

Amache National Historic Site

Colorado

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Amache National Historic Site – General Management Plan Newsletter

Help Shape the Future of Amache National Historic Site

Dear Friends,

The National Park Service is creating a General Management Plan for Amache National Historic Site (Amache) in Granada, Colorado. This long-term plan will guide how we protect historic resources, shape meaningful visitor experiences, support partnerships, and ensure that Amache remains a place of integrity and learning for generations to come. Amache's story is vital – it teaches about the resilience of the human spirit and the injustices of wartime incarceration. By developing this plan with care, we aim to preserve fragile cultural resources, honor descendant communities, and strengthen opportunities for visitors to understand this important chapter in American history.

Inside this newsletter, you'll find early ideas for the park's future, ways to get involved, and opportunities to share your voice.

Your engagement plays a central role in this effort. The perspectives of survivors, descendants, local residents, and all those connected to Amache help us understand what matters most, what should be protected, and how visitors should experience the site. We invite you to share your thoughts, respond to these early concepts, and join our upcoming public meetings. Together, we can shape a future for Amache that reflects its national significance and supports continued remembrance, learning, and community connection.

Thank you for contributing to the future of your national park.

Eric Leonard, High Plains Group Superintendent
Jennifer O'Neill, Site Manager

October 2026



Amache National Historic Site, located near Granada, Colorado, preserves the remains of the “Granada Relocation Center,” one of ten War Relocation Authority camps. More than 10,000 Japanese Americans, most of them US citizens, were incarcerated at Amache during World War II. The site’s archeological features, historic foundations, and reconstructed buildings help visitors understand both the conditions of confinement and the resilience of those who lived there.

A General Management Plan (GMP) is the National Park Service’s long-term blueprint that sets direction for preserving resources, shaping visitor experiences, planning access and facilities, and guiding partnerships to ensure the park’s protection and relevance for future generations.

The Amache GMP will provide management guidance and specific actions to help the park

- Protect fragile historic resources and conserve the historic and traditional landscape
- Offer visitors an accessible place for remembrance, learning, and reflection
- Make visits easier and safer through clear routes, engaging interpretive opportunities, wayfinding signs, and basic facilities
- Work closely with partners to support a community-connected atmosphere where survivors, descendants, local residents, and other stakeholders see themselves reflected in the care and ongoing story of Amache.

How we’ll manage the site (Desired Conditions and Management Zones)

As part of the General Management Plan, the National Park Service is defining “desired conditions” for Amache National Historic Site – clear goals for what the park should look and feel like in the future. Some of these conditions apply across the entire site, while others relate to specific areas, or “zones,” that offer different types of experiences and levels of development.

To achieve these goals and help guide future decisions, the park would be organized into four proposed management zones that have informed preliminary ideas for the site. Each zone has its own purpose and character, and it includes descriptions of visitor experiences and desired resource conditions for the area:

- **Interpretation and Orientation Zone:**
A welcoming starting point where visitors are introduced to Amache’s history. This zone includes the main arrival area and routes – both by car and on foot – where visitors can learn the story of Amache as they begin exploring the site.
- **Commemorative Zone:**
A quiet, respectful space for remembrance and ongoing commemoration. Centered around the Amache Cemetery, this zone supports reflection and honors the individuals and families whose lives were profoundly affected by incarceration.
- **Passive Preservation Zone:**
Places where sensitive cultural and natural resources are protected with little to no development. These areas are meant to safeguard fragile features and landscapes and will see only limited visitation to avoid unnecessary disturbance.
- **Administrative Operations Zone:**
Behind-the-scenes areas used for essential park functions, such as maintenance and staff facilities. These spaces are generally kept out of public view to preserve the historic character of the broader site.



The National Park Service is exploring a range of draft ideas for how Amache could evolve, and how implementing them would move Amache toward the goals outlined above, in the list of management zones and desired conditions. The ideas shown here are early, draft concepts the National Park Service is exploring to strengthen resource protection, improve visitor orientation, expand opportunities for safe and meaningful exploration, and support long-term park operations. These concepts illustrate a range of possibilities for how Amache could evolve over time, and they are meant to spark conversation – not represent final decisions. Individual ideas could stand alone, be combined in new ways, or be replaced entirely based on your feedback.

Any future actions would depend on available funding, on-the-ground conditions, partner support, and further planning. Once plans are completed, it will take time to implement the actions, and GMP completion does not mean the park will immediately offer new facilities or infrastructure.

Concept 1: Primary Visitor Contact at Amache National Historic Site

In this early concept, visitors would begin their experience at the Amache site itself rather than downtown Granada.

Today, first contact happens at the Amache Museum – a partner-run space where both NPS Rangers and Amache Preservation Society volunteers welcome visitors and offer tours. Under draft concept 1, the National Park Service could build a small, historically compatible visitor contact station at the historic site, with parking, restrooms, and orientation exhibits. Rangers would be present during operating hours, making it easier for visitors to start learning the history of Amache as soon as they arrive. The park would continue partnering closely with the Town of Granada and the Amache Preservation Society to support the museum and interpret Amache’s deep connections to the community.

Draft ideas under concept 1 include:

- Building a modest, historically compatible visitor contact facility, possibly combined with an updated maintenance shop, in an area without sensitive archeological resources.
- Moving primary visitor contact, interpretation, and administrative offices to the historic site and into the new facility.
- Continuing strong partnerships with the Town of Granada and the Amache Preservation Society.

Concept 2: Initial Visitor Contact in Downtown Granada

In draft concept 2, visitors would begin their Amache experience in downtown Granada rather than at the historic site. Visitors would stop first at a partner owned facility in town – an NPS-branded space that could offer orientation, exhibits, and ranger interaction – before heading out to Amache National Historical Site. This approach would highlight Granada’s historic connection to the site and make it easier for visitors to explore related places in town, while still supporting self-guided experiences at the park.

Draft ideas under concept 2 include:

- Establishing a leased NPS visitor contact station in Granada.
- Adding clear wayfinding within the site – street signs, block markers, and interpretive waysides – to support self-guided visits.
- Supporting creation of a multi-use trail between Granada and Amache for walking or biking.
- Using the Entrance Area at Amache as the main hub for parking, restrooms, and orientation for visitors arriving from town.
- Designating driving and walking tour routes in the site, as well as encouraging visitors to use the one mirroring the historic walk between the camp and downtown Granada.
- Continuing strong partnerships with the Town of Granada and the Amache Preservation Society.

Management and Zoning, Concept 1

ZONING LEGEND

- Interpretation & Orientation
- Commemorative
- Passive Preservation
- Administrative Operations

- NPS Boundary
- Road-Historic Maintained
- Road-Historic (not present)
- Road-Driving Tour
- Road-Admin Only
- Parking-Public
- Parking-Admin only
- Interpretive Walking Trail
- Historic Building Footprint
- Historic Guard Tower (not present)
- Interpreted Block
- Driving Tour Stops



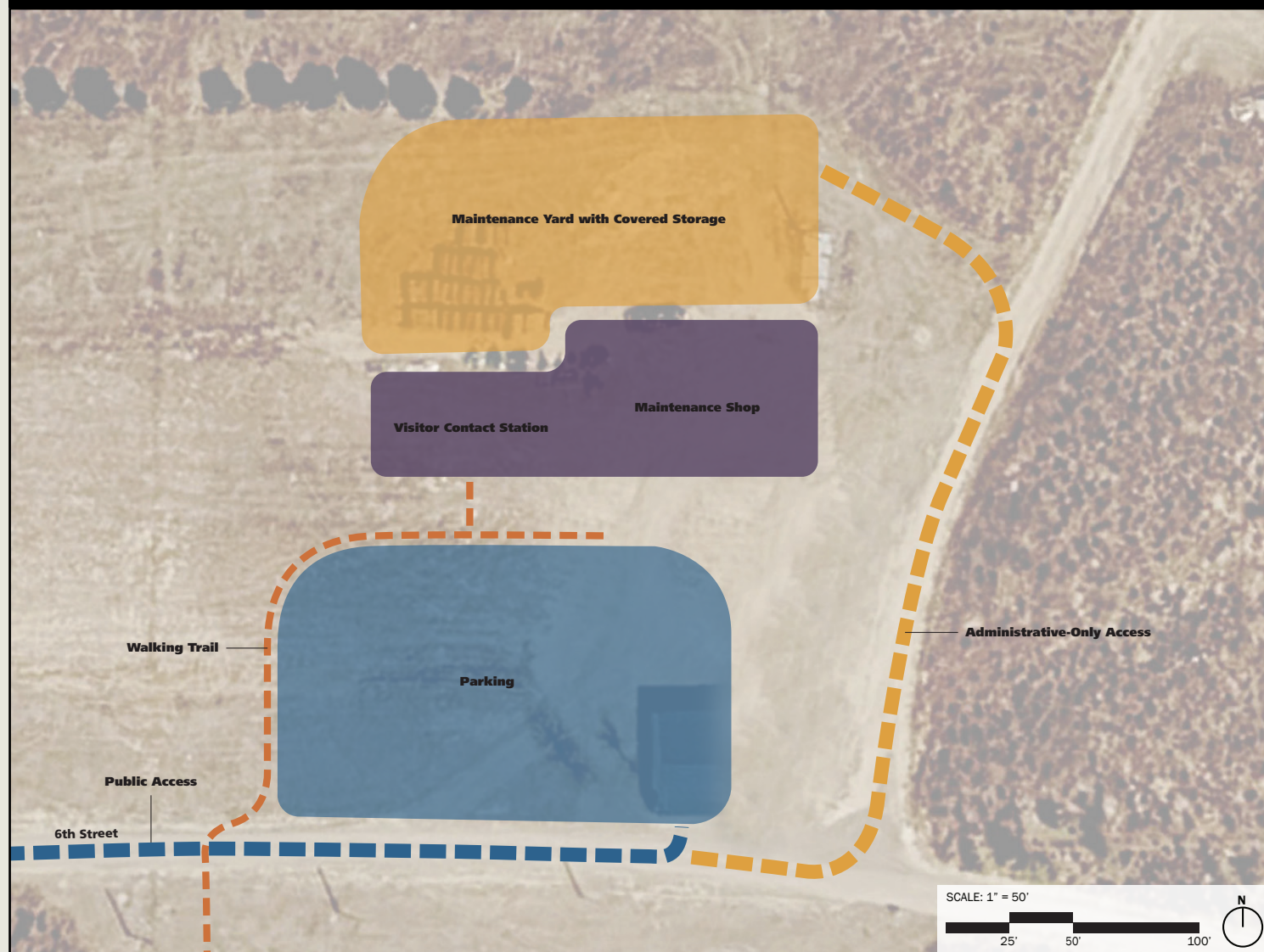
Management and Zoning, Concept 2

ZONING LEGEND

- Interpretation & Orientation
- Commemorative
- Passive Preservation
- Administrative Operations



Visitor Contact Station, Concept 1



What do you think about the future of NPS visitor contact and site interpretation?

- » What stories or features do you think are most important for visitors to experience?
- » Should initial visitor contact stay in Granada, or move to the Amache site? If it remains in Granada, where?
- » If primary visitor contact and NPS administrative offices were moved to the historic site, where do you think they should go?
- » What interpretive themes or connections between Granada and Amache should be emphasized?
- » How should NPS continue partnering with Granada, the Amache Preservation Society, and others?



Other Areas within Amache National Historic Site

Beyond where visitors first arrive, the National Park Service is exploring a range of early, draft ideas to improve how people move through Amache, learn from the site, and access key features safely. These possibilities focus on providing clearer routes, expanding interpretation, and enhancing visitor services – while still protecting sensitive cultural resources and honoring the experiences of survivors and descendants. A central priority in both concepts is ensuring that survivors and descendants can continue to connect with every part of Amache’s landscape, and that future visitation supports deeper understanding of the site’s history, the realities of incarceration, and the lasting legacy of this period.

This section discusses ideas for areas within the site. Regardless of which concept the ideas are currently associated with, individual ideas could complement either of the two development concepts described above. As you review these locations and early ideas, consider how each might fit within or strengthen the concepts.

Entrance Area

The Entrance Area is where visitors first arrive at Amache, turning in near the NPS sign and finding a small, informal parking area with orientation panels and a short loop trail. The reconstructed Honor Roll – recognizing those from Amache who served in WWII – is a defining feature of this space. Looking ahead, the National Park Service is exploring two draft approaches for how this area might evolve as the park develops.

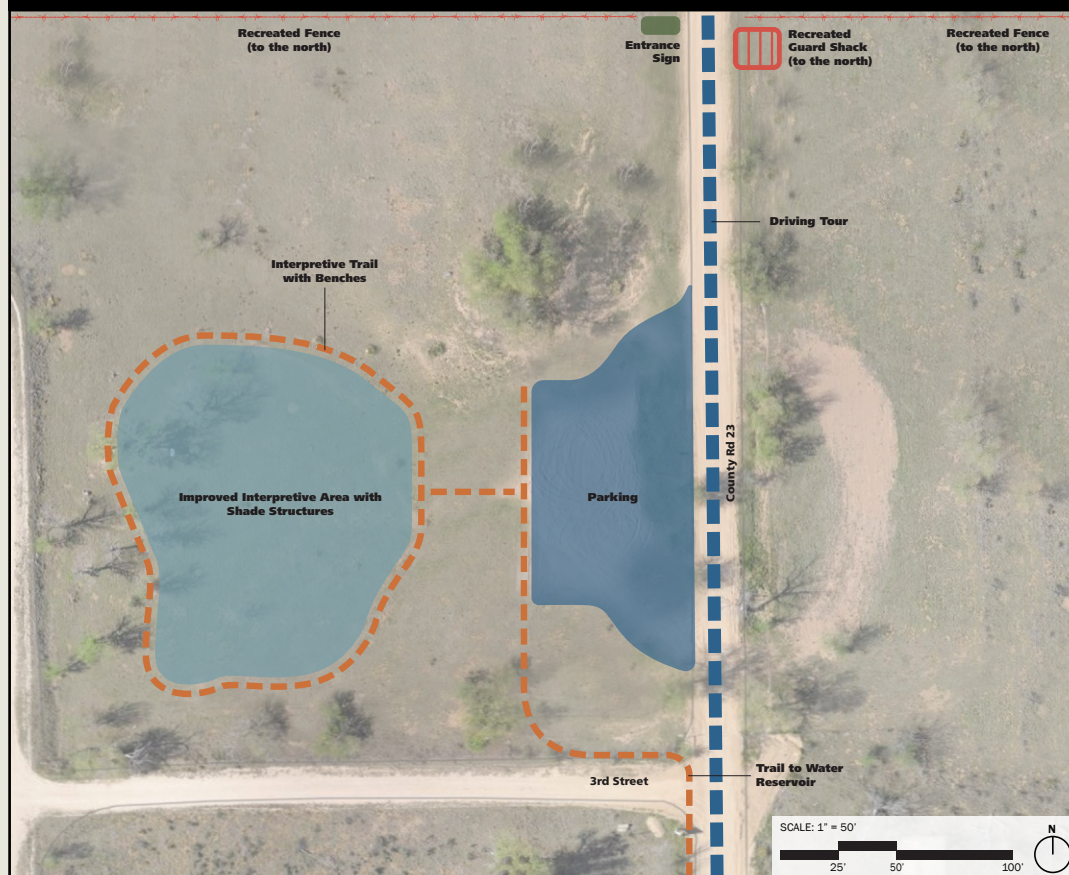
Under concept 1, the Entrance Area would still welcome visitors but play a smaller role, since most guests would continue past it to begin their visit at a new on-site contact station elsewhere in the park. Under concept 2, the Entrance Area would continue to serve as the main arrival point and would be thoughtfully improved to better meet visitor needs.

Early ideas for the Entrance Area include:

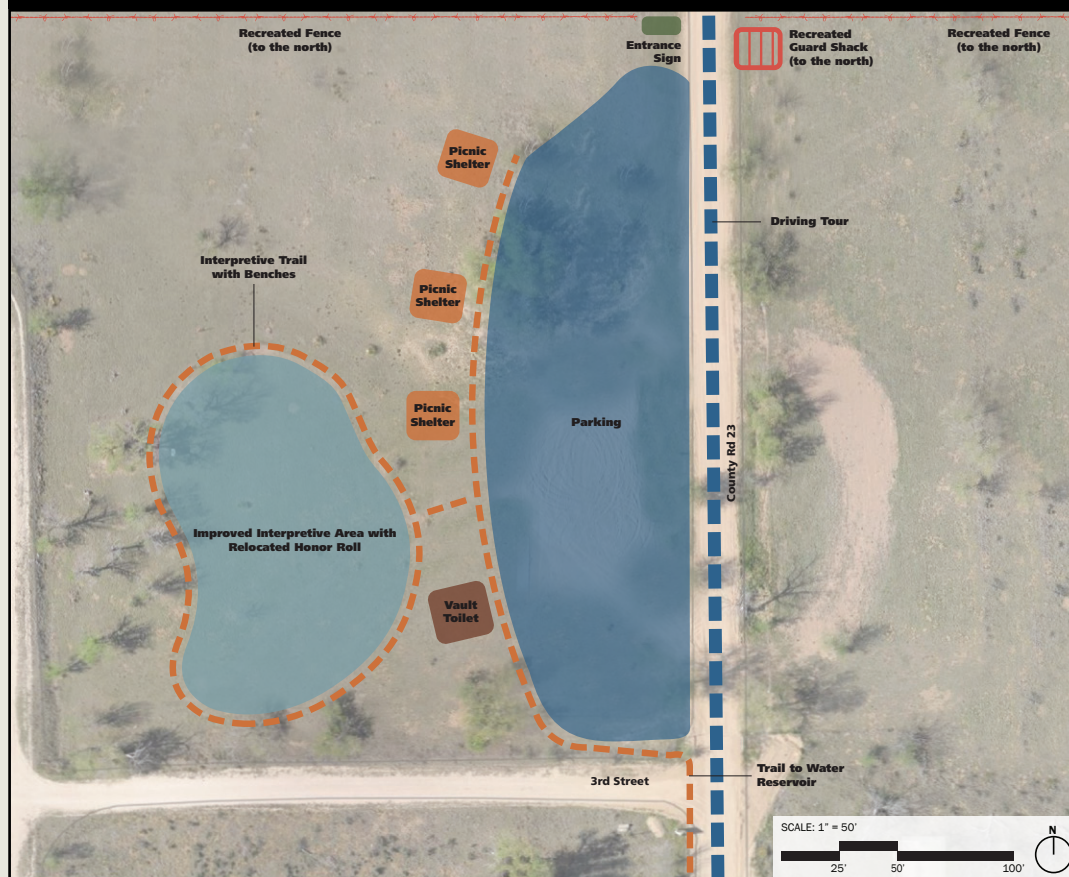
- Expanding and formalizing parking for cars and buses.
- Adding shade, benches, and clearer orientation and interpretive signs.
- Improving trailhead access so visitors can safely reach other parts of the site.
- Considering a guard shack and historic fence exhibit to reflect the wartime arrival experience.
- Exploring whether the Honor Roll should remain at the entrance or return to its historic location at Block 9F.
- Establishing visitor comfort stations.



Entrance Area, Concept 1



Entrance Area, Concept 2



What do you think about the future of the Entrance Area?

- » Should the Entrance Area continue as the primary orientation and interpretive hub, or should that role move elsewhere within the site?
- » Should the Honor Roll stay at the entrance or be relocated?
- » If a comfort station is added, is the entrance the best place for it – or should it be placed in another area of the historic site?

Block 12H

Block 12H sits along the southern edge of Amache and contains some of the site's most visible historic foundations. The original concrete footprints of barracks, the mess hall, and the bath house and laundry remain easy to see today, offering visitors a powerful sense of what daily life looked like inside a residential block. A reconstructed barracks – placed on one of the historic foundations in 2016 – stands here as well, but years of weight and weather have begun to accelerate wear on the original concrete foundation.

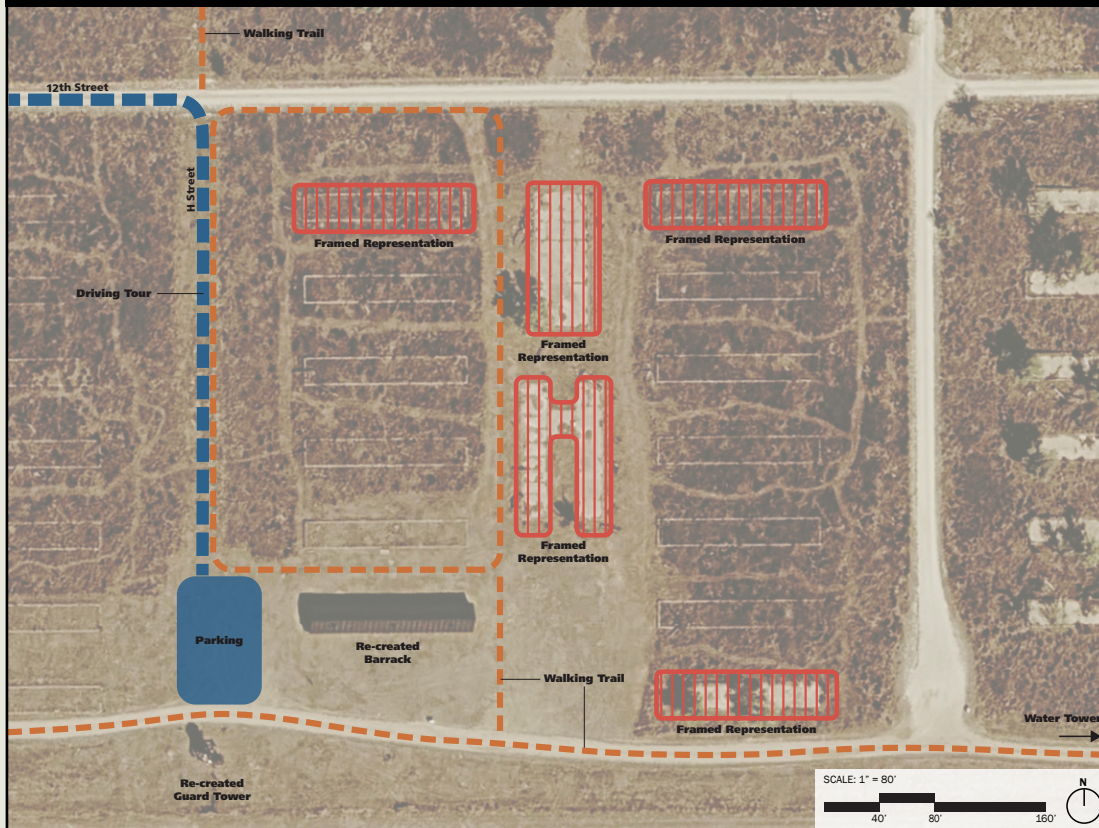
The National Park Service is exploring draft ideas to help visitors better understand the layout and functions of a typical block while also protecting fragile archeological features. Across both draft development concepts, Block 12H could become a primary place for visitors to learn about the built environment of Amache and the experiences of the people who lived there.

Ideas for consideration include:

- Creating visitor parking and trail access for easy exploration of the water tower, guard tower, and other nearby features.
- Installing “framed representations” of several buildings – lightweight framing set above historic foundations – to show the spatial layout and building massing without stressing original archeological remains.
- Replacing the existing reconstructed barracks with a framed representation in the future to reduce long-term maintenance needs and protect the historic foundation.
- Developing a loop trail through the block that highlights foundations, building functions, and selected archeological features.



Block 12H, Concept 1



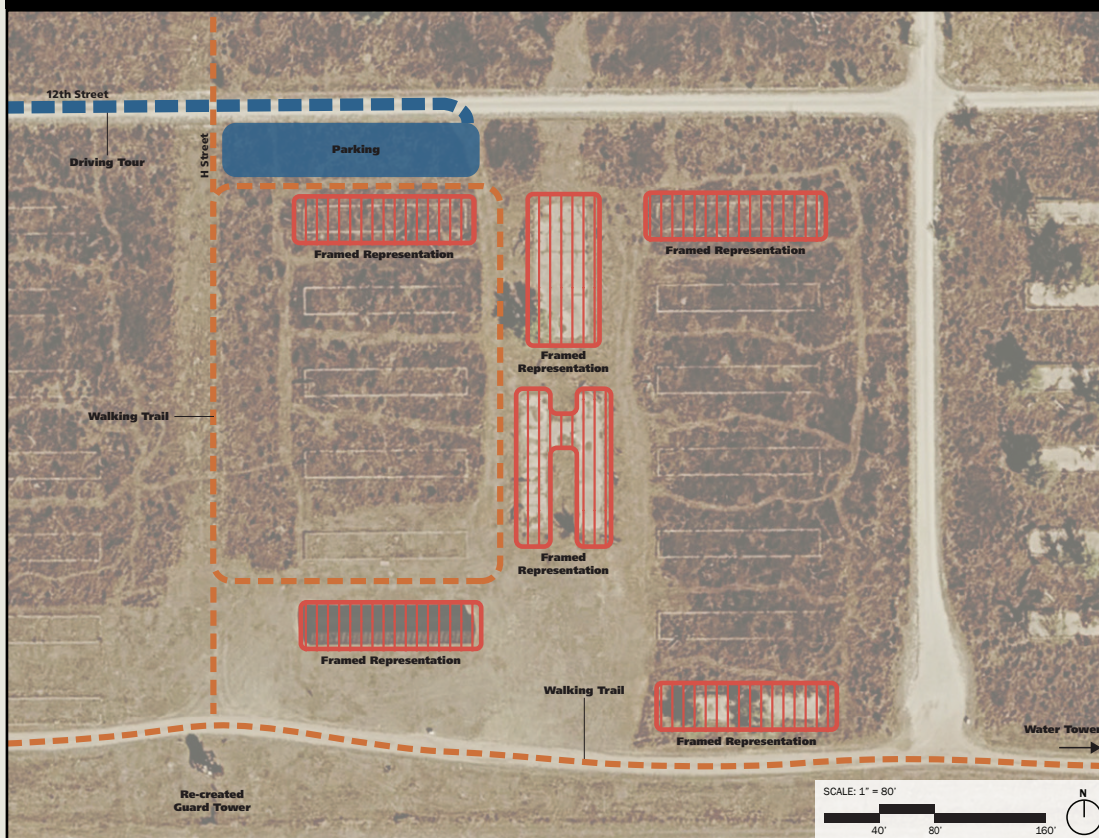
What do you think about the future interpretation and design of Block 12H?

» Is Block 12H the right place to introduce visitors to the layout and daily life of Amache's residential blocks? Do you have other ideas?

» Should framed building representations be added to show where key structures – such as mess halls, laundry/bath facilities, recreation halls, or barracks – once stood?

» How would you prefer the barracks to be maintained? For example, should they be maintained as reconstructed barracks, or as a lighter framed representation?

Block 12H, Concept 2





Recreation Hall

The Recreation Hall in Block 11F is a surviving historic building that was restored to its original location. After the camp closed, it was moved to the Town of Granada

and used for storage for decades before returning to its original historic foundation in 2018. Today, the building's restoration helps visitors connect with daily life at Amache – where Recreation Halls served as gathering places for meetings, religious services, clubs, dances, and community events (11F was the preschool). As with the reconstructed barracks, however, placing the building back on its original concrete foundation has caused accelerated wear on the historic material, prompting the National Park Service to explore draft ideas for long-term protection and visitor access.

Across both development concepts, the Recreation Hall could become a centerpiece of interpretation, offering visitors a chance to step inside a historic structure that once supported community life at Amache.

Ideas for consideration:

- Modifying the historic concrete foundation to better support the restored building.
- Allowing visitors inside the Recreation Hall, potentially with replica furniture or interpretive exhibits that highlight daily life and community gatherings.
- Enhancing accessible routes, parking, ramps, and other site features surrounding the building to improve safety and reachability.



Cemetery

Set in the southwest corner of Amache, the cemetery is one of the most meaningful and historically significant places on the site. It has long served as the heart of

remembrance – home to early and modern pilgrimages, community gatherings, tree plantings, and ongoing care by descendants and volunteers. Today, the maintained lawn, benches, and restored columbarium make the cemetery a living space of commemoration where visitors can quietly reflect on the experiences of those incarcerated at Amache.

As part of this planning effort, the National Park Service is exploring early, draft ideas to support the cemetery's long-term health, ensure safety and accessibility, and uphold its role as a sacred space for descendants, survivors, and visitors.

Ideas being considered include:

- Maintaining the cemetery as an active, living place of remembrance, guided by descendant and community expectations.
- Improving irrigation, accessible parking, and pathways to support ongoing care and safe visitor access.
- Exploring opportunities for the landscape to evolve thoughtfully, while preserving the character and solemnity of the space.

What do you think about the future of the Recreation Hall?

- » How should the National Park Service use this historic building?
- » Should the Recreation Hall remain on its original foundation – even if that may require modifications to the original archeological remains of its foundation – or should other long-term options be considered?
- » What types of exhibits, furnishings, or stories would help visitors understand the role that Recreation Halls played in daily life at Amache?

What do you think about the future maintenance of the Cemetery?

- » How should the cemetery landscape be cared for in the future?
- » Are additional commemorative features needed – either within the cemetery or elsewhere on the site – to support reflection and remembrance?
- » What improvements would help visitors feel safe, welcome, and supported when visiting the cemetery?

Help Shape Amache's Future!

We'd love to hear your reactions to the concepts and ideas presented in this newsletter – what resonates with you, what concerns you, and what you feel is missing. Specific questions we have are:

1. What do you think about the designs and ideas presented in this newsletter? Do you have feedback on any of the questions posed?
2. What are the most important ongoing experiences at Amache that you want to see continued? What new experiences do you hope to see in the future?

3. Are there stories, places, or perspectives we haven't mentioned that you believe should be part of the park's long-term vision?
4. Do you have thoughts about education, access, preservation, partnerships, or anything else that will help shape Amache as it develops?

Your insight is essential. Whether you have a fully formed idea or just a small suggestion, the National Park Service wants to hear from you as we plan for the future of Amache National Historic Site. Your engagement will help ensure Amache remains a place of remembrance, learning, and community for generations to come.

How to Participate

The 45-day public comment period runs October 19 – December 3, 2026. We hope to see you at one of our public meetings or hear from you online or by mail.



Online (Preferred)

Share your ideas online at
https://parkplanning.nps.gov/AMCH_GMP

By Mail

Attn: AMCH GMP/Charles Lawson
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

Attend a Public Meeting

We'll host one virtual and four in-person public meetings to present an overview of the project and provide an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and submit comments. A recording of the virtual meeting will be available during the comment period. More information, including a link to register for the virtual meeting, is available at the project website: https://parkplanning.nps.gov/AMCH_GMP.

Virtual Public Meeting

Friday, November 6, 2026

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. (MST)

[Please Register for a Link to Join the Meeting](#)

In-Person Public Meetings

Monday, November 9, 2026

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (MST)

Granada Community Center

105 South Main Street

Granada, CO 81041

Thursday, November 12, 2026

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (MST)

Tri-State/Denver Buddhist Temple

1947 Lawrence Street

Denver, CO 80202

Tuesday, November 17, 2026

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (PST)

Enmanji Buddhist Temple

Memorial Hall

1200 Hwy 116 S

Sebastopol, CA 95472

(Enter from Elphick Rd)

Thursday, November 19, 2026

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (PST)

Gardena Valley Japanese American Cultural Institute

1964 W. 162nd Street

Gardena, CA 90247