, as well as providing scholarships and opportunities for Hispanic children. Further LULAC activities in Fort Collins are discussed in other context reports in this study.

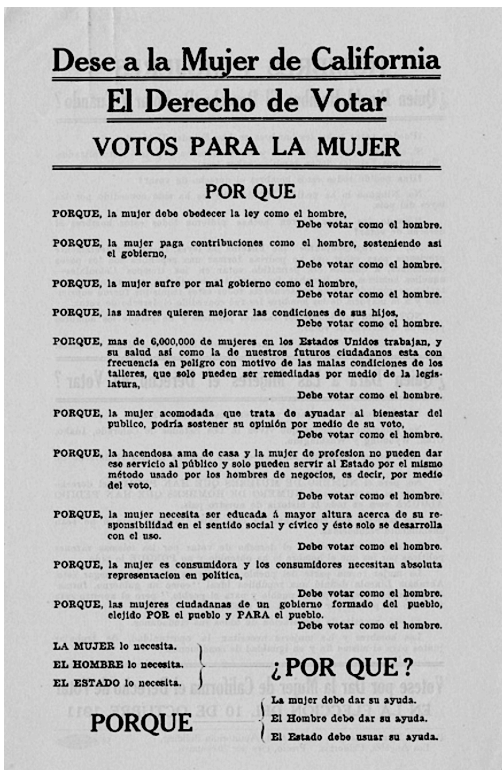


Figure 5. Los Angeles Political Equality League, “Pamphlet of the Los Angeles Political Equality League by Maria Lopez,” Claremont, California, 1911 (Women’s Museum of California)

ASIAN AMERICAN VOTING RIGHTS

As with Native Americans, the voting rights of Asian people were limited by discriminatory laws barring them from citizenship and property ownership. Additionally, like Hispanic people, they were subjected to volatile swings in immigration laws that both encouraged their migration to the United States to provide low-cost labor and then restricted from immigrating or becoming citizens. The lack of citizenship was used to prevent Asian immigrants from owning property.

Chinese people were prevented from becoming citizens, despite petitions to the courts to allow this. The U.S. Congress in 1870 specifically excluded Chinese people from eligibility for citizenship. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act created a ten-year ban on Chinese laborers immigrating to the United States and required non-laborers to produce documents from the Chinese government confirming their qualifications to immigrate. Chinese immigrants already in the U. S. had to secure documents for re-entry; state and federal courts were prohibited from granting citizenship to Chinese resident aliens but could deport them. The act was extended in 1892 as the Geary Act; which also required Chinese residents to obtain a certificate of residence, without which they could be deported. The Geary Act was made permanent in 1902.¹¹³ Japanese people were limited in their ability to immigrate to the U.S. in 1907. The laws preventing naturalized citizenship for Asian peoples were lifted, one group at a time, between 1943–1952.¹¹⁴ After the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act abolished the racist quota system established in 1924 that gave preference to Western/Northern Europeans, the U.S. experienced an upswing in immigration from Asia.¹¹⁵

Asian Americans were not especially concerned with voting rights, however; their primary focus for civil rights activism was on equal protection in employment, education, and housing. Only when those issues were addressed did Asian organizations turn their attention to voter registration.¹¹⁶

FORT COLLINS ACTIVITY

Current research has not located specific activity related to voting rights and the Fort Collins AAPI community.



Figure 6. Komako Kimura, a prominent Japanese suffragist, marches in New York on October 23, 1917. (Wikimedia Commons)

THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965 AND AMENDMENTS TO THE ACT

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 can be seen as a culmination of the struggle for voting rights that began before the Civil War. Designed to achieve universal voting equality in the United States, the Act returned oversight of discriminatory voting practices to the federal government and contained immediate remedies for any ongoing discrimination.

The 1965 Voting Rights Act stated that, in order to “assure that the right of citizens of the United States to vote is not denied or abridged on account of race or color, no citizen shall be denied the right to vote in any Federal, State, or local election because of his failure to comply with any test or device.” It also gave the U.S. Attorney General — utilizing voter eligibility information through November 1, 1964 — the power to initiate action against any state or locality that utilized testing or other devices designed to hinder voting. States and localities in which fewer than 50% of qualified adults voted in 1964 would have any eligibility tests or devices suspended for five years. Importantly, the Act stipulated that any state or locality under investigation could not institute any new voting regulations or laws without permission of the U.S. Attorney General or the U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia. Jurisdictions could no longer institute new discriminatory practices to replace previous tactics. The Act also requested that the Attorney General pursue the constitutionality of poll taxes in state and local elections.¹¹⁷ The Supreme Court would determine poll taxes unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment just one year later, in its 1966 decision on *Harper v. Virginia State Board of Elections*, 383 U.S. 663 (1966).¹¹⁸

Certain crucial provisions of the Voting Rights Act were set to expire in five years; these provisions were renewed after congressional hearings in 1970 and again by Congress in 1975, 1982, and 2006.¹¹⁹

Because the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was specifically intended to address discrimination against African Americans in the Southern United States, the places where “fewer than 50% of qualified adults voted in 1964” were limited. As a result, the Act did not apply to areas where non-White/Anglo people made up a smaller proportion of the population. In 1975, it was expanded to include 375 additional jurisdictions outside the South.¹²⁰ Also in 1975, the Voting Act was amended to include bilingual ballots for language minority groups, defined as “persons who are American Indian, Asian American, Alaskan Natives, or of Spanish Heritage.”¹²¹

In 1980, the City of Mobile, Alabama’s use of at-large elections, in place since 1911, was challenged in *City of Mobile v. Bolden*. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that that the electoral system did not violate the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments as it lacked proof of purposeful discrimination. Although in 1973 the Court had struck down at-large elections in Texas as discriminatory (*White v. Regester*), in *Mobile*, the court’s majority opinion set a high bar to prove discrimination, which it saw as required by the Constitution and the Voting Rights Act, and allowed the at-large election system in Mobile to continue.¹²² In 1982, Congress addressed the decision of *Mobile v. Bolden* by amending the Voting Rights Act to explicitly state that discrimination could be claimed without establishing a purposeful intent to discriminate¹²³ and renewed the 1965 Act, as amended, for 25 years.

PROPERTY TYPES ASSOCIATED WITH VOTING RIGHTS IN FORT COLLINS

“Associated property type” is a technical term used by NPS to describe historic resources that are related to the theme, geographic location, and time period for a particular theme study or historic context. The NPS theme study *Civil Rights in America: Racial Voting Rights* identifies resources that could be nominated to the National Historic Landmarks Program, while this historic context identifies resources that could be nominated to the NRHP at the state or local level. Please refer to *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* for more information.

- Property types identified in the theme study include those associated with:
- Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution, passage of federal legislation, or intervention by the Executive BranchThe federal government’s ability to prosecute private
- individuals for civil rights infractions
- The use of discriminatory tests and practices, the grandfather clause, poll taxes, etc. to prevent or discourage people from voting
- The use of White-only primary elections
- State laws that restricted or blocked Native people from voting if they were not taxed, maintained tribal affiliations, or lived on reservations.
- Nonviolent strategies by grassroots organizations to gain voting rights
- Violence committed against individuals and groups advocating for or otherwise working to achieve voting rights, including the federal government’s investigation of segregationist violence against civil rights worker
- Directly influencing the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965

This includes properties associated with individuals who led efforts to overturn legal obstacles to voting rights, worked to increase voter education and registration, or led groups which had a voting rights agenda. Most of the Associated Property Types found in Fort Collins to date would be categorized with “Nonviolent strategies by grassroots organizations to gain voting rights.”

All historic sites associated with this context, if nominated to the NRHP, would be proposed under Criterion A: “Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history” at the local level of significance.

A building must also retain its historical and architectural integrity; in other words, it “must physically represent the time period for which it is significant.” Integrity is evaluated on the basis of seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. For example, the substantial interior and exterior changes made to the Grant Avenue Presbyterian Church/LULAC Hall, in order to convert it to condominiums, have erased its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. It only retains integrity of location, setting, and association, and the building is no longer identifiable as a church. It would not, therefore, be eligible for nomination to the NRHP.

Although eligibility for listing in the NRHP is generally limited to those resources whose period of significance ends more than 50 years ago, as all resources associated with the ongoing struggle for voting rights are identified, their data should be collected so that they can be nominated as they become eligible.

The resource types listed here and individually significant sites identified elsewhere were located through archival and historical research and/or information provided by individuals in the community. Property types associated with voting rights generally fall into one of the following four categories: meeting places, polling places, homes of significant individuals related to voting rights in Fort Collins, and protest sites/march routes.

- During the women’s suffrage movement, community members met to share information, organize, and advocate for change. Following the Voting Rights Act of 1965, organizations such as LULAC and the La Raza Unida political party met with members of the community to educate and register voters and put forward Hispanic candidates for office. In both cases, these meetings took place in a variety of venues, including schools, churches, and restaurants.
- Polling places in Fort Collins were set up in publicly accessible spaces such as schools, churches, office spaces, hotels, and the opera house.
- Although no protest sites or march routes have been identified for the time period included in this historic context, that property type is listed here in the event that a community member might have information to share about that activity in the past.

Note: This project did not include a historic resources survey. Prior to further considering any of these resources for inclusion in a potential NRHP nomination, these properties should be appropriately surveyed and documented.

PROPERTY TYPE: RELIGIOUS FACILITY

Churches and synagogues are religious buildings used by congregations to meet for worship services, but they also were often used as meeting places for secular community organizations. During the period included in this historic context, many churches were extant in Fort Collins. The first Jewish synagogue building, for Congregation Har Shalom, was dedicated in 1982.

In order to be listed on the NRHP, a religious building must meet one of the four primary Criteria for the Evaluation of Significance (event, person, design/construction, or information potential) as well as Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties. A church where community organizers worked to secure voting rights — for example, by educating and helping to register Hispanic voters prior to 1975 — would meet Criterion A: “Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.” Criteria Consideration A states that a religious property’s significance must be judged on purely secular terms; for example, a historic church building where an important non-religious event took place.

PROPERTY TYPE: SCHOOL

School buildings often include auditoriums or gymnasiums that can be used for community gatherings and for events such as speeches. In Fort Collins, particularly during the women’s suffrage movement, speeches were given in support of voting rights for women at various schools. Schools also served as some of the first polling places for elections open to women or non-White/Anglo voters in Fort Collins.

The school building must still be recognizable as a school, whether it is still used for that function or not, and must retain its characteristic architecture, in order to have sufficient integrity to be considered for listing on the NRHP. The portion of the school that was used for speeches or polling stations (probably the gymnasium) must be extant; more research may be needed to determine the location of those events within the school building.

PROPERTY TYPE: RESTAURANT

In Fort Collins, the tearoom in the Colonnades Restaurant (415 Remington Street, no longer extant) was frequently the site of meetings for women during the suffrage movement. Restaurants were often located in the first-floor spaces of multi-story downtown buildings. Those spaces undoubtedly have been occupied by multiple tenants over the intervening years following the historic events described in this context narrative. In order to be eligible for the NRHP, the building should retain the historical configuration of spaces on the floor where the tearoom was located. Past alterations that removed significant interior details or finishes may affect the evaluation of integrity.

PROPERTY TYPE: HOTEL

The Commercial Hotel (now Northern Hotel Apartments, 172 N. College Ave.) served as a polling place when women cast their first votes in Fort Collins in 1894. The three-story building still functions as a Domestic resource, although the subcategory used by the NRHP today would be “multiple dwelling” instead of “hotel.” Because important architectural elements of this building have been retained, including the interior atrium, dome, staircase, and glass doors, alterations to other parts of the building may be minor enough to render the building as a whole eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A and possibly also Criterion C.

PROPERTY TYPE: SINGLE DWELLING

The homes of significant individuals associated with voting rights in Fort Collins may be eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A. The home of Albina Washburn in 1876 is still to be identified. Addresses during the women’s suffrage movement are known for the homes of Elizabeth Stone (327 Jefferson Street, no longer extant), Lucy Richards McIntyre (137 Mathews Street), and Sarah Jane Leffingwell Corbin (402 Remington Street, no longer extant), all local leaders of the women’s suffrage movement.

PROPERTY TYPE: MUSIC FACILITY

Carrie Chapman Catt traveled throughout Colorado in 1893, organizing local suffrage groups, and visited Fort Collins, speaking at the Opera House (123 North College Avenue). Opera houses were typically located on upper floors of multi-story downtown buildings. That space may have been occupied by tenants over the intervening years following the historic events described in this context narrative. In order to be eligible for the National Register under Criterion A, the building should retain the historical configuration of spaces on the floor where the opera house was located. Past alterations that removed significant interior details or finishes may affect the evaluation of integrity.

SITES PRIORITIZED FOR SURVEY

All historic resources identified during this project have been compiled in a single inventory spreadsheet, whether extant or not. The following historic properties have been confirmed to be extant and potentially significant at the local level under Criterion A.

120 S. College Avenue – Mossman Building



123 N. College Avenue – Opera House



172 N. College Avenue – Northern Hotel



234 N. Grant Avenue – 2nd Presbyterian Church; Grant Avenue Presbyterian Church; LULAC Hall



235 Linden Street – Grange Hall No. 7



137 Mathews Street – Lucy McIntyre residence



3039 W. Vine Drive – District 10 Schoolhouse



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