

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

The objective of a survey of historic resources is the documentation of the identified properties and their evaluation for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places. The purpose of a research design is to provide direction for fields of research and for the interpretation and evaluation of the resources identified.

New Castle, Colorado, is situated within the Colorado Plateau culture area, as defined by the Colorado Historical Society Resources Planning Protection Process (RP3). Colorado RP3 provides a framework to identify and record historic resources of the state and direction to analyze the significance and preservation of resources. Historic resources for this region have been documented in an RP3 report by Michael B. Husband, **Colorado Plateau Country Historic Context**.¹ That report identifies a series of sequential themes based on socioeconomic periods of development. A theme applicable to the study area is "Rail Towns, 1870-1920."

Research questions concern the extent, nature, age, and integrity of existing historic resources associated with the development of the town. Primary questions include the ability of existing resources to provide information about the history of the area; the lifestyle of the residents; and the ways in which the town reflects local, state, and national associations and patterns of development. The age of buildings, building functions, construction techniques, building materials, and the quality of craftsmanship reflected in buildings are significant questions. Whether there are enough intact resources along Main Street to constitute an historic district or whether individual resources display significance are important questions for this study.

Based on the results of preliminary research it was expected that the buildings recorded would include a mixture of commercial, residential, and public uses.

¹Michael B. Husband, **Colorado Plateau Country Historic Context** (Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1984).