



Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation Planning

http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_1.htm

Preservation planning is a process that organizes preservation activities (identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties) in a logical sequence. The Standards for Planning discuss the relationship among these activities while the remaining activity standards consider how each activity should be carried out. The Professional Qualifications Standards discuss the education and experience required to carry out various activities.

The Standards for Planning outline a process that determines when an area should be examined for historic properties, whether an identified property is significant, and how a significant property should be treated.

Preservation planning is based on the following principles:

- Important historic properties cannot be replaced if they are destroyed. Preservation planning provides for conservative use of these properties, preserving them in place and avoiding harm when possible and altering or destroying properties only when necessary.
- If planning for the preservation of historic properties is to have positive effects, it must begin before the identification of all significant properties has been completed. To make responsible decisions about historic properties, existing information must be used to the maximum extent and new information must be acquired as needed.
- Preservation planning includes public participation. The planning process should provide a forum for open discussion of preservation issues. Public involvement is most meaningful when it is used to assist in defining values of properties and preservation planning issues, rather than when it is limited to review of decisions already made. Early and continuing public participation is essential to the broad acceptance of preservation planning decisions.

Preservation planning can occur at several levels or scales: in a project area; in a community; in a State as a whole; or in the scattered or contiguous landholdings of a Federal agency. Depending on the scale, the planning process will involve different segments of the public and professional communities and the resulting plans will vary in detail. For example, a State preservation plan will likely have more general recommendations than a plan for a project area or a community. The planning process described in these Standards is flexible enough to be used at all levels while providing a common structure which promotes coordination and minimizes duplication of effort. The Guidelines for Preservation Planning contain additional information about how to integrate various levels of planning.

Standard I. Preservation Planning Establishes Historic Contexts

Decisions about the identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties are most reliably made when the relationship of individual properties to other similar properties is understood. Information about historic properties representing aspects of history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture must be collected and organized to define these relationships. This organizational framework is called a "historic context." The historic context organizes information based on a cultural theme and its geographical and chronological limits. Contexts describe the significant broad patterns of development in an area that may be represented by historic properties. The development of

historic contexts is the foundation for decisions about identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties.

Standard II. Preservation Planning Uses Historic Contexts To Develop Goals and Priorities for the Identification, Evaluation, Registration and Treatment of Historic Properties

A series of preservation goals is systematically developed for each historic context to ensure that the range of properties representing the important aspects of each historic context is identified, evaluated and treated. Then priorities are set for all goals identified for each historic context. The goals with assigned priorities established for each historic context are integrated to produce a comprehensive and consistent set of goals and priorities for all historic contexts in the geographical area of a planning effort.

The goals for each historic context may change as new information becomes available. The overall set of goals and priorities are then altered in response to the changes in the goals and priorities for the individual historic contexts.

Activities undertaken to meet the goals must be designed to deliver a usable product within a reasonable period of time. The scope of the activity must be defined so the work can be completed with available budgeted program resources.

Standard III. The Results of Preservation Planning Are Made Available for Integration Into Broader Planning Processes

Preservation of historic properties is one element of larger planning processes. Planning results, including goals and priorities, information about historic properties, and any planning documents, must be transmitted in a usable form to those responsible for other planning activities. Federally mandated historic preservation planning is most successfully integrated into project management planning at an early stage. Elsewhere, this integration is achieved by making the results of preservation planning available to other governmental planning bodies and to private interests whose activities affect historic properties.

Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Preservation Planning

Introduction

These Guidelines link the Standards for Preservation Planning with more specific guidance and technical information. They describe one approach to meeting the Standards for Preservation Planning. Agencies, organizations or individuals proposing to approach planning differently may wish to review their approaches with the National Park Service.

The Guidelines are organized as follows:

[Managing the Planning Process](#)

[Developing Historic Contexts](#)

[Developing Goals for a Historic Context](#)

[Integrating Individual Historic Contexts-Creating the Preservation Plan](#)

Coordinating with Management Frameworks
Recommended Sources of Technical Information

Managing the Planning Process

The preservation planning process must include an explicit approach to implementation, a provision for review and revision of all elements, and a mechanism for resolving conflicts within the overall set of preservation goals and between this set of goals and other land use planning goals. It is recommended that the process and its products be described in public documents.

Implementing the Process

The planning process is a continuous cycle. To establish and maintain such a process, however, the process must be divided into manageable segments that can be performed, within a defined period, such as a fiscal year or budget cycle. One means of achieving this is to define a period of time during which all the preliminary steps in the planning process will be completed. These preliminary steps would include setting a schedule for subsequent activities.

Review and Revision

Planning is a dynamic process. It is expected that the content of the historic contexts described in Standard I and the goals and priorities described in Standard II will be altered based on new information obtained as planning proceeds. The incorporation of this information is essential to improve the content of the plan and to keep it up-to-date and useful. New information must be reviewed regularly and systematically, and the plan revised accordingly.

Public Participation

The success of the preservation planning process depends on how well it solicits and integrates the views of various groups. The planning process is directed first toward resolving conflicts in goals for historic preservation, and second toward resolving conflicts between historic preservation goals and other land use planning goals. Public participation is integral to this approach and includes at least the following actions:

1. Involving historians, architectural historians, archeologists, folklorists and persons from related disciplines to define, review and revise the historic contexts, goals and priorities;
2. Involving interested individuals, organizations and communities in the planning area in identifying the kinds of historic properties that may exist and suitable protective measures;
3. Involving prospective users of the preservation plan in defining issues, goals and priorities;
4. Providing for coordination with other planning efforts at local, State, regional and national levels, as appropriate; and
5. Creating mechanisms for identifying and resolving conflicts about historic preservation issues. The development of historic contexts, for example, should be based on the professional input of all disciplines involved in preservation and not be limited to a single discipline. For prehistoric archeology, for example, data from fields such as geology, geomorphology and geography may also be needed. The individuals and organizations to be involved will depend, in part, on those present or interested in the planning area.

Documents Resulting from the Planning Process

In most cases, the planning process produces documents that explain how the process works and that

discuss the historic contexts and related goals and priorities. While the process can operate in the absence of these documents, planning documents are important because they are the most effective means of communicating the process and its recommendations to others. Planning documents also record decisions about historic properties.

As various parts of the planning process are reviewed and revised to reflect current information, related documents must also be updated. Planning documents should be created in a form that can be easily revised. It is also recommended that the format language and organization of any documents or other materials (visual aids, etc.) containing preservation planning information meet the needs of prospective users.

Developing Historic Contexts

General Approach

Available information about historic properties must be divided into manageable units before it can be useful for planning purposes. Major decisions about identifying, evaluating, registering and treating historic properties are most reliably made in the context of other related properties. A historic context is an organizational format that groups information about related historic properties, based on a theme, geographic limits and chronological period. A single historic context describes one or more aspects of the historic development of an area, considering history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture and identifies the significant patterns that individual historic properties represent, for example, Coal Mining in Northeastern Pennsylvania between 1860 and 1930. A set of historic contexts is a comprehensive summary of all aspects of the history of the area.

The historic context is the cornerstone of the planning process. The goal of preservation planning is to identify, evaluate, register and treat the full range of properties representing each historic context, rather than only one or two types of properties. Identification activities are organized to ensure that research and survey activities include properties representing all aspects of the historic context. Evaluation uses the historic context as the framework within which to apply the criteria for evaluation to specific properties or property types. Decisions about treatment of properties are made with the goal of treating the range of properties in the context. The use of historic contexts in organizing major preservation activities ensures that those activities result in the preservation of the wide variety of properties that represent our history, rather than only a small, biased sample of properties.

Historic contexts, as theoretical constructs, are linked to actual historic properties through the concept of property type. Property types permit the development of plans for identification, evaluation and treatment even in the absence of complete knowledge of individual properties. Like the historic context, property types are artificial constructs which may be revised as necessary. Historic contexts can be developed at a variety of scales appropriate for local, State and regional planning. Given the probability of historic contexts overlapping in an area, it is important to coordinate the development and use of contexts at all levels. Generally, the State Historic Preservation Office possesses the most complete body of information about historic properties and, in practice, is in the best position to perform this function.

The development of historic contexts generally results in documents that describe the prehistoric processes or patterns that define the context. Each of the contexts selected should be developed to the point of identifying important property types to be useful in later preservation decision-making. The amount of detail included in these summaries will vary depending on the level (local, State, regional, or

national) at which the contexts are developed and on their intended uses. For most planning purposes, a synopsis of the written description of the historic context is sufficient.

Creating a Historic Context

Generally, historic contexts should not be constructed so broadly as to include all property types under a single historic context or so narrowly as to contain only one property type per historic context. The following procedures should be followed in creating a historic context.

1. Identify the concept, time period and geographical limits for the historic context

Existing information, concepts, theories, models and descriptions should be used as the basis for defining historic contexts. Biases in primary and secondary sources should be identified and accounted for when existing information is used in defining historic contexts.

The identification and description of historic contexts should incorporate contributions from all disciplines involved in historic preservation. The chronological period and geographical area of each historic context should be defined after the conceptual basis is established. However, there may be exceptions, especially in defining prehistoric contexts where drainage systems or physiographic regions often are outlined first. The geographical boundaries for historic contexts should not be based upon contemporary political, project or other contemporary boundaries if those boundaries do not coincide with historical boundaries. For example, boundaries for prehistoric contexts will have little relationship to contemporary city, county or State boundaries.

2. Assemble the existing information about the historic context

- a. **Collecting information:** Several kinds of information are needed to construct a preservation plan. Information about the history of the area encompassed by the historic context must be collected, including any information about historic properties that have already been identified. Existing survey or inventory entries are an important source of information about historic properties. Other sources may include literature on prehistory, history, architecture and the environment; social and environmental impact assessments; county and State land use plans; architectural and folklife studies and oral histories; ethnographic research; State historic inventories and registers; technical reports prepared for Section 106 or other assessments of historic properties; and direct consultation with individuals and organized groups.

In addition, organizations and groups that may have important roles in defining historic contexts and values should be identified. In most cases a range of knowledgeable professionals drawn from the preservation, planning and academic communities will be available to assist in defining contexts and in identifying sources of information. In other cases, however, development of historic contexts may occur in areas whose history or prehistory has not been extensively studied. In these situations, broad general historic contexts should be initially identified using available literature and expertise, with the expectation that the contexts will be revised and subdivided in the future as primary source research and field survey are conducted. It is also important to identify such sources of information as existing planning data, which is needed to establish goals for identification, evaluation and treatment, and to identify factors that will affect attainment of those goals.

The same approach for obtaining information is not necessarily desirable for all historic contexts. Information should not be gathered without first considering its relative importance to the historic context, the cost and time involved, and the expertise required to obtain it. In many cases, for example, published sources may be used in writing initial definitions of historic contexts; archival research or field work may be needed for subsequent activities.

- b. Assessing information: All information should be reviewed to identify bias in historic perspective, methodological approach, or area of coverage. For example, field surveys for archeological sites may have ignored historic archeological sites, or county land use plans may have emphasized only development goals.

3. Synthesize information

The information collection and analysis results in a written narrative of the historic context. This narrative provides a detailed synthesis of the data that have been collected and analyzed. The narrative covers the history of the area from the chosen perspective and identifies important patterns, events, persons or cultural values. In the process of identifying the important patterns, one should consider:

- Trends in area settlement and development, if relevant;
- Aesthetic and artistic values embodied in architecture, construction technology or craftsmanship;
- Research values or problems relevant to the historic context; social and physical sciences and humanities; and cultural interests of local communities; and
- Intangible cultural values of ethnic groups and native American peoples.

4. Define property types

A property type is a grouping of individual properties based on shared physical or associative characteristics. Property types link the ideas incorporated in the theoretical historic context with actual historic properties that illustrate those ideas. Property types defined for each historic context should be directly related to the conceptual basis of the historic context. Property types defined for the historic context "Coal Mining in Northeastern Pennsylvania, 1860-1930" might include coal extraction and processing complexes; railroad and canal transportation systems; commercial districts; mine workers' housing; churches, social clubs and other community facilities reflecting the ethnic origins of workers; and residences and other properties associated with mine owners and other industrialists.

- a. Identify property types: The narrative should discuss the kinds of properties expected within the geographical limits of the context and group them into those property types most useful in representing important historic trends.

Generally, property types should be defined after the historic context has been defined. Property types in common usage ("Queen Anne House," "mill buildings" or "stratified sites") should not be adopted without first verifying their relevance to the historic contexts being used.

- b. Characterize the locational patterns of property types: Generalizations about where particular types of properties are likely to be found can serve as a guide for identification and treatment. Generalizations about the distribution of archeological properties are frequently used. The

distribution of other historic properties often can be estimated based on recognizable historical, environmental or cultural factors that determined their location. Locational patterns of property types should be based upon models that have an explicit theoretical or historical basis and can be tested in the field. The model may be the product of historical research and analysis ("Prior to widespread use of steam power, mills were located on rivers and streams able to produce water power" or "plantation houses in the Mississippi Black Belt were located on sandy clay knolls"), or it may result from sampling techniques. Often the results of statistically valid sample surveys can be used to describe the locational patterns of a representative portion of properties belonging to a particular property type. Other surveys can also provide a basis for suggesting locational patterns if a diversity of historic properties was recorded and a variety of environmental zones was inspected. It is likely that the identification of locational patterns will come from a combination of these sources. Expected or predicted locational patterns of property types should be developed with a provision made for their verification.

- c. Characterize the current condition of property types: The expected condition of property types should be evaluated to assist in the development of identification, evaluation and treatment strategies, and to help define physical integrity thresholds for various property types. The following should be assessed for each property type:
 1. Inherent characteristics of a property type that either contribute to or detract from its physical preservation. For example, a property type commonly constructed of fragile materials is more likely to be deteriorated than a property type constructed of durable materials; structures whose historic function or design limits the potential for alternative uses (water towers) are less likely to be reused than structures whose design allows a wider variety of other uses (commercial buildings or warehouses).
 2. Aspects of the social and natural environment that may affect the preservation or visibility of the property type. For example, community values placed on certain types of properties (churches, historic cemeteries) may result in their maintenance while the need to reuse valuable materials may stimulate the disappearance of properties like abandoned houses and barns.
 3. It may be most efficient to estimate the condition of property types based on professional knowledge of existing properties and field test these estimates using a small sample of properties representative of each type.

5. Identify information needs

Filling gaps in information is an important element of the preservation plan designed for each historic context. Statements of the information needed should be as specific as possible, focusing on the information needed, the historic context and property types it applies to, and why the information is needed to perform identification, evaluation, or treatment activities.

Developing Goals for a Historic Context

Developing Goals

A goal is a statement of preferred preservation activities, which is generally stated in terms of property types.

The purpose of establishing preservation goals is to set forth a "best case" version of how properties in the historic context should be identified, evaluated, registered and treated.

Preservation goals should be oriented toward the greatest possible protection of properties in the historic context and should be based on the principle that properties should be preserved in place if possible, through affirmative treatments like rehabilitation, stabilization or restoration. Generally, goals will be specific to the historic context and will often be phrased in terms of property types. Some of these goals will be related to information needs previously identified for the historic context. Collectively, the goals for a historic context should be a coherent statement of program direction covering all aspects of the context.

For each goal, a statement should be prepared identifying:

1. The goal, including the context and property types to which the goal applies and the geographical area in which they are located;
2. The activities required to achieve the goal;
3. The most appropriate methods or strategies for carrying out the activities;
4. A schedule within which the activities should be completed; and
5. The amount of effort required to accomplish the goal, as well as a way to evaluate progress toward its accomplishment.

Setting priorities for goals

Once goals have been developed they need to be ranked in importance. Ranking involves examining each goal in light of a number of factors.

1. General social, economic, political and environmental conditions and trends affecting (positively and negatively) the identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of property types in the historic context.

Some property types in the historic context may be more directly threatened by deterioration, land development patterns, contemporary use patterns, or public perceptions of their value, and such property types should be given priority consideration.

2. Major cost or technical considerations affecting the identification, evaluation and treatment of property types in the historic context.

The identification or treatment of some property types may be technically possible but the cost prohibitive; or techniques may not currently be perfected (for example, the identification of submerged sites or objects, or the evaluation of sites containing material for which dating techniques are still being developed).

3. Identification, evaluation, registration and treatment activities previously carried out for property types in the historic context.

If a number of properties representing one aspect of a historic context have been recorded or preserved, treatment of additional members of that property type may receive lower priority than treatment of a property type for which no examples have yet been recorded or preserved. This approach ensures that the focus of recording or preserving all elements of the historic context is retained, rather than limiting activities to preserving properties representing only some aspects of the context.

The result of considering the goals in light of these concerns will be a list of refined goals ranked in order of priority.

Integrating Individual Contexts-Creating the Preservation Plan

When historic contexts overlap geographically, competing goals and priorities must be integrated for effective preservation planning. The ranking of goals for each historic context must be reconciled to ensure that recommendations for one context do not contradict those for another. This important step results in an overall set of priorities for several historic contexts and a list of the activities to be performed to achieve the ranked goals. When applied to a specific geographical area, this is the preservation plan for that area.

It is expected that in many instances historic contexts will overlap geographically. Overlapping contexts are likely to occur in two combinations-those that were defined at the same scale (i.e., textile development in Smithtown 1850-1910 and Civil War in Smithtown 1855-1870) and those defined at different scales (i.e., Civil War in Smithtown and Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley). The contexts may share the same property types, although the shared property types will probably have different levels of importance, or they may group the same properties into different property types, reflecting either a different scale of analysis or a different historical perspective. As previously noted, many of the goals that are formulated for a historic context will focus on the property types defined for that context. Thus it is critical that the integration of goals include the explicit consideration of the potential for shared property type membership by individual properties. For example, when the same property types are used by two contexts, reconciling the goals will require weighing the level of importance assigned to each property type. The degree to which integration of historic contexts must involve reconciling property types may be limited by the coordinated development of historic contexts used at various levels.

Integration with Management Frameworks

Preservation goals and priorities are adapted to land units through integration with other planning concerns. This integration must involve the resolution of conflicts that arise when competing resources occupy the same land base. Successful resolution of these conflicts can often be achieved through judicious combination of inventory, evaluation and treatment activities. Since historic properties are irreplaceable, these activities should be heavily weighted to discourage the destruction of significant properties and to be compatible with the primary land use.

National Register Historic District / Local Historic District: There is a Difference

“A National Register District Identifies; A Local District Protects”

State Historic Preservation Office, Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources. 1999

National Register District

A **National Register** historic district is a historic district that is listed in the **National Register of Historic Places**. The National Register is our country’s official list of historic places worthy of preservation. It includes individual buildings, structures, sites, and objects as well as historic districts that are historically, architecturally, or archaeologically significant.

National Register listing **recognizes** the significance of properties and districts. By doing so, it **identifies** significant historic resources in a community. Boundaries of National Register districts are tightly drawn to encompass only concentrated areas of historic buildings. Information compiled to nominate a historic district can be used in a variety planning and development activities. National Register listing also makes available specific preservation incentives and provides a limited degree of protection from the effects of federally funded, licensed, or permitted activities.

The National Register is maintained by the U.S. Department of the Interior. In Georgia, the National Register program is administered by the Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Natural Resources. Districts and other properties are listed in the National Register through a 17-step process that involves **identification, documentation, and evaluation**. National Register historic districts most commonly encompass central business districts, residential neighborhoods, industrial areas, rural areas, and occasionally, entire communities.

Local Historic District

A **local** historic district is a district designated by local ordinance and falls under the jurisdiction of a **local preservation review commission**. A local historic district is generally “overlaid” on existing zoning classifications in a community; therefore, a local district commission deals only with the appearance of the district, not with the uses to which properties in the district are put.

According to the 1980 Georgia Historic Preservation Act which makes such local designations possible, a local historic district is a “geographically definable area, urban or rural, which contains structures, sites, and/or works of art which have special historical or aesthetic interest or value; represent one or more periods or styles of architecture typical of one or more eras in the history of the municipality, county, state, or region; and cause that area to constitute a visibly perceptible section of the community.

The designation of a local district **protects** the significant properties and historic character of the district. It provides communities with means to make sure that growth, development, and change takes place in ways that respect important architectural, historical and environmental characteristics. Local designation encourages sensitive development in the district and discourages unsympathetic changes from occurring. This happens through a process called **design review**, whereby the preservation commission approves major changes that are planned for the district and issues Certificates of Appropriateness which allow the proposed changes to take place.

National Register District

Identifies significant properties and districts for general planning purposes.

Analyzes and assesses the historic character and quality of the district.

Designates historic areas based on uniform national criteria and procedures.

Sets district boundaries tightly, based on the actual distribution pattern of intact historic properties in the area.

Makes available specific federal tax incentives for preservation purposes.

Provides a limited degree of protection from the effects of federally assisted undertakings.

Qualifies property owners for federal and state grants for preservation purposes, when funds are available.

Does not restrict the use or disposition of property or obligate private property owners in any way.

Does not require conformance to design guidelines or preservation standards when property is rehabilitated unless specific preservation incentives (tax credits, grants) are involved.

Does not affect state and local government activities.

Does not prevent the demolition of historic buildings and structures within designated areas.

Local Historic District

Protects a community's historic properties and areas through a design review process.

Protects the historic character and quality of the district with specific design controls.

Designates historic areas on the basis of local criteria and local procedures.

Sets district boundaries based on the distribution pattern of historic resources plus other preservation and community planning considerations.

Provides no tax incentives for preservation purposes unless such are provided by tax law.

Provides no additional protection from the effects of federally assisted undertakings.

Does not qualify property owners for federal or state grants for preservation purposes.

Does not restrict the use to which property is put in the district or require property owners to make improvements to their property.

Requires local commission review and approval, based on conformance to local design guidelines, before building permit is issued to any "material changes" in appearance to the district.

Does not affect federal, state, or local government activities.

Provides for review of proposed demolitions within designated areas; may prevent or delay proposed demolitions for specific time periods to allow for preservation alternatives.

Districts in Context

National Register and locally designated historic districts can be used independently or together to help preserve a community's historic resources. For example, the National Register program might be used as a convenient and credible way to identify a community's historic resources, followed by a local district designation which would further protect and enhance those historic resources. Conversely, a local survey done to establish a local historic district might also be used as the basis for a National Register district, which would afford additional preservation incentives, including rehabilitation tax credits, to properties protected in the local district. Local district designation might be used to protect, selectively, portions of National Register districts considered especially significant to a community or subject to particularly strong development pressures. Local designation also might be afforded to an area larger than a National Register district to provide an even greater degree of protection to the historic resources within the National Register district.

Some community's preservation needs may be met entirely with either a locally designated district or a National Register district; there are many examples in Georgia of both situations. Other communities may believe that package deal involving both types of districts works best. The point to remember is that local districts and National Register districts are different, but complementary, and can work effectively by themselves or together in meeting a community's historic preservation needs.

The Planner and the Preservationist

An Uneasy Alliance

Eugenie Ladner Birch and Douglass Roby

In many ways the planning and historic preservation movements have had similar but separate patterns of institutional development. Although the planning profession is older and more refined than the preservation effort, their shared concern for the quality of the built environment has made them natural allies in promoting conservation practices in American metropolitan areas. At times, differing objectives have marred their mutual cooperative endeavors; but on the whole, they have developed an important symbiotic relationship that has served to strengthen both professions.

"Historic preservation as a distinct kind of urban planning is relatively recent in origin," asserted Wayne O. Attoe in *Introduction to Planning*, a definitive textbook published in 1979. In fact, he maintained, "Historic preservation . . . remains a troublesome aspect of urban planning." Nonetheless, he concluded, "historic preservation can be integrated into comprehensive urban planning practice."¹

Not all contemporary accounts of planning practice agreed with Attoe's statements. Some did not consider preservation important at all. The latest version of the profession's familiar green handbook (also published in 1979), *The Practice of Local Government Planning*, barely mentioned the field. The third edition of *Urban Land Use Planning*, by F. Stuart Chapin, Jr., and Edward J. Kaiser, appearing in the same year, made no reference to it despite its analysis of other modern concerns.²

The stance of the American Planning Association—which grants professional credentials to planners—reflected that dichotomy. Only in October 1980 did the APA admit a historic preservation division into its ranks, allowing it to join transportation, environmental protection, and urban design as a legitimate planning func-

tion. In 1982, however, the association suspended the group for nonperformance.³

Several factors have produced modern planners' ambivalence to historic preservation. Historically, the planning and preservation movements have pursued distinct goals, served different populations, and experienced dissimilar patterns of organizational growth. In recent years, however, the two groups have moved closer together. Their growing cooperation has hinged on two interrelated items: each movement's evolving definition of its function in American society, and the changing nature of public-sector involvement in urban development.

In the first instance, planners and preservationists have moved closer to each other through the redefinition of their respective missions. In the past fifty years, many planners have slowly narrowed their focus from analysis of regional and citywide trends to concentration on neighborhood efforts. During the same period, the preservationists have broadened their agenda to include the conservation of urban districts and neighborhoods as well as isolated, individual structures. Although neither group has lost sight of its own origins, both have established grounds for mutual agreement and supportive ventures. The implications of their merging interests are best illustrated in their joint participation in selected government activities.

At the municipal level, increased attention to conservation efforts has provided a framework for their cooperation. By 1982, for example, 832 cities had enacted preservation laws incorporating provisions for zoning protection, districting, and transfer of development rights—areas of traditional planning interest.⁴ Furthermore, a growing body of federal and local case

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law—culminating in the landmark *Grand Central* decision, *Penn Central Transportation v. New York City* (438 U.S. 1978)—strengthened the legal basis for this use of the police power, a factor not lost on the planners.

In reality, federal government initiatives have contributed most substantially to joint efforts by planners and preservationists. Direct funding, new administrative practices, and tax reforms have been the main features of national planning-preservation activities. For example, a 1980 study of funding practices under the Urban Development Action Grants administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development revealed that HUD had spent about 43 percent of its funds on rehabilitation, much of which involved preservation. (Rehabilitation dated from 1954, when the Housing Act and succeeding urban legislation authorized such expenditures.) Funding for rehabilitation of historic properties dated from the 1966 Model Cities Act.⁵ Additional impetus came from the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (1966), which established important intergovernmental bureaucratic links; and insertion of key provisions in the Transportation Act (1966) and the National Environmental Protection Act (1969), both of which required federal administrators to take special care to protect historic sites. Finally, the Tax Reform Act of 1976 and its subsequent amendments made adaptive reuse (the recycling of older buildings formerly considered obsolete) economically viable and provided an alternative to clearance-and-demolition schemes often employed by planners in urban development.

Through these devices, historic preservation slowly became an important item in the urban agenda. By 1980, planners and preservationists united to promote common interests. Their merger was only partial, however, for each shared reservations about the others' actions. Nonetheless, they had forged a fragile, if uneasy, alliance. This paper documents the growth of that alliance, highlighting the steps leading to its achievement and outlining unresolved areas.

The early years: Progressive era to the New Deal

At their inceptions, the planning and preservation movements had very little in common, despite their shared progressive roots. Although both were responses to late nineteenth-century urbanization and industrialization, they differed in thrust, in organizational style, and in their views of the relationship between the public and private sectors.

While the planners had reformist, rationalist origins, the preservationists had patriotic, romantic roots. Shortly after 1909, the year when the first National Conference on City Planning and the Congestion of Cities convened and the landmark Chicago Plan was issued, planners had a clear vision of their mission.

They were to present prescriptions or master plans for improving city life. To that end they appraised urban systems, especially circulation and recreation facilities, and restructured metropolitan centers to create long-range schemes for civic order. Later they added important implementation devices. Their most successful efforts were the zoning ordinance and the capital budget. In the first three decades of the twentieth century, planners would refine and codify their movement, ultimately setting up professional qualifying criteria; create a solid base of citizen support; and mobilize sufficient political strength to make planning a legitimate municipal concern exercised through the permanent local planning commission and planning department. By 1927, four hundred American towns had incorporated some form of planning in their operations.⁶

Although essentially local in focus, the planning movement would be highly organized on the national level. By 1934, it had three representative organizations, the American Institute of Planners, the American Society of Planning Officials, and the American Planning and Civic Association. Membership in the former two groups was dominated by white, male professionals, while the latter had a larger female representation in its membership, which consisted largely of citizen volunteers.⁷

On the whole, the planning movement—with its amalgam of professionals, including architects, engineers, lawyers, and real estate agents, and its diverse base of citizen support, including politicians, businessmen, and volunteer civic activists—insinuated itself into American municipal life rapidly and efficiently.

In contrast, the preservation movement had a slower, narrower growth pattern. Motivated by desires to “Americanize” immigrants by showing them historical landmarks or to rescue important monuments from destruction in the wave of new construction that characterized the period, individuals, often women, organized local efforts to preserve significant structures. Occasionally those efforts attracted national attention, such as the successful mid-nineteenth-century battle led by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association to prevent George Washington’s home from falling into the hands of real estate speculators; but more often, they remained parochial.⁸

Like planners, preservationists came from varied, usually upper-income backgrounds. They came from patriotically based national groups such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, interest associations such as the (Theodore) Roosevelt Memorial Association, local civic and municipal art supporters, and assorted professions, including architectural history, museum and antiquarian societies. Unlike planners, however, the preservationists did not have an immediately definable product. Their approach was to organize simple, reactive responses to rescue threatened individual structures or sites of historic importance. Anyone in-

terested could participate; no credentials were required. They had no specialized methods except to use rather broad criteria for determining the historic (and later the aesthetic) legitimacy of the buildings concerned. They did not articulate a generally applicable set of professional concerns, for in their early years they had no equivalent to the master plan, zoning ordinance, or capital budget. Although they welcomed public-sector involvement to finance the purchase and maintenance of specific sites—particularly after the 1906 passage of the Antiquities Act and its expansion in 1916 through the creation of the National Park Service—they did not have a clear-cut vision for continuous, comprehensive, or systematic procedures to enhance preservation. Furthermore, coming from elite backgrounds, they were inclined to consider their activities as primarily philanthropic, properly pertaining to the private sector.

Lacking the missionary zeal of their planning counterparts, the preservationists were less eager organizers. Although some activists had created a few associations, such as the American Scenic and Historic Society (incorporated in New York in 1895) and the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (organized fifteen years later in Boston), their efforts emphasized communications, not professional development, and remained regional, not national, in focus. The only national professional involvement that occurred in the period took place in the American Institute of Architects' intermittent preservation committees, which unsystematically established acceptable style authentication and restoration techniques for historic buildings.⁹

In those early years, the planners and the preservationists had few formal links. Except for sharing occasional common concerns, such as joint sponsorship of the Federal City project in Washington, they had little to contribute to each other. After 1925 that mutual independence would change. At that time, two projects, the restoration of Williamsburg, Virginia (1924), and the establishment of the Old City District in Charleston, S.C. (1931), began a new era of planner-preservationist cooperation.

The relationship between planning and preservation in Williamsburg was subtle. The town had an elegant seventeenth-century plan based on Le Nôtre's Versailles and Wren's postfire London reconstruction project, and when local minister William Goodwin and financier John D. Rockefeller began to collaborate in 1924, they originally intended to restore individual buildings. As work progressed, however, they slowly shifted their focus to the whole of colonial Williamsburg. Ultimately, they authorized the reconstruction of its entire urban fabric, including streets and open spaces. Soon, twentieth-century problems began to demand their attention: where would the thousands of visitors stay; how would they circulate through the reconstruction; and most important, how would the restored district be protected? Although Rockefeller's 1928 suggestion to hire a city

planner to answer these questions went unheeded, the professionals engaged did create a battery of legal devices to meet the modern needs of the museum-city, including the legal demarcation of the area as a historic district.¹⁰

As Williamsburg attracted nationwide attention, preservationists in other towns modeled their efforts on the Virginia experience. They also were faced with the problem of integrating historic zones into working municipalities, not museum towns. In the larger cities with a more resistant urban structure, this type of planning would be refined.

The case of Charleston, South Carolina, is illustrative and represents a significant step in the evolution of the planning-preservation alliance. In Charleston, three major tools of the planning-preservation effort—surveying, zoning, and financing—were developed. As with most evolutionary efforts, they were not created systematically but were invented to meet current needs.

In 1931, after a lengthy campaign by the privately organized Society for the Preservation of Old Dwellings, founded in 1920 by real estate agent Susan P. Frost, the city government designated eighty acres of downtown land as a special zoning district where exterior alteration and new construction were subject to restrictions. Advised by Pittsburgh planner and zoning expert Morris Knowles, who set the Old City District boundaries, the city established administrative procedures incorporating the city planning and zoning commissions and a newly appointed Board of Architectural Review. In a coordinated effort, the society financed restoration in the area using a revolving fund to purchase and renovate the district's dwellings, which then were sold or rented on the open market. Ten years later, in 1941, planning consultant Frederick Law Olmsted recommended an additional refinement to the program, a citywide architectural survey that was undertaken with Carnegie Foundation funding by the Carolina Art Association. That survey remained the community's basic reference through two enlargements of the district, only to be replaced by an updated version thirty years later.¹¹

Although the Old City District designation represented a new level in cooperation between planners and preservationists, this pioneering effort had definite limitations. In a bid to secure the support of the area's commercial interests, for example, the professionals excluded businesses from the district's restrictions. In addition, in keeping with contemporary practice, they justified their work in terms of elimination of the slums that characterized the area (which, incidentally, was the setting of Dubose Heyward's regional classic *Porgy*, the inspiration for George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*). They simply did not include today's issues of displacement, relocation, and gentrification in their calculations.¹²

Over the years, the Charleston model would be replicated in only a few cities, notably New Orleans, Lou-

isiana, and Monterey, California, but the district designation and its protective devices would not be employed widely until several decades later. Instead the movements continued on the largely separate courses of development set years earlier. Planners, whose real interests lay in regulating new construction, resource allocation, transportation, and population dispersion, concentrated on the housing, slum clearance, and garden city programs embodied in the New Deal activities of the Public Works Administration, the Federal Housing Administration, the National Resources Board, and the Resettlement Administration. There they proudly created public housing developments, model subdivision standards, state land use plans, and greenbelt towns. Sharing in the federal largess, the preservationists promoted site-specific activities, namely the recording of the nation's representative architecture through the Historic American Buildings Survey and the designation, purchase, and maintenance of landmarks by an expanded National Park Service. That work contributed uniform evaluative criteria to conservation practices. Essentially, both groups neglected the local urban district focus.

Despite the neglect of larger urban preservation issues during the New Deal, the framework for a planning/preservation alliance was in place at the end of the period. At its base was the professional expertise preservationists had gained by adapting techniques from planners and architects. As can be seen from the Williamsburg and Charleston examples, preservationists were forced by the scope of urban projects to enlarge their vision and make their work systematic. They adopted a three-pronged approach to their work, incorporating methods for articulating and administering districts, standards for declaring sites worthy of conservation, and formulas for creative financing.

Planning and preservation in the middle years: Postwar to the sixties

The federally sponsored New Deal initiatives would continue to influence the planning and preservation movements in the two decades after the Second World War. Consequently, they would continue in their separate stances. As both groups matured and regularly re-evaluated their activities, however, they began internal restructuring efforts that would lead to a merging of interests by the end of the period.

With the end of the war, planners were caught up in managing suburbanization and urban renewal. Slum clearance, new construction, highway planning, and the revitalization of central business districts became primary professional concerns. "Conservation" and "preservation" were rarely part of the practitioner's vocabulary. Fueled by \$10 billion in federal funds appropriated by the Housing and Slum Clearance Act of

1949 and subsequent amending legislation, planners adopted the standard "write-down" formula. They designated urban renewal areas and condemned and cleared land to provide sites for entrepreneurs to develop according to municipal comprehensive plans.¹³ They aimed to renew the economic lives of declining central cities.

The early course of urban renewal in New Haven, Connecticut, exemplifies this model. A small city of only about 130,000 inhabitants, endowed with a major university and a beautiful town green dating from the seventeenth century, New Haven had been dissatisfied with its situation for most of the twentieth century. Too close to New York to compete culturally, overshadowed economically and politically by Hartford, losing population and commerce to the wealthier suburbs, and alarmed by the concentration of poor minorities in decaying older neighborhoods, New Haven had all the problems of dozens of old cities of the northeast.¹⁴ The only thing that made New Haven different was the aggressiveness with which it tried to apply diverse planning nostrums to those ills. As early as 1910 it had a park plan by Gilbert and Olmsted; in 1941 the new City Planning Commission hired Maurice Rotival to produce a comprehensive plan stressing highway improvements.

Although nothing much came of either of those plans, the city was clearly predisposed to accept self-improvement schemes. In 1953 the electorate confirmed that predisposition when it made Richard Lee mayor on the basis of his campaign platform to bring urban renewal to the city.¹⁵ Vowing to rid the downtown of its Oak Street slum, to restore central business functions, and to improve access to the core from the suburbs, Lee hired young lawyer Edward Logue to spearhead the activity as the city's first development administrator. "Clear and rebuild" were Lee's orders to Logue, an adept fund-raiser who turned the trickle of federal funding into a torrent. (By 1967 New Haven would receive \$790 per capita in urban renewal funds; New York City had received \$42 per capita.)¹⁶

Under the Lee-Logue administration, renewalists transformed the downtown. They leveled the Oak Street slum and replaced it with a shopping mall and parking garage. They joined the city to the suburbs with a six-lane connector to the Connecticut Turnpike. Hailed in contemporary professional journals and the popular press, New Haven, for a few short years, seemed to provide a successful model for the nation's planners.¹⁷

City after city incorporated its method. By 1962, 588 communities had projects, and Federal Urban Renewal Administrator William Slayton predicted that by 1964, 750 cities would be engaged in more than fifteen hundred projects.¹⁸ In efforts to achieve their ends, the urban renewalists—usually a coalition of planners, local politicians, journalists, and business and civic leaders—justified the wholesale destruction of large sites, re-

ardless of the viability of individual parcels, a rationale that would be upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court decision handed down in 1954 in *Berman v. Parker* (348 U.S. 26, 75 S. Ct. 98, 99). In that case, the plaintiff, an owner of a successful Washington, D.C., department store located in the Southwest Urban Renewal Area argued that his property was not blighted and therefore not eligible for condemnation under the “write-down” process. Using the widest possible interpretation of public purpose, the court rejected his plea. It argued that health and safety were not the only constitutional tests of public purpose and that the attractiveness of a whole area might be construed as serving the general public interest, thus upholding current clearance practices.¹⁹ By that judgment, the court left the way open for renewers to seize and write down land almost anywhere.

Although most communities followed the standard urban renewal pattern as illustrated in New Haven, some exceptions did exist. In Boston, for example, the new government center plan, while focusing on new construction, did incorporate eighteenth- and nineteenth-century buildings into its design. Professional guidance from planners Frederick Adams, John Howard, and Roland Greeley and architects I. M. Pei and Walter Whitehall had led to a national competition for downtown reconstruction. The 250 entrants were required to consider two national shrines, the Old State House and Faneuil Hall–Quincy Market, and several adjacent streets as an “inseparable part of the design ensemble,” although they were outside the project boundaries. Within the boundaries, the nineteenth-century Sears Crescent was not given such firm protection. Nonetheless, the winning entry submitted by Kallmann, McKinnell, and Knowles preserved the structure.²⁰ (Even in New Haven, plans would involve conservation, as in the case of the award-winning Wooster Square project, a 235-acre scheme to retain and rehabilitate a nineteenth-century working-class neighborhood.²¹)

In Philadelphia, however, the planners of urban renewal created the most significant example of preservation of the period. Like New Haven, Philadelphia had a tradition of activity in civic improvement dating back to the early twentieth century. Its park system, its city-beautiful-inspired Fairmont (Benjamin Franklin) Parkway, and its militant housing association indicate the latent sympathy that would later be exhibited in a high degree of popular receptivity to city planning and redevelopment in the postwar era. Well aware of the dangers of central city deterioration that characterized so many cities of the period, Philadelphia’s civic leaders had been among the earliest in the nation to attempt to reverse the situation. As early as 1943, an enlightened municipal reform effort had vested the city planning commission with a generous budget to undertake a long-range capital budgeting program; a few years later, the Citizens’ Council on City Planning articulated the

need for urban revitalization in its well-received Better Philadelphia Exhibition of 1947. Two other groups, the Independence Hall Association and the City Center Residents’ Association, added a preservation dimension as they launched their own limited but successful campaigns to encourage conservation. When the Housing and Slum Clearance Act was passed in 1949, the city was well prepared to take advantage of it. Ultimately two agencies, the City Planning Commission, headed by Edmund Bacon, and the Redevelopment Agency, chaired by William F. Rafsky, worked closely to coordinate a short-term development strategy with the longer-range comprehensive plan. Their major thrusts were to conserve the central business district, to embark on a residential renewal program to upgrade the slums and prevent deterioration in good neighborhoods, to rationalize transportation, and to encourage industry.²²

As in New Haven, a major portion of the plan focused on clearance and new construction, particularly for the Penn Center project, which combined office, recreation, commercial, and transportation functions. But an important secondary effort, restoration of Society Hill, the city’s colonial, residential core, employed preservation and rehabilitation more widely than had been customary under standard renewal schemes. Endowed with hundreds of eighteenth-century residential structures that were in an advanced state of blight, as well as a picturesque but crowded and inefficient food market, the neighborhood was a perfect site for renewal. Designated as a “key residential belt,” the hundred-acre site was a critical component of a citywide housing scheme. After moving the food market to a new distribution center, the city designated the district as an urban renewal area to include construction of three high-rise apartment towers—controversial but financially necessary—selective demolition, and public and private rehabilitation of historic townhouses. Its aim was not to achieve “restored replicas . . . but architectural harmony” in the rebuilding and remodeling of “an attractive residential community with modern convenient living accommodations in towering apartments and small houses.”²³

Although a highly visible and successful example of the melding of urban renewal and preservation, the project remained a minor part of the total project costs of the Philadelphia program. By the mid-1960s, it constituted only 12 percent of the city’s net project costs and commanded only 13 percent of the federal grants to the city. In contrast, large-scale reconstruction efforts like Market Street East (a shopping mall) and Eastwick (new housing construction) were receiving much higher percentages of the total resources.²⁴ Thus while the Society Hill project received more than its share of national media attention, it did not represent the prevailing model for urban renewal.²⁵ Nonetheless, it did serve as a brilliant testimony to a new approach to preservation and planning.

Of course, as in the other examples of the planning-preservation alliance, Society Hill had its limitations. In the opinion of some planners, the displacement of the area's low-income residents and the homogeneity of the replacement population (primarily white, upper-income groups) was a perversion of urban renewal purposes.²⁶ For their part, the preservationists criticized the visual intrusion of the modern apartment towers and questioned the design of some new townhouses.²⁷ All in all, however, Society Hill, protected by traditional zoning devices, demonstrated that the two groups could cooperate and benefit from the use of renewal powers and funds to restore a neighborhood.

While the planners were engaged in urban renewal activities, the preservationists began to pump energy into their movement. They were driven to organize by a desire to concentrate the fragmentary elements of their own constituency. And after 1949 they would gain more momentum in the face of innumerable threats from urban renewal administrators whose heavy-handed clearance programs tended to be insensitive to preservation concerns. In 1948 a small group of architects, architectural historians, museum curators, landmarks conservators, and others formed the National Trust for Historic Preservation, modeled on similar European associations. Congressionally chartered and funded through private donations, dues, and large doses of foundation aid, the trust had multiple jobs: an acquisition function allowing for the purchase and maintenance of property; a communications role giving technical advice to local groups, publications, and special research; and a professional development capacity encompassing refining criteria for building evaluation and creating educational training programs.²⁸

Except for its acquisition powers, the trust would function in a capacity for preservationists similar to the role the earlier American Institute of Planners and American Society of Planning Officials served for planners. Consequently, the postwar decades featured a significant restructuring of the preservation movement. Under the trust's pragmatic leadership, the very definition of preservation changed dramatically. In only a few years, the organization gained broad acceptance that preservable projects would include more than historic buildings or objects. Its expanded vision, built on the Charleston experience, added the conservation of districts embodying values of local and state as well as national importance. It extended acceptable time periods allowing for Victorian and twentieth-century contributions. And above all, it moved from a relaxed insistence on museum purity preservation toward acceptance of adaptive reuse techniques. For example, in 1951 the trust would endorse the activities of Historic Georgetown that saved that district's older buildings from demolition by renovation and economic exploitation. These views began to broaden the support base of the movement. Measured in trust membership, the

rolls grew from a handful in 1947 to 640 in 1952, to 1,684 in 1956, to 4,000 in 1962. Its most significant growth occurred in the next decade, however, when the trust began to have a larger impact. By the end of the seventies, it had expanded to 42,000 members.²⁹

Armed with a more broadly defined mission, the organization embarked on a course of proselytizing and professional development. Following a pattern used a generation earlier by planners, the trust wooed foundation support to finance those activities. (Where planners relied on money from the Sage and Rockefeller fortunes, the preservationists benefited from the Mellon wealth.) With this financial security, the trust used the same techniques as ASPO had employed years earlier. It sponsored "circuit-riding" experts to give advice to local groups. It offered short courses in preservation administration. It revised and simplified survey instruments in order to encourage data collection. It developed a literature through publication of *Historic Preservation*, a bimonthly journal, and later *Preservation News*, a tabloid newspaper. It organized movies and exhibits, such as the 1958 "Architecture Worth Saving" at New York City's Museum of Modern Art, and it published textbooks like *Historic Preservation Law* by Jacob H. Morrison.

As the movement expanded, model preservation projects proliferated. Encouraged by the trust, several cities used zoning techniques employed in Charleston and the urban renewal model from Philadelphia. Among them were Boston, Savannah, Richmond, Providence, Bethlehem (Pa.), and Pittsburgh.

Savannah stands out as an example of that work. Relatively undamaged by the Civil War and bypassed by the early twentieth-century economic development that transformed other Southern cities, this city of 118,000 possessed a large stock of exemplary but highly deteriorated antebellum architecture arranged in a unique eighteenth-century plan that was characterized by attractive, regularly placed residential squares. In the early 1950s, twin threats of downtown modernization and suburban expansion menaced this resource. While transportation planners proposed to drive a widened street through one of the city's most beautiful squares and actually replaced the Old City Market with a multilevel parking garage, private wreckers demolished eighteenth-century houses to scavenge used bricks to face out-of-town tract dwellings. Rising to meet the challenge, local preservationists, led mainly by women, responded in 1954 with the creation of the Historic Savannah Foundation to raise public support for municipal conservation. Although moderately successful in its early years, it was constantly strapped for funds and became a more substantial influence only after arousing the interest of local bankers led by a young investor, Leopold Adler II. Under his leadership, the group devised a three-pronged preservation strategy: an architectural survey; a campaign for a historic district

designation, protected by zoning; and the creation of a revolving rehabilitation fund. Ultimately the group achieved its aims. It completed the survey of a 2½-square-mile area in 1968. Five years later city legislation protected it with a historic zoning district designation, the largest in the nation. And the group raised \$200,000 for its revolving fund, which, with sophisticated management, it used to establish lines of credit in the local banks, thereby multiplying its value. Besides those efforts, in 1962 the city government incorporated a sixteen-acre residential restoration project, the Troup Trust, into its urban renewal program. In succeeding years, the city sponsored two other urban renewal designations in the district, including one to restore the riverfront.³⁰

While the preservation movement was beginning to grow, the planners were facing a crisis in their history. In the late 1940s, a number of younger practitioners, including Martin Meyerson, F. Stuart Chapin, Jr., and others, had begun to challenge the teachings of their predecessors. They attacked the profession's reliance on the comprehensive plan: they questioned the validity of planning decisions made without citizen participation; and they disputed current urban renewal techniques that were based on clearance and wholesale replanning of existing districts without reference to local culture and historic values. They were joined by other critics who objected to the cost and output of urban renewal programs.

The literature of the period would reflect those concerns. In 1956, Meyerson, at that time a University of Pennsylvania planning professor and vice president of the American Council to Improve Our Neighborhoods (a Ford Foundation-funded group fostering local environment improvement), startled his colleagues with his keynote address at the 1956 annual AIP convention, in which he challenged them to engage in pulse-taking and review activities. Aiming to bring "planning and policy closer together," he urged them to monitor shorter-range, narrowly gauged community concerns. This was a major link toward forging the planning-preservationist alliance because it called on planners to connect planning theory with project planning.³¹ It would be a short conceptual step to neighborhood planning advocated in the following decade.

Others added to the Meyerson prescription and called for a re-evaluation of planning values. Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1962), Herbert Gans' *The Urban Villagers* (1962), "A Choice Theory of Planning" (1962) by Paul Davidoff and Thomas A. Reiner, and Davidoff's later piece "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning" (1965) all cautioned practitioners to be more aware of the diverse, smaller-scale building blocks of planning and more appreciative of the beauty and functionalism of existing neighborhood organization.³² Finally, Martin Anderson, in the *Federal Bulldozer* (1964), provided planners with evidence of the failure of the clearance strategy. Documenting the high

cost and slow progress of massive demolition, he called for scrapping the whole program.³³

Planning and preservation in the later years: The alliance meshes

Ultimately, the new wave of criticism accelerated changes in national legislation and planning practice, for federal administrators themselves constantly adjusted the priorities of the programs. For example, planning studies were appropriated more generously and allowed for more thorough investigation of neighborhood dynamics and potential rehabilitation strategies. Under this rubric, several studies were undertaken. The *Seaver Townsend Urban Renewal Area* (Boston), *Historic Preservation Plan for a Central Neighborhood Renewal Area* (Savannah), and *The Negro Housing Problem: A Program for Philadelphia* exemplify the technique. Those reports underscored the historic or residential values of the areas in question and led the way to conservation efforts. Charles Abrams, author of the Philadelphia study, reflected this sentiment:

American neighborhoods include the good and the miserable. But housing conditions should not be the sole determinant of what deserves to stay or to be torn down. . . . Demolition of a functioning neighborhood . . . disrupts associations and institutions, destroys what people have added to the neighborhood and the attributes that drew them there in the first place.³⁴

One of the best of these was written in Providence when the Urban Renewal Administration granted \$50,000 for a joint City Planning Commission-Providence Preservation Society study of a 380-acre area on the site of that city's original seventeenth-century settlement. The resulting 200-page report, released after almost three years of investigation, demonstrated a careful blend of historic preservation and city planning procedures. Its authors divided it into three parts: an overview of American preservation; a collection of recommended survey and evaluation techniques; and a comprehensive development plan combining recommendations for urban renewal, historic district demarcation and protection, and long-range planning. Cited by the American Institute of Architects in 1960 "as a major contributor to American architecture, to community planning and to civic design," it was reissued in 1967 by HUD, which by that time was beginning to increase its support of conservation and rehabilitation activities. HUD was so motivated because in the five years since the report's publication, much had been accomplished to demonstrate the success of historic-area renewal undertaken as part of a total urban planning and development effort. A historic district protected by historic zoning covered about a third of the area, and the recommended 120-acre renewal area had been

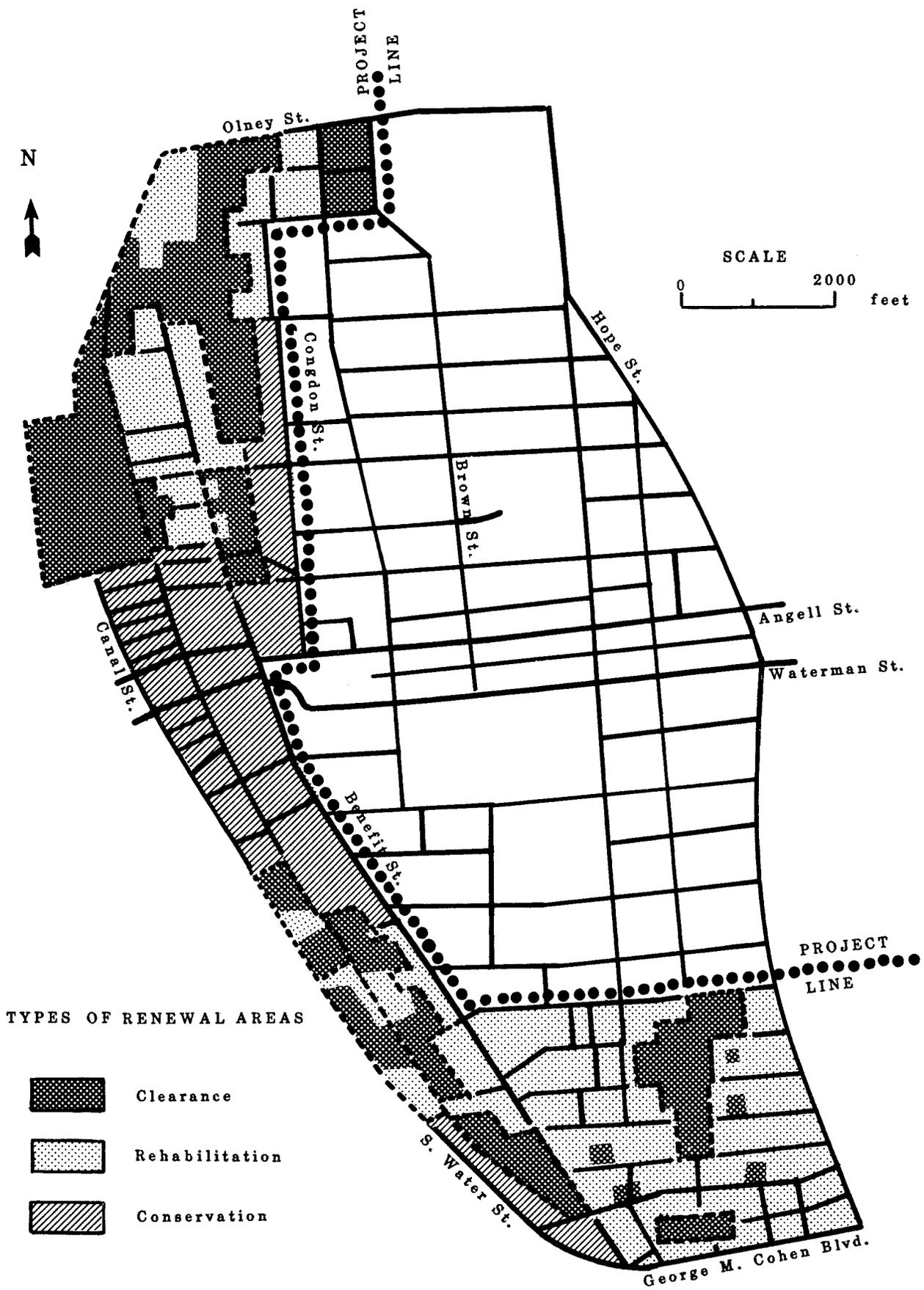


Figure 1. The award-winning College Hill plan in Providence, Rhode Island (1967), featured a major statement in preservation and incorporated extensive conservation areas in the master plan.

incorporated (with its historic protection provisions intact) into the larger East Side Project, encompassing 343 contiguous acres in the city.³⁵ Other cities, particularly in New England, followed suit. Among the notable ones were Newburyport and New Bedford, Massachusetts.³⁶

The planning studies were matched with new conservation-based programs, which, over time, would capture increasing amounts of federal funding. The Community Renewal Program, enacted in 1959 but not operational until the mid-sixties, called for local governments to study and schedule small-scale, non-demolition projects. Implementation for the program came from newly passed code enforcement and below-market rehabilitation loan programs.³⁷ San Francisco, for example, began its highly successful FACE (Federally Assisted Code Enforcement) program after passage of this legislation. As the City Planning Department selected target areas, it frequently included neighborhoods scheduled for massive redevelopment for the combined inspection and loan program. By 1976 it had spent about \$23 million to rehabilitate about ten thousand housing units, a figure that contrasted favorably with the \$12 million dollar price tag of a single slum clearance project that provided far fewer standard dwellings.³⁸

The culmination of the new thrust came in the late 1960s with passage of two revolutionary programs: the Demonstration and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (Model Cities) and the Neighborhood Development Program of 1968. Both called for communities to focus their resources in carefully selected neighborhoods. While the first represented an important innovation in integrating social welfare activities with physical planning, the second provided new operating procedures, including annual funding and incremental planning. The effects of both would finalize planners' acceptance of an approach employing short-range, less-than-citywide solutions emphasizing rehabilitative measures.³⁹ This dramatic revision in planning methodology offered a sharp contrast to procedures reliant on long-term, comprehensive visions and massive neighborhood clearance and redevelopment schemes.

The new approach appealed to planners for a variety of reasons. To some it was philosophically attractive because it included an appreciation of neighborhood values. To others it was economically alluring because it offered a more cost-effective means of doing business. Its overriding value was that it allowed practitioners to deal with urban problems in smaller units and to reap immediate and visible results.

While planners were enmeshed in their internal restructuring, the preservationists continued to be active in expanding their influence. By the mid-1960s they assumed an aggressive lobbying posture, particularly in the federal arena. Amazingly alert to potential opportunities, they forged new alliances and successfully promoted their interests in transportation, environmental, housing, and tax legislation. Their most im-

portant achievement, however, was the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966.

Preceded by numerous supportive studies, such as the Ford Foundation-funded *With Heritage So Rich*, and endorsements from President Lyndon B. Johnson, the law made preservation a public concern and provided a means for integrating preservation activities into the government bureaucracy.⁴⁰

Like the planners of a generation earlier who had gained public approval of the master plan, the preservationists invented their own device, the National Register of Historic Places. This federal list recognized structures and districts of local and state importance and provided minimal protection for them by requiring federal review of any government activity threatening them.

Supplementing the extant national historic landmark system, the contents of the National Register were drawn from an intricate recommendation system. With 50 percent matching funds from the federal government, states and localities were to undertake surveys to establish nominees according to standards developed by the U.S. Department of the Interior. States were responsible for making nominations. (Most created bureaucratic units headed by state preservation officers for that purpose.) The idea caught on quickly. In 1972, only six years after its institution, the register had 3,500 entries, and ten years later it would have fifteen thousand.⁴¹ By 1980 all fifty states had established permanent preservation offices.⁴²

One reason for the success of the program was the dramatic increase in federal funding for these activities. The Department of the Interior planning and survey allocations rose from \$82,000 in 1969 to \$2.2 million three years later—a twenty-five-fold increase.⁴³

The 1966 act also contained another crucial provision, the so-called "Section 106" review power. It gave this mandate:

. . . [F]ederal agencies shall prior to the approval of the expenditure of any federal funds or prior to the issuance of any license . . . take into account the effect of the undertaking on any district, site, building, structure or object that is included or eligible for inclusion in the National Register.⁴⁴

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, a presidentially appointed board, was vested with a final review power. Although the provision included no way to prevent the execution of such projects, it, like its counterpart, the environmental impact statement mandate of the National Environmental Protection Act, had the power to delay or to open the questions to adjudication after Advisory Council comment.

While the preservationists were involved in those activities, the planners' emphasis on rehabilitation continued to gain momentum, reaching its logical conclusion in the multifaceted neighborhood movement of

the seventies. In the process, federal urban policy would be transformed from reliance on large-scale renewal projects heavily laced with new construction to locally based community stabilization programs premised on conservation and rehabilitation. Occurring in less than ten years, that transformation had several distinct steps. First, the 1968 passage of the Neighborhood Development Program, while designed to promote efficiency by allowing for annual funding of partially planned projects, had another, more important effect: favoring rehabilitation. Second, new development formulas such as the Federal Home Loan Bank Board's experimental residential rehabilitation program, Neighborhood Housing Services (later incorporated into HUD activities as the Neighborhood Preservation Program), provided impetus by designing coordinated local self-conservation efforts with government programs in code enforcement and capital facilities investment and private-sector, market-rate loans. Finally, the 1974 Housing and Community Development Act and its 1977 amendments bolstered the neighborhood approach through several new or expanded devices. Its required Housing Assistance Plan mandated citywide neighborhood quality evaluations and required the targeting of specific neighborhoods for improvement. Its funding of community development grants, Section 8 housing assistance and Section 312 rehabilitation loans aimed to accomplish those ends. The creation of the Urban Development Action Grant, which had neighborhood revitalization as one of its two objectives, in 1977, and the formulation of the Neighborhood Strategy Areas program a year later more definitively linked the housing rehabilitation and rental assistance programs to other concentrated local revitalization.⁴⁵

HUD's emphasis on conservation was in keeping with changing tastes. Disparate events of the mid-seventies—the oil shortage, the Bicentennial celebrations, the environmental movement—had made Americans more appreciative than ever of the richness of their natural and man-made resources. The well-crafted, well-located housing units of yesteryear fell into that category. Furthermore, economic considerations—prices for used houses rose less than prices of new construction—also played an important part as some prospective buyers purchased homes in previously neglected territories, the bypassed older central city neighborhoods. This trend, which by the end of the decade affected more than half the nation's cities, was quickly named "urban gentrification" because of the nature of its participants: young, well-educated, relatively affluent professionals. While HUD supported neighborhood conservation, it also used UDAG funds to encourage downtown redevelopment incorporating historic properties. The highly publicized success of such projects, notably the Faneuil Hall–Quincy Market scheme of developer James Rouse, stimulated planners to employ federal funding and tax relief techniques to encourage private-sector interest in this area of economic development.⁴⁶

In that environment the planners and the preservationists sealed their close, yet uneasy, alliance. Seemingly, the effort, labeled "neighborhood preservation" by the former and "neighborhood conservation" by the latter, united them. It was bolstered by more than two hundred federal programs offering direct financial aid and technical information. It was made legitimate by the creation in 1976 of the National Historic Preservation Fund, which authorized dramatically increased funding supported by Treasury income derived from the lease of mineral rights on public lands. And it was encouraged by influential indirect benefits contained in the Tax Reform Act of 1976, amended in 1978 and 1981, favoring rehabilitation of certified historic properties. As the movement exploded, terms like "adaptive reuse," "area preservation," and "neighborhood revitalization" became common currency to planner and preservationist alike. Article after article in the *Journal of Housing Architectural Record* and other publications testified to the success of their joint endeavors. The Victorian District (Savannah), Old Town (Baltimore), Hoboken, Georgetown, Alexandria, Pioneer Square (Seattle), Long Wharf (Boston), Galveston, Santa Fe, and South Street Seaport became representative and desirable models of urban redevelopment.⁴⁷

In addition, educators of both fields began to seek ways of training their respective students in the joint methods. Planners whose first degree programs dated from the 1930s incorporated preservation materials into their curriculums. At the University of Illinois, for example, the Department of Urban and Regional Planning devoted its continuing professional education program in 1977 to historic preservation themes.⁴⁸ Preservationists, who had a much shorter educational history and far fewer degree programs than their planning counterparts, nonetheless instructed their students in many planning techniques. Arthur P. Ziegler's textbook *Historic Preservation in Inner City Areas* informed them about zoning, easements, and funding techniques, while Columbia University professor James Marston Fitch's manual *American Building* taught students how to distinguish worthy architecture.⁴⁹

Finally, it was not unusual for planners to become deeply involved in preservation work, as did New Jersey practitioner Jack R. Stockvis. Before his 1981 appointment as deputy to HUD's assistant secretary for community planning and development, Stockvis was project manager of the Paterson (New Jersey) Great Falls Historic District, administered from the city's Department of Community Development. He had come to that position from Jersey City, where as executive director of the Jersey City Historic District he had helped initiate the city's back-to-the-city brownstone movement, an effort that received national publicity.⁵⁰

Yet all was not perfect in the alliance. Torn by different values set within their professions, planners and preservationists questioned the results. While both groups agreed that the aesthetic and economic benefits

of their output could be dramatic, they also had major complaints. In some instances the planners decried the continued displacement of indigenous populations inevitably outpriced in many improved neighborhoods; in other cases, preservationists objected that emphasis on economic development destroyed the authenticity of restored sectors. Other areas of disagreement centered on costs, appropriate reuse, degree of preservation, allocation of federal funds, and selection of potential sites and clients.⁵¹ A typical dispute occurred around the Pikes Place Market project in Seattle, Washington. The focus of a decade-long battle, it ultimately was restored, but not before the topic became an issue in a citywide election.⁵²

Nonetheless, by the beginning of the eighties, an alliance had been forged. Each group had an effect on the other. The preservationists had a greatly expanded vision of their functions. They had moved from the single-minded pursuit of limited objectives centered on protection of specific monuments to conservation of whole neighborhoods—residential, commercial, and even industrial. They shaped a systematic approach to their work incorporating the surveying, evaluation, districting, and zoning tools of the planner. They had fought successfully for participation in major federal programs ranging from community development to open space. And finally, they had developed a substantial following, demonstrating their strong popular base of support. Likewise, the planners had drawn benefits from the alliance. They made adaptive reuse, narrower neighborhood projects, and conservation of existing community structures major goals of their work and carefully integrated them into their longer-range mission of creating comprehensive plans to direct urban growth and development. Thus as the 1980s opened the two groups worked together to promote common goals.

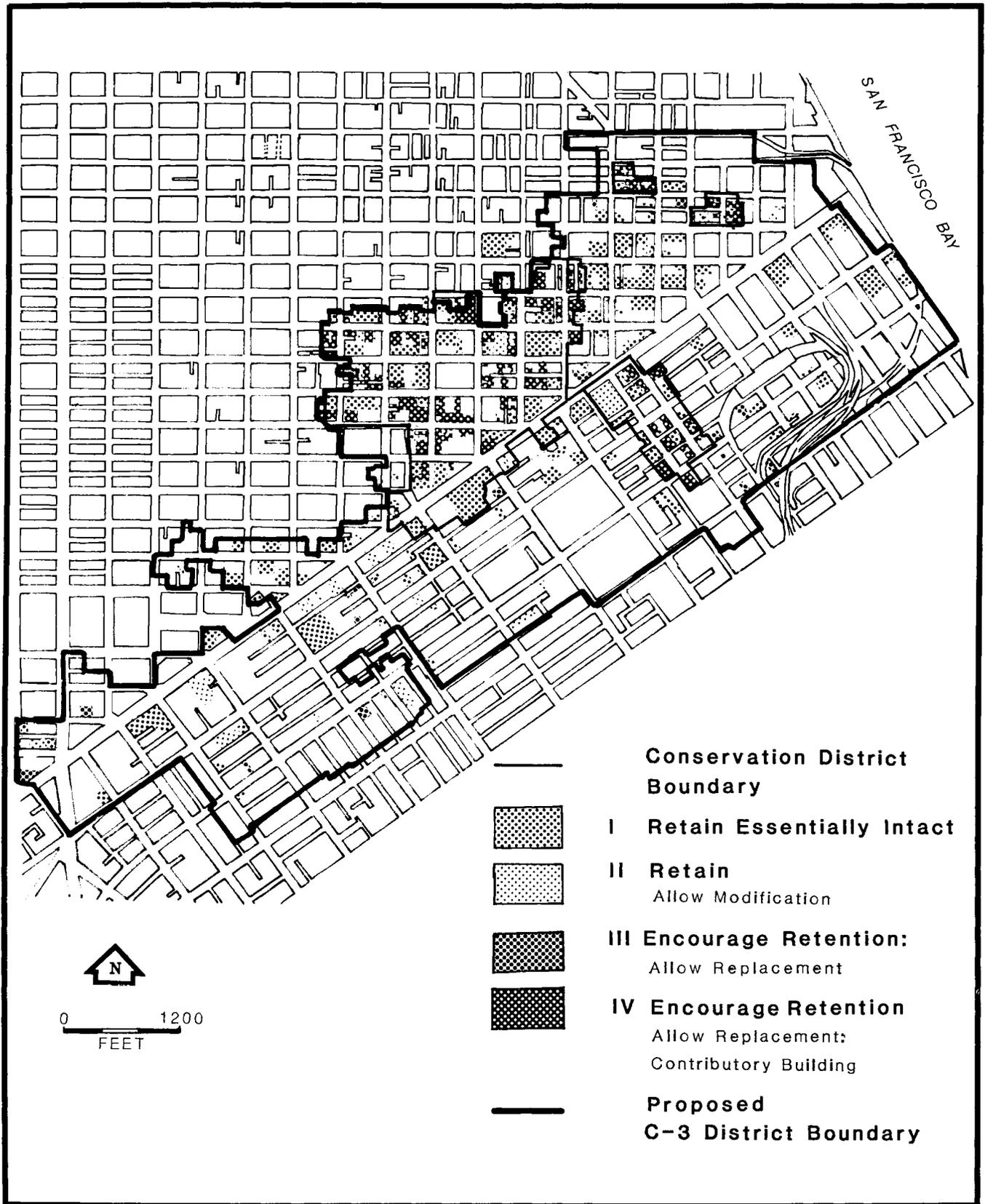
Planning and preservation under the New Federalism: The alliance survives

With the advent of the Reagan administration and its limited vision of urban assistance, the alliance threatened to crumble. When funds became scarce the two groups devoted their time and energy to survival, not alliance-building. At this time, planners faced a debacle as federal aid to cities declined by 12 percent, much of which was subtracted from planning programs.⁵³ Allocations for community block grants and Section 8 housing were slashed. Areawide planning assistance, the “701” program, and Section 312 rehabilitation loans were eliminated. The Urban Development Block Grants, threatened with extinction, were saved only after a furious fight, and even then funds were reduced by one-third.⁵⁴ The preservationists faced more substantial cuts. As early as 1979 President Jimmy

Carter, in a last-ditch effort to balance the budget, had begun to chip away at their \$55 million budget while leaving HUD appropriations intact.⁵⁵ Under the Reagan administration they faced an even more difficult situation. After a presidential request in 1980 for zero funding, they successfully battled for \$26 million for the Historic Preservation Fund. In the three succeeding years, that scenario reappeared; yet the preservationists’ strenuous lobbying yielded a successful outcome and their funding stayed at the same level.⁵⁶

As the two groups fought for survival, some of the underlying differences between them became more apparent. The stance of each on a key Reagan urban policy, the enterprise zone, exemplifies the rift. While both basically supported the effort, each also had reservations that, on examination, revealed disregard or deep-seated distrust of the other’s goals. The planners believed that the enterprise zone proposals should be amended to enable their coordination with community block grant districts, to eliminate the limit on the number of zones, and to balance the amount of labor and capital-intensive businesses eligible for favorable tax treatment embodied in the legislation. They never addressed preservation issues in their comments.⁵⁷ In the preservationists’ judgment, the laws needed substantial revision to prevent the loss of hard-fought conservation gains of the previous decade. While, like the planners, they pleaded for unlimited designation of the zones, their rationale was different. They feared that the small number of proposed area designations would foster such intermunicipal competition that cities would waive their preservation laws in their rush to prove to the federal government that they merited the award. Instead, the preservationists called for strict and specific measures of protection, including a requirement that the zones be surveyed to identify and register properties eligible for the National Register.⁵⁸

Despite the downturn, the legacy of their shared accomplishments left an important mark on the American landscape. Whole cities, districts, neighborhoods, and individual buildings in hundreds of localities were protected and adapted for modern use through the efforts of these professionals. Furthermore, while the practice of planning has been enriched by the contributions of the preservationists, the planners have added their own techniques to conservation efforts.⁵⁹ As suggested by New York Metropolitan APA chapter President George Raymond, planners have the unique evaluative skills to aid in community preservation decisions.⁶⁰ That thesis was borne out in August 1983, when Dean Macris, director of the city planning department of San Francisco, unveiled a daring plan to direct the growth of the city’s downtown. Central to the program were provisions for block-by-block protection of almost 500 historically significant buildings in five architectural conservation districts. Thus the alliance, uneasy as it is, has encouraged a new vision of the desirable urban



RMZ

Figure 2. Sixteen years after the Providence plan, the Downtown Plan for San Francisco incorporated many acres of conservation district in the central area of the city, an action that merited the attention of the press throughout the country.

scene and is forging a permanent heritage for the nation. Preservationists have played their part particularly in the aesthetic area by identifying and publicizing significant buildings, neighborhoods, and cities. Planners have contributed their skills in providing legal and administrative conservation techniques and integrating the programs into general schemes directing urban development. On the whole, their cooperative efforts have yielded positive results.

Authors' note

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PLANNING FOR SUCCESSFUL PRESERVATION

Compiled by NAPC

Editors note: The following article was compiled in response to numerous requests from our members using materials collected by NAPC including training presentations and conference handouts. Many excellent books with more extensive information are available from the American Planning Association (www.planning.org) and the National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.nationaltrust.org).

Although developing and maintaining a preservation plan is not an endeavor to be taken lightly, it is not beyond the reach of most local preservation programs.

In order to be optimally successful, a local preservation program must plan for its future growth as well as its ongoing maintenance. The need for local preservation plans has become more obvious as historic preservation and local preservation commissions have become more accepted as legitimate parts of local government, and as their work has become more complex. In some states, having a local preservation plan is a requirement of the Certified Local Government (CLG) program or may be mandated by state legislation. Many communities, however, do not have a local preservation plan or have allowed their plan to become out of date. Although developing and maintaining a preservation plan is not an endeavor to be taken lightly, it is not beyond the reach of most local preservation programs

What is a Preservation Plan?

Simply put, a preservation plan is a roadmap for a government's future preservation activity. Ideally, a local preservation plan is an element of the city or county's comprehensive plan; but in cities and towns without comprehensive plans, it can be a stand-alone document. Whatever its form, a preservation plan *and the planning process* provide a proactive way to ensure the preservation and protection of a community's historic resources and character.

By informing property owners about the community's preservation goals, a preservation plan can be a public outreach tool for the preservation commission. Community buy-in is achieved by involving the public in the planning process, which lets property owners and residents help shape the community's future in a positive way. As the public becomes more aware of local history, enthusiasm and support for its preservation will grow. In many cities and towns, the preservation plan is also an economic development tool used to help attract businesses and individual property owners who value the characteristics usually found in communities with strong preservation programs.

Elements of a preservation plan may exist in a city or town's different policies and land use management tools and it is not uncommon for objectives that would be included in a preservation plan to be found in the local zoning or preservation ordinance. Since these ordinances do not provide the other elements of a preservation plan, they cannot take its place. Naturally, preservation plans vary from place to place depending on community size, stage of development, public awareness of historic resources, when the local preservation ordinance was passed, etc. In all cases, however, an effective preservation plan has certain characteristics.

Common Characteristics

Future oriented - An effective preservation plan establishes goals and objectives that will be achieved over time through survey activity, district designation, regulations, and ordinance administration.

Continuous - To be effective and remain relevant, a preservation plan requires periodic reevaluation and amendment to adjust to changes in local conditions as well as further development of other, related municipal policies and local ordinances.



Realistic - The preservation plan should be based on identified current and anticipated conditions as well as designed to help shape those conditions. It will not be effective if it only explores desired results and does not acknowledge real challenges and local conditions.

Comprehensive - Even if the preservation plan has to be a stand-alone document, it should contain all the elements it would have as a part of a comprehensive plan. Briefly, these elements include:

- ♦ **Statement of goals and the purpose of the preservation plan.** This element provides direction by establishing the community's preservation work program and sets forth the philosophy underlying the other elements of the plan. The goals must accurately reflect the community's vision for its future as well as its preservation needs. The community's vision is identified through public participation in the planning process.
- ♦ **Definition of historic character.** By describing the community's unique character, this element provides context for other parts of the plan and continuity when the plan is updated or amended. It can be as simple as a summary of the community's history and significant periods, or a very detailed narrative citing individual character defining resources.
- ♦ **Summary of past preservation efforts.** An overview of the local preservation movement helps people understand the evolution of the community's preservation program. It also informs future decisions about preservation priorities and planning activity.
- ♦ **Historic resource surveys and plans for future surveys.** A community's historic resources survey and a process for maintaining it are essential to successful local preservation. This element includes information about where and when surveys have been conducted, what areas will be surveyed in the future, and how the surveys will be maintained. The rationale behind prioritizing future survey areas should also be included. (See "Surveying for Success" on page 14 for more information about local historic resource survey programs)
- ♦ **Explanation of legal basis for historic preservation.** An overview of the state and local preservation laws establishes the legitimacy of the local preservation program and plan. Reference should be made to all applicable state statutes such as the state enabling legislation and any comprehensive planning legislation. An explanation of the local preservation ordinance and how it is administered, including enforcement and appeals provisions, is essential.
- ♦ **Discussion of relationship between historic preservation and other land use and growth management authority.** How preservation will be coordinated with other governmental decisions concerning land use, transportation, public works, etc. should be addressed in the plan to avoid conflicting decisions. This element should also provide a process to reconcile potentially contradictory regulations. These provisions are easier to coordinate when the preservation plan is an element in a comprehensive plan.
- ♦ **Explanation of public sector responsibilities.** How the municipality will manage historic properties that it owns must be defined to guide its future treatment of them. In many states, city owned property is not subject to review by the local



preservation commission. A commitment by the local government to be a responsible steward can prevent inappropriate public sector actions. This section should also include a means for ensuring that public actions, such as infrastructure improvements, will not adversely affect privately owned historic resources.

Discussion of preservation incentives. This section of the plan does not create incentive programs, but summarizes programs that are already in place and recommends programs that should be developed in the future. Local regulation is more readily accepted when accompanied by incentives such as tax credits, façade grants, and low income housing assistance to promote historic resource protection. (See *The Alliance Review*, May - June 2005 for more information)

Discussion of preservation education activity. Public outreach to promote preservation is essential for successful local preservation. Programs to educate the public about the local historic preservation program, the importance of historic resources, and to raise awareness and appreciation of local history should be summarized and potential future programs outlined in the plan

An agenda for future preservation activity. This section provides time frames for implementing the plan's goals and objectives and sets implementation priorities. Just as importantly, it establishes a system for periodic review to monitor progress, identify any necessary amendments, and to update the plan on a regular basis.

The Process

No single planning process fits every community in detail, but most include a steering committee comprised of representatives from the various stakeholders. Stakeholders include the local preservation commission, property owners, from various municipal agencies, elected officials, members of local preservation non-profit groups, business owners commission staff, and others. The steering committee typically works with commission staff (if available) or a consultant who provides expertise and experience and guides the process.



Through a series of community meetings and surveys, the committee learns what is important to the community and how the community wants to grow. A skilled facilitator is essential. These community values and vision are then compiled and presented to the community for review and comment. The steering committee, along with staff or a consultant, uses the information from the community to develop and refine the goals and objectives eventually set forth in the plan. Whatever process is followed, public participation is essential.

Through a series of community meetings and surveys, the committee learns what is important to the community and how the community wants to grow.

Photo: NAPC File Photo

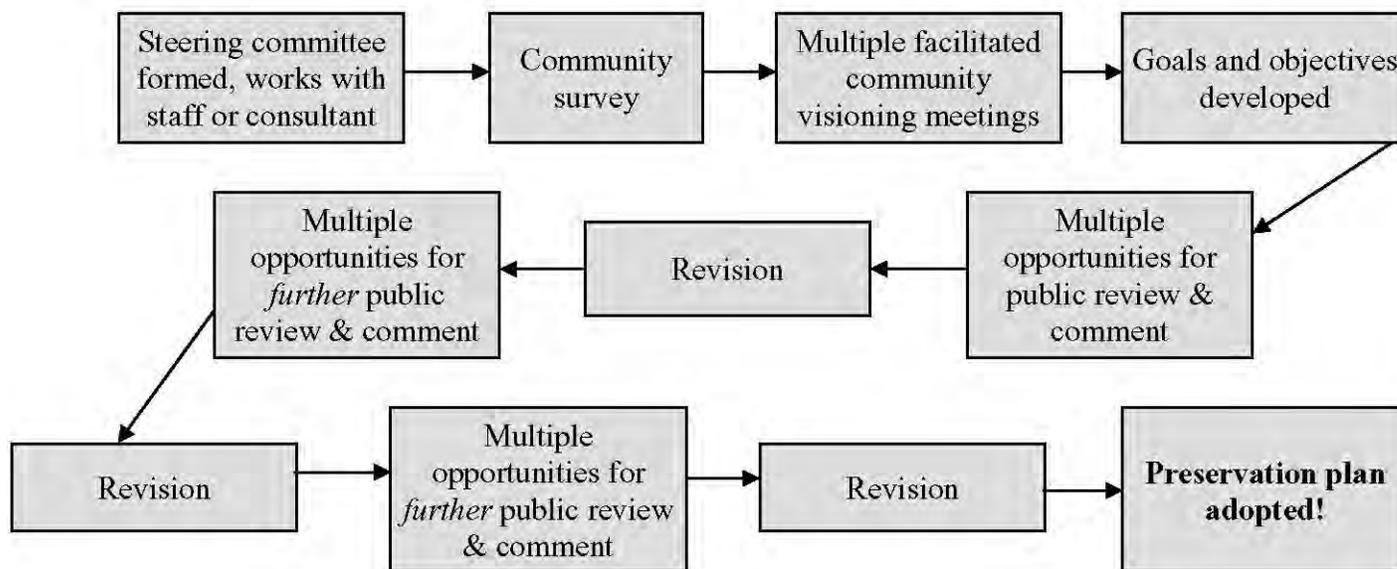
The committee can develop other parts of the plan like historical background, past preservation efforts, legal basis, public sector responsibilities, etc. with less public involvement; but nothing in the plan should be developed without giving the public an opportunity to comment. By involving as many stakeholders as possible and actively seeking public participation, you can help ensure that the plan will be readily adopted and its implementation supported.

Challenges

As with anything, there are challenges to developing and maintaining a preservation plan. Fortunately, they are not insurmountable. The most common challenges include:



The Preservation Planning Process:



Funding - Even if commission staff is available to guide the process, staff time usually isn't free and the additional work required may necessitate hiring additional personnel. Frequently, hiring an outside consultant is the most reasonable option. Potential sources of funding include CLG grants, local preservation organizations, and civic-minded businesses.

Scope - Avoid having so large a scope to the planning endeavor that the task becomes impossible to manage. A community may need to begin with small plans for distinct districts and then expand to include other areas.

Public participation - Even though the strength of a plan depends on it, public participation can be difficult to get. Use multiple meetings scheduled for different times of the day and evening as well as on weekends. Hold them in a variety of safe, fully accessible places. If transportation is difficult for part of the population, consider asking local civic groups to help. Have translators available at meetings held in neighborhoods with large non-English speaking populations. Announce the meetings frequently and well ahead of time in multiple places including television, radio, and the alternative press.

Implementation - Once a plan is adopted, implementation can prove to be more difficult than anticipated. Revision to the agenda may be necessary, but should not be so severe as to negate its effectiveness.

Maintenance - The more the plan is used and referenced, the easier it will be to maintain. Make reviewing the plan part of the annual review of commission work and include it in the commission's annual report.



Cultural Resources

PARTNERSHIP NOTES

Technical assistance in historic preservation planning, related planning/land use topics, and preservation strategies for Federal agencies, Indian tribes, States, and local governments

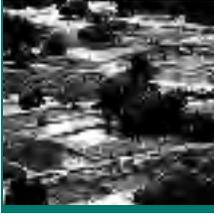
ZONING AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

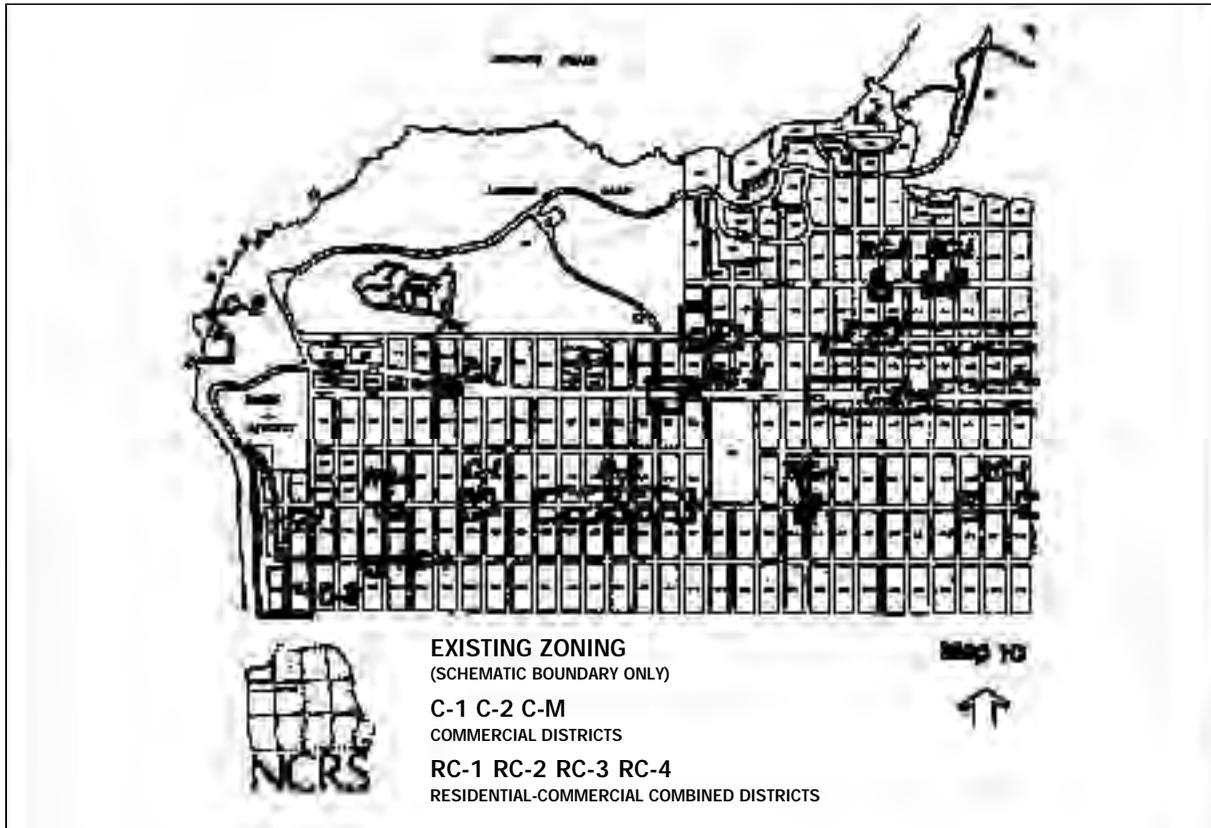
Stephen A. Morris

ZONING IS ONE OF MANY ORDINANCES AFFECTING the use of land in a local community. Others include building and fire codes, environmental regulations, subdivision ordinances, and the land-use policies expressed in a comprehensive or master plan. Of all these, however, zoning is the most far reaching and, perhaps, the best established. Historic properties and archeological sites occupy land area and, like other land uses, are subject to zoning regulations. When properly applied, zoning can be a powerful tool in protecting historic properties. Although zoning may be more effective in protecting historic buildings and historic districts than other kinds of historic resources, it is important to become knowledgeable about zoning in your community and to understand how it affects historic resources and archeological sites and how it might better protect these historic properties.

What is zoning?

Under state enabling legislation, a local government is authorized to divide the land area in its jurisdiction into districts, or *zones*, each with a set of regulations governing the development of private land. The districts are marked on a zoning map, which is an official government document. Generally, the text of the ordinance specifies the categories of uses allowed in each district (residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, etc.), the density of development, the maximum size of the buildings, the size of the lot, the required spaces around the buildings, the number of off-street parking spaces, and other requirements for development, such as the building setback from the lot lines and the number of off-street parking spaces. Zoning districts are designated by classifications, such as “RS1” which might stand for Residential Single Family Low-Density, or “C2,” which could be Commercial Medium-Density (generally letters





Commercial zones in a section of San Francisco. Source: Neighborhood Commercial Rezoning Study, San Francisco Department of City Planning, May 1984.

refer to uses while the numbers indicate density), as shown in the zoning map from San Francisco, above.

What kinds of local governments can adopt zoning?

State zoning enabling legislation generally specifies which local jurisdictions are authorized to adopt a zoning ordinance. In some states, both municipalities (cities and towns) and counties

can adopt zoning laws; in others, zoning is a function reserved for municipalities. The State of Texas, for example, restricts zoning to cities and towns of a certain size and requires counties to get special permission from the state legislature in order to adopt a zoning ordinance.

How long has zoning been in practice?

New York City adopted the nation's first comprehensive zon-

ing ordinance in 1916. The Standard State Zoning Enabling Act was drafted by the Department of Commerce in 1922 and had much to do with the widespread adoption of State enabling legislation and the acceptance of zoning by many of the larger cities and suburban communities around the country. The right of local governments to zone was affirmed by the Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.* in 1926, which upheld that, in prin-

ciple, zoning was a valid expression of the police power (i.e., the power of the government to regulate activity by private persons for the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the public).

What about pre-existing uses or buildings?

Buildings or uses in existence prior to the establishment or amendment of the zoning ordinance, which are inconsistent with the new or amended zoning requirements, are called *non-conformities*. A lot that does not meet minimum size requirements can also be non-conforming. Non-conformities are sometimes given a set period within which they must be brought into conformity with the zoning ordinance; in some cases they are allowed to remain in existence indefinitely under the condition that they will not be expanded or improved.

How is a zoning ordinance adopted and administered?

The zoning ordinance and its supplemental map are adopted by the local governing body, such as the city or county council or town board, based on the recommendations of the planning commission, or a specially appointed zoning commission. The zoning commission makes its recommendations after studying existing

patterns of development and particular land use issues in a community. After the ordinance and map are finalized and adopted, an appointed zoning board of appeals or board of adjustment is established to decide when exceptions to the ordinance can be granted to particular property owners. A zoning administrator or officer administers the zoning ordinance on a day-to-day basis, granting zoning permits for proposed developments that comply with the terms of the ordinance.

How are changes made to a zoning ordinance?

Changes to the text of a zoning ordinance or a zoning map can be in the form of *zoning amendments* or *revisions*. A revision is considered to be more comprehensive than an amendment and usually results in a completely new ordinance. Both require following the legal process established by the state enabling legislation and must be approved by the local governing body. If state law requires that the zoning ordinance be consistent with the local comprehensive plan, policies in the plan must be considered. Often the planning commission reviews proposed amendments and makes recommendations to the town council. The term *rezoning* applies to both amendments and revisions and does not distinguish

between changes that apply to a small area or to the entire community.

What is a variance and under whose authority is it granted?

Given the unique characteristics of each parcel of land, zoning authorities recognized early on that although every property owner within a district would be bound to the same requirements, in certain cases exceptions would have to be made. One common type of exception is a *variance*, in which a property owner is exempted from all or a number of the provisions of the zoning ordinance. Variances require the property owner to prove to the zoning appeals board that, due to the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical condition of the property, compliance with the zoning regulations would result in undue hardship. Variances may cover any aspect of the zoning requirements, such as use, number of parking spaces, size of building, or setbacks (the required distance between buildings and lot lines).

What about special exceptions?

Special exceptions, also known as *special permits* or *conditional uses*, apply to uses that, although they don't conform to the zoning reg-

ulations, are considered to be desirable in a particular district under certain circumstances, such as a school in a residential zone. Unlike variances, special exceptions are listed in the text of the zoning ordinance along with those uses permitted as *a matter of right* or *by right* under the ordinance. The conditions required for the zoning board to grant a special exception are also set forth in the ordinance, although sometimes the board negotiates particular conditions to be placed on a proposed development with a property owner.

What is historic zoning or historic district overlay zoning?

Where historic district design review is established through the zoning ordinance, it is often referred to as *historic zoning* or *historic district overlay zoning*. An *overlay zone* is an additional layer of regulations for a particular area, which is laid atop the underlying or base zoning regulations. There are many different kinds of overlay zones including those that establish additional controls on development in areas subject to airport noise or those that promote downtown retail development. The base zoning provisions, which relate to use and density, continue to be administered by the zoning authorities. A

design review board or historic preservation commission administers the regulations contained in the historic overlay zone.

Should historic zoning or design review regulations and base zoning be coordinated?

Regardless of whether or not design review in historic districts is called historic zoning or is implemented through an independent process, it is essential that preservation regulations, such as historic district design review, and zoning be coordinated. Where there is no coordination, the preservation regulations that seek to preserve and protect the integrity of historic neighborhoods may be working at cross-purposes with the zoning ordinance, the goal of which could well be to attract high-density new development.

How can preservation regulations and zoning be coordinated?

Coordination can take place in a variety of ways. One way is to arrange for regular meetings between members of the zoning board and the preservation commission or to have a member of the zoning board also serve on the preservation commission. Interaction between the staff of both groups is also important. A

number of zoning ordinances provide a degree of coordination by allowing the historic district commission or design review board to review and make recommendations on all use permits, variances, rezoning requests, and zoning text amendment applications within the historic district.

Where preservation and zoning are separate, an ideal solution is to include a clause in each ordinance stating that where there are conflicts, the preservation ordinance takes precedence. Alternatively, the zoning ordinance might have a provision stating that there is a presumption against developments, rezonings, and variances that harm individual landmarks or historic districts. In addition, successful preservation commissions build in the opportunity to comment on any zoning issues that may affect historic properties and have the authority to recommend a suspension of certain zoning requirements that hamper preservation.

What are the typical problems that result from a lack of coordination between preservation regulations and zoning rules?

Zoning incompatible with current use. The most typical problems arise because the cur-

rent and historical uses in an area do not match the current zoning designation. Often a historic residential neighborhood may be zoned for retail, office, or industrial uses. The pressure to convert to one of these uses can result in the demolition or inappropriate remodeling of historic residences. Additionally, but often not considered, the demolition or inappropriate remodeling of the buildings to more profitable uses could damage or destroy important archeological remains that may exist on the property.

Density. A related conflict between zoning and preservation is density. In many cases, the current and traditional uses in a historic district may conform with the uses permitted under the zoning regulations, but the density of the property's actual use may be lower than the zoning allows. This is frequently the case in older commercial districts where historic commercial buildings are an average of two or three stories in height but the zoning allows much taller buildings. This also happens when farm acreage is zoned, for example, at a density of three houses per acre. The greater economic return generated by larger commercial buildings or more intense residential development creates pressure to demolish the existing

buildings, or to build incompatible additions to smaller historic buildings. Residential areas zoned for densities much higher than those represented by the existing buildings frequently suffer from disinvestment, since owners of the existing houses may be reluctant to maintain them without any assurance that a large apartment building will not be built on a neighboring property.

Allowable density may be the critical factor in archeological site protection. Higher density means greater square footage of floor space (either horizontally, vertically, or both) or a greater number of housing units permitted per acre. If in certain zoning categories, the zoning ordinance allows a density that essentially fills up the entire property, there will be no opportunity for protecting an archeological site in place. The site protection goal conflicts with the allowable density. On the other hand, the lower the permitted density in a particular zoning category, the greater the opportunity to find ways to protect archeological sites in place.

Lot sizes. Minimum lot sizes can also be a source of problems. For example, the 1950s zoning in one Virginia town encouraged redevelopment of older, so-called "obsolete," residential neighbor-

hoods close to the downtown. The zoning enlarged the minimum lot size beyond the traditional size (small urban lots) in order to redevelop the district in a manner similar to a large lot suburban neighborhood. Redevelopment did not take place as planned, and years later the area became desirable as a historic residential neighborhood. Property owners, however, were prevented from building compatible in-fill houses on traditionally sized vacant lots by the 1950s zoning, which required large lots. The inability to develop the vacant lots hampered the revitalization of the neighborhood.

The converse situation can also work against preservation. In historic areas where houses were traditionally built on large lots, current zoning or subdivision regulations may allow new dwellings to be wedged between historic houses on newly subdivided lots much smaller than those of the surrounding houses.

Off-street parking. Finally, preservation regulations and zoning often appear to be working at cross-purposes in regard to off-street parking requirements. Typically, modern zoning requires a greater number of off-street spaces than can be easily accommodated on a small historic lot. As a result, the property owner rehabilitating a historic building

or constructing a compatible infill building in a historic district often faces the dilemma of either demolishing an adjacent historic building to provide enough space for the required parking or abandoning the project altogether. Neither of these results is a favorable preservation outcome.

Each of the problems discussed above can be resolved by changing the existing zoning. However, prior to considering solutions to individual problems, it is advisable to take a comprehensive look at zoning and preservation conflicts throughout a community.

What steps should a community take to study the effect of zoning on the protection of historic properties in the area?

A logical place to begin studying the relationship between zoning and preservation in a community is to compile a single map showing both the boundaries of historic districts (or potential historic districts) and individual landmarks and the boundaries of the various zoning districts that affect the same area. This type of map clearly illustrates what zoning designations apply in areas of historic interest. At this point the text of the zoning ordinance

should be analyzed to determine the requirements for each zoning district and whether or not they support or conflict with the preservation and revitalization of the historic properties or areas.

The following questions provide a starting point for an analysis of this sort:

- Are historic residential neighborhoods with single-family houses zoned for single-family residential or other compatible uses?
- Do lot sizes and the building setback requirements from the front lot line match historic patterns?
- Do separate zoning districts with widely divergent regulations (one for high-density commercial use, one for single-family residential use, for example) divide a single historic neighborhood?
- Does the zoning for areas immediately surrounding a historic district provide an adequate buffer against development that would have a negative impact on the historic area?
- Do commercial zones allow much taller and larger buildings than currently exist in the historic district?
- Do commercial zones permit automobile-oriented commercial uses, such as

drive-through facilities, service facilities, or large parking lots, that conflict with the traditional street-front and pedestrian orientation of historic commercial buildings?

- Does the zoning require so many off-street parking spaces that it hampers the rehabilitation of historic buildings or the construction of new in-fill buildings?

If an analysis of zoning designations in historic districts reveals situations of the kind mentioned above, the next step is to examine the zoning ordinance to determine what, if any, existing zoning classifications might be more appropriate, or if it is necessary to amend the zoning in other ways.

What kinds of amendments should be considered to make the zoning in historic districts more responsive to preservation concerns?

Amendments might involve shifting the boundaries between adjacent zones or substituting one classification for another, such as changing from an inappropriate low-density residential designation to a more appropriate medium-density residential one.

The existing zoning ordinance, however, may not include classifications that are entirely appropriate for historic districts. In such cases, a particular requirement may have to be changed. If, for instance, the required minimum lot size in a particular single-family residential zone is too large and discourages in-fill construction and rehabilitation, changing this regulation to allow smaller lot sizes may be required. Or, if parking requirements are such that it is difficult to rehabilitate buildings in historic areas, then the number of required parking spaces should be reduced.

Another option would be to draft an entirely new zoning classification with requirements tailored to the specific needs of a historic district. Zoning classifications that apply only to particular areas of a community are known as *special purpose districts* or *special use districts*. Cities have enacted these not only for historic districts but also for other areas of the city with specialized uses or needs such as ethnic neighborhoods or areas with large institutions (hospitals, universities, etc.). Seattle has two districts of this kind: the Pioneer Square Preservation District, which was established to protect the historical and architectural character of that commercial historic district; and the International Special Review District,

which aims to maintain the International District core as an Asian cultural, retail, and residential center by encouraging such uses as small scale food processing and craft work with an Asian emphasis.

What is downzoning?

If the current zoning permits development at densities far higher than existing buildings, rezoning might involve what is known as *downzoning*, or reducing the permitted height and bulk of buildings. Downzoning can be controversial since affected property owners may perceive it as diminishing the value of their property. If this issue can be resolved, downzoning may be the single most effective protection measure that can be achieved through zoning in historic commercial areas, particularly in downtown business districts, because it substantially removes the pressure for high density development from the district.

What other measures are available to make zoning compatible with historic preservation?

A number of cities have amended their zoning ordinances to include special exceptions that allow historic properties to be used in ways not permitted as a matter of right in a particular

zone. For example, in Denver, offices or art galleries are permitted by special exception in residential zones if they are housed in historic buildings. This measure has made the large mansions in the city's Capitol Hill district more economically competitive with new residential buildings. Similarly, the District of Columbia created a special exception to allow nonprofit organizations to use residential landmark buildings for certain nonresidential use under specified circumstances (the building must contain a gross floor area of 10,000 square feet or greater, for example). Some cities, such as Richmond, Virginia, provide for the waiver of certain zoning requirements, such as height and area regulations and off-street parking and loading requirements for buildings in historic districts, when it can be demonstrated that the waiver is necessary in order to achieve the purposes outlined in the city's preservation ordinance.

Transfer of development rights or TDR is another zoning technique that has been used to promote preservation in a few cities and counties. Basically, the TDR technique separates the rights to develop a parcel of land from other rights associated with the parcel. The development rights of agricultural land, low density historic buildings, or the air space above a historic building,

for example, are transferred to sold for use in another location where higher density development is permitted or encouraged. Subsequent development on the land from which these rights have been transferred can be limited to very low density or precluded altogether, depending upon the community's regulations. The cost and expertise required to administer a full-scale TDR program have presented difficulties, especially for smaller communities which lack full-time planning staff.

Bonus or incentive zoning has also been used to encourage historic preservation in communities around the country. The bonus refers to the additional density (beyond what would otherwise be permitted) granted to developers in exchange for providing specified public amenities, such as open space or affordable housing. Philadelphia's plan for Center City proposed that density bonuses be granted for the preservation of locally designated historic structures and that the city's zoning code be revised to include standards to define the requirements.

Conditional zoning is another technique that can benefit the preservation of historic resources and archeological sites. The local government may grant a landowner's request for rezoning

only if certain conditions are met, such as the dedication of land for a community park, the provision of a playground, or street improvements to accommodate traffic associated with the new development. Sometimes called *proffers*, these conditions are negotiated and agreed upon by local government staff and the property owner. Once approved by the local governing body, these conditions become legally binding as part of the property's zoning.

This technique has been successfully used in Fairfax County, Virginia, where archeological sites have been surveyed, excavated, set aside in open space, and donated to the county park system, and historic buildings have been incorporated into development project designs as residences and community centers. This technique is also used effectively in Massachusetts. For example, in Sharon, Massachusetts proffers helped protect the Stoughtonham Furnace Site, listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its historically significant remains of an iron foundry where cannons were made during the Revolutionary War. The developer of a large residential development donated the site to the town for conservation land and donated a preservation restriction (or easement) to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Despite the potential benefits of this technique, there are some drawbacks. The success of such an approach depends upon local government staff and/or commissioners being knowledgeable about historic preservation and archeological protection issues, being able to participate in the rezoning review process, understanding the business objectives of development, and having skills in effective negotiation. Where knowledgeable and skilled staff are lacking, historic resource preservation may never receive consideration unless citizens raise the issue during public hearings.

Some practical suggestions

Preservationists should demonstrate a sincere, constructive, and continuing interest in local zoning issues by attending scheduled meetings and public hearings of the zoning commission or board of zoning adjustment (whether or not a "preservation case" is on the agenda). It is not necessary (and sometimes counterproductive) to give formal testimony on every topic. However, thoughtful queries by the public at a hearing will often raise questions that board members themselves would not have considered, and ideas from the public can help the board develop the conditions

and requirements to be included in its decisions. Preservationists can also frame their questions and observations to make clear connections between historic preservation and zoning issues—connections board members might not otherwise see.

Secondly, having demonstrated their commitment, credibility, and interest in local zoning, preservationists should take the next step and offer historic preservation training or presentations for local zoning (and other land use) boards. The training has to be attractive, appealing, and user-friendly and should be promoted as a way to enhance the board members' ability to do their work more effectively and efficiently, not as a "favor" or as lobbying from a special-interest group. Arranging for co-sponsorship of the sessions by the state or regional planning agency, the State Historic Preservation Office, local non-profit or service clubs, and business organizations demonstrates that preservation concerns are varied and widely shared public policy issues and not special-interest concerns.



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Sources of Information

For those interested in learning more about zoning and pursuing the connections between zoning and historic preservation the following publications may be useful. Publications of the American Planning Association are available from APA's Planners Book Service, 122 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600, Chicago, Illinois 60603; or check out a wider selection of planning, zoning, and related publications on APA's Web site at <www.planning.org>.

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CULTURAL RESOURCES PARTNERSHIP NOTES

HERITAGE PRESERVATION SERVICES, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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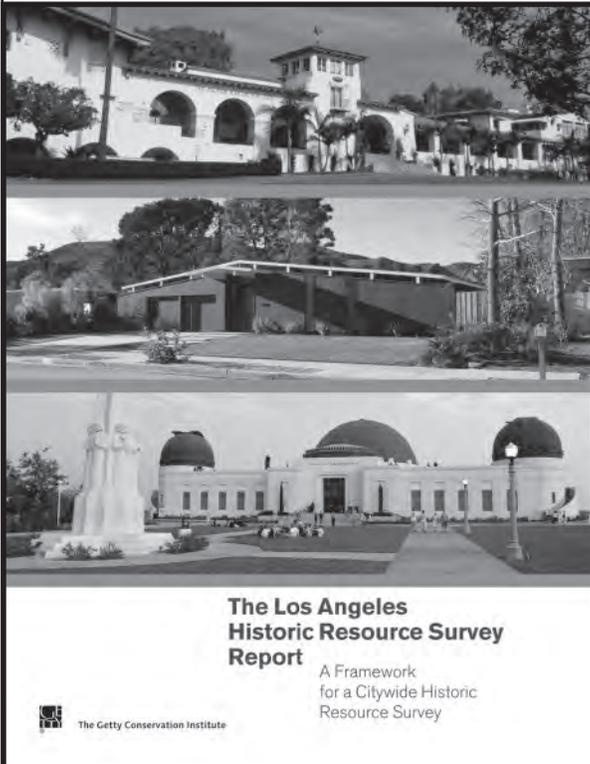


U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Cultural Resources

PLANNING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY SURVEY

Janet Hansen, Deputy Manager, Office of Historic Resources, City of Los Angeles

The City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources (OHR) is getting ready to launch year one of SurveyLA, the multi-year citywide survey of historic resources. SurveyLA represents one of the largest and most ambitious surveys in the U.S. Imagine the challenge of planning for a survey in a city that comprises 466 square miles and 880,000 parcels—an area larger than eight of the nation's largest cities combined. Los Angeles has learned some valuable lessons in developing a methodology for a citywide survey that not only makes a project of this magnitude possible, but also utilizes cutting-edge approaches that have the potential to change the way we think about historic resources surveys. Sharing these lessons is particularly timely since many government agencies and preservation organizations are in the start-up phase of planning for first-time citywide surveys or updating previous ones.



Although Los Angeles' cultural resources ordinance called for a citywide survey of historic resources almost 50 years ago, it was not until 2005, when the J. Paul Getty Foundation entered into a multi-year grant agreement with the City, that SurveyLA began. Prior to the start of SurveyLA, city surveys were generally single-purpose in nature—primarily limited to nominations for historic districts and those required for compliance with state and federal environmental review processes.

In preparation for the citywide survey, the Getty Conservation Institute completed a multi-year study, looking at best practices nationwide, which culminated in *The Los Angeles Historic Resource Survey Report*. Starting in 2006, the OHR used this framework as a blueprint for developing SurveyLA methodology. One of the greatest challenges has been developing tools and methods that both meet accepted federal and state survey guidelines and standards, and providing streamlined approaches to identifying and evaluating historic resources in a city as large, complex, and diverse as Los Angeles.

Getting Started

Since the 1970s and '80s, when many cities began completing historic resources surveys, survey methodologies have become increasingly more sophisticated. Today's surveys are typically marked by the use of survey information for planning purposes, greater reliance on historic context statements to identify and evaluate re-

Starting in 2006, the OHR used the *Los Angeles Historic Resource Survey Report* framework as a blueprint for developing SurveyLA methodology.

sources, advances in technology that make field surveys more efficient, and new strategies for public participation.

When planning a survey, research should be conducted to gain a perspective on up-to-date survey strategies to make informed decisions when developing survey methodologies. Sources of information may include a State Historic Preservation Office and municipalities, and agencies that have recently completed surveys, particularly those that may be using some innovative technologies. In addition, national, state, and local preservation organizations regularly offer sessions on new directions in historic resources surveys, often providing useful case studies.

One of the most important considerations when planning a survey is the proposed use of survey findings. Survey data provide the foundation for preservation planning and making sound decisions about historic resources. Understanding how survey data will be used not only helps to shape survey methodologies, but also provides a basis for more fully integrating preservation planning into the larger planning process. For SurveyLA, data will be used first and foremost as a planning tool. Survey methodology was specifically designed to gather data needed to help shape decisions by policy makers, developers, urban planners, community organizations, and property owners. Survey results will be used to inform community plans and other policy documents, facilitate project review and state and federal environmental review processes, and assist with disaster preparedness. Findings will also provide vast opportunities in areas relating to curriculum development, heritage tourism, economic development, and marketing historic neighborhoods and properties.

Survey strategies are also defined by what surveys, if any, have already been completed in a community and what areas or individual resources are designated. These factors may necessitate coordination with other agencies and organizations to consolidate information and provide a clear understanding of what needs to be surveyed. Other considerations in planning for surveys include the types of financial resources available; staffing and personnel needs, including the use of volunteers; and a time frame for completion. Understanding these issues will help with decision making regarding funding sources and the need to phase a survey over a period of time.

Developing Historic Contexts

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Preservation Planning, published almost 30 years ago, identify the historic context as the cornerstone of the preservation planning process. A context statement is a narrative technical document that provides a framework for completing surveys.

Planning for historic contexts generally requires reconnaissance-level surveys to identify important property types and research regarding significant development trends in the architectural, social, and cultural history of an area. In addition to working with consulting firms specializing in historic resources surveys and contexts, municipalities may enlist help from preservation commissioners, local history experts, historical societies, and colleges and universities offering preservation programs. For citywide surveys, organizing a committee and holding working meetings will help develop an organizational framework for a comprehensive context statement that covers the full range of resources represented. Updated surveys may require revisions to existing contexts and development of additional contexts not covered in previous surveys. Whether a new survey or an update, developing a plan will help set priorities for generating contexts and completing surveys based on preservation planning needs, allocated budget, and time constraints.

SurveyLA is grounded in the preparation of a citywide historic context statement using the Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) approach developed by the National Park Service. The narrative document identifies contexts and themes that represent the city's architectural, social, and cultural history, links those themes to extant representative property types, and provides a framework for property type evaluation through the development of eligibility standards. These standards provide specific physical and associative qualities and integrity thresholds a property must have to convey significance. While the MPD format was designed to evaluate thematically-

related properties for listing in the National Register; when applied to a local survey it may also incorporate state and local criteria for evaluation, thus making survey findings more broadly applicable when used for planning.

Survey Technology

Technological advances have resulted in great efficiencies in conducting field surveys and managing survey data. Exploring available technology options is an important part of the survey planning process. For SurveyLA, the citywide historic context statement has been used as the basis for developing a custom mobile application, or Field Guide Survey System (FiGSS), designed for use in the field on tablet PCs. The FiGSS uses Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping software and is preloaded with aerial photographs, tract maps, and information relating to designated, previously surveyed, and potentially significant resources. The FiGSS allows surveyors to identify individual properties and historic districts. Boundaries for potential districts can be drawn in the field based on historic tract maps or visual inspection of an area.

The FiGSS is unique in that it “translates” the components of the historic context into data fields so that surveyors can readily place a property within the appropriate context and theme by selecting from drop down lists. For example, when surveying a 1950s residential neighborhood a field surveyor would select the context “Residential Development and Suburbanization,” the theme “Post-WWII Suburbanization,” and sub-theme “Suburban Planning and Design.” A set of eligibility standards associated with this context/theme combination are presented as a series of check boxes from which the field surveyor will select to determine if the neighborhood qualifies as a potential historic district.

To make the overall survey process more efficient, SurveyLA methodology and the FiGSS are also designed to streamline information gathering and production of standardized California State historic resources inventory forms. The OHR, for example, worked with the survey coordinator at the California State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) to develop a format for automating bullet-point descriptions of properties based on standardized lists of architectural features. This format eliminates the need for writing lengthy narrative descriptions, which are time consuming and expensive, and generally do not add value to using survey information as a planning tool. The OHR is also working with the California OHP to develop new survey forms to record information based on the identification and evaluation of resources using the MPD approach and an application to automate the electronic transfer of survey data to OHP.

Public Participation

A strategic public participation and community outreach program is a critical part of planning for a survey. Early outreach efforts may help gain support for a survey, dispel misconceptions about why surveys are conducted and how the results are used, and generate interest in participating in the project. An outreach program should provide early and ongoing information about a survey, offer clearly defined opportunities to volunteer, and encourage the public to contribute information on important resources in their neighborhood. Outreach activities may vary depending on the needs of the survey and available resources.

The sheer size and diversity of Los Angeles necessitated developing a SurveyLA public participation program that is broad-based and citywide. With the assistance of the Getty Conservation Institute, the OHR developed the SurveyLA website to provide general information on the project, volunteer sign-up opportunities, and reports on project progress.

The website also features an interactive “MyhistoricLA” form to solicit information on potential resources that should be included in the survey. In addition, the OHR has used two Certified Local Government grants and worked with consultant teams to recruit and train a SurveyLA Speakers Bureau and develop *MyHistoricLA: Guide to Public Participation in SurveyLA*. This booklet, available on the SurveyLA website, provides step-by-step instructions for individuals and groups to use in providing information about important historic resources in their neighborhoods. SurveyLA outreach efforts have resulted in a volunteer base of over 200 people who have assisted with tasks including research, photography, data entry, field surveying and writing historic contexts.

Conclusion

SurveyLA has provided a unique opportunity for the City of Los Angeles to work together with consultants, volunteers and the State Office of Historic Preservation to develop a methodology that is providing a forward-thinking model for how surveys can be conducted. The lessons learned along the way have broad applicability for government agencies and organizations nationwide. The field surveys start in the coming months a new set of challenges will no doubt, be presented. The OHR will continue to share the “new lessons learned” as we move forward.

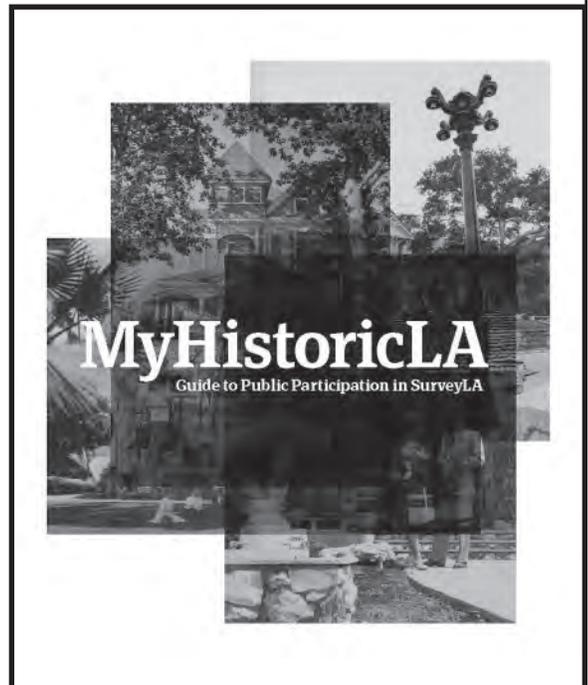
For more information:

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This booklet, available on the SurveyLA website, provides step-by-step instructions for individuals and groups to use in providing information about important historic resources in their neighborhoods.
Photo courtesy of the author.

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USING VOLUNTEERS IN THE LOCAL SURVEY PROCESS THREE CASE STUDIES EXAMINE THE BENEFITS

Erin Gettis, City Historic Preservation Officer, City of Riverside, California

As someone who works as a staff of one to a board and to a planning division, it is difficult to imagine life without the assistance of volunteers. As I write this article, my volunteer intern is working away on a thematic survey project in a capacity that formerly was performed by paid interns until recent jurisdictional budget cuts. Most of the time using volunteers is a “no-brainer.” They fill the gaps for largely underfunded jurisdictional departments and perform duties for boards/non-profits that allow for the very existence of the non-profit. Preservation as we know it could not, and would not, exist without the devoted, dependable volunteer: that jack-of-all trades, that person who wears so many hats, that person that makes our organizations possible.



Volunteers for SurveyLA Speakers Bureau receive training
Photo courtesy of the Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources.

Utilizing volunteers for survey projects is somewhat more complicated because a certain level of skill, or ability to follow directions, is required. Before contemplating use of volunteers in your project, it is important to consider your project goals and how using volunteers support that agenda. There are certainly preconceptions by many as to whether the use of volunteers would be a positive benefit or a negative concern. Some might think using volunteers will help save money, perhaps the most common reason volunteers are considered to be a benefit. Others might think that using volunteers undercuts consultants who have to work for a fee to sustain a business. Some think that using a group of volunteers, in particular on a survey project, will save time. Others might have soured to use of volunteers after a bad volunteer experience. Lastly, others may think that when volunteers are used the final product suffers. There is likely some element of truth to all of these preconceptions, good or bad. Put those aside for a moment, though, while we examine

three success stories of three jurisdictions of varying size where volunteers have been used to meet project goals. Volunteers have the ability to contribute to a project's success and in the following cases, you will see that the benefits outweigh the concerns and go far beyond cost savings to provide true community benefit.

Three Case Studies of various sized jurisdictions

San Juan Bautista

The city of San Juan Bautista is located in Northern California, and was named after Mission San Juan Bautista, which is located within the city. It is still primarily an agricultural town with a population of just over 1500. In 2005-2006 Galvin Preservation Associates did a reconnaissance level survey that included the entire city limits as well as the sphere of influence, inventorying more than 300 properties. The project included updating the existing citywide historic context statement by including contexts into the post-war era, working with volunteers to enter data into California Historic Resources Inventory Database (CHRID), and updating state level forms for the inventory. Andrea Galvin, president of Galvin Preservation Association was interviewed about this survey.

Riverside

In the City of Riverside, a city located half way between Los Angeles and Palm Springs California, Christopher Joseph and Associates prepared a Citywide Modernism context

statement and conducted the associated survey in 2008 and 2009. In 2006, Riverside had 293,761 residents. Extreme growth during the 1940s, 50s, and 60s necessitated such a survey, because these resources are now reaching 50 years of age. I managed the project, which included expanding upon the existing City-wide context statement to include the Modernism theme. As part of the survey portion of the project, the City of Riverside partnered with University of California, Riverside (UCR) to use student volunteers from a pair of classes. Students surveyed and produced state-level standard forms of a Modernism-themed business district for their final class project, and the resulting forms were reviewed by qualified City staff and the project consultant.

Los Angeles

SurveyLA, the Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey, is Los Angeles' first comprehensive program to identify significant historic resources throughout the city of 3,849,378 (in 2006) residents and is a ground-breaking effort. While Los Angeles has over 900 Historic-Cultural Monuments (local landmarks) and 24 Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (Historic Districts), to date only 15% of the city has been surveyed. The Office of Historic Resources (OHR) in Los Angeles was created in part to tackle this monumental task. Ken Bernstein, OHR's manager, was interviewed about this survey. There are numerous opportunities for volunteering at SurveyLA, a list of which can be seen in the links under Resources at the end of this article. (*The database and survey methodology can be read about in detail in this issue in an article by Janet Hansen, OHR's Deputy Manager.*)

Best Survey Practices

Up-Front Planning

When it comes to managing any project, if best practices are employed the project is more likely to succeed. Up-front planning can provide benefit in nearly any setting and the same is true when using volunteers for surveys. The typical nightmare volunteer story is a reality for most, where volunteers were used possibly to save money, perhaps last minute, and the volunteers were unreliable or disorganized and as a result the end product was not successful. Up-front planning is the key to meaningful volunteer input. All three of these success stories included a large amount of advanced planning. In Los Angeles, professionals prepared online templates that allowed members of the public to provide input on potentially significant properties. Once the data was entered online, the data fields of these templates populated survey forms that were later used by professionals conducting the survey. Additionally, volunteer members of the Speakers Bureau which is discussed further below, solicited input from the community at information meetings citywide. This information collected from volunteers by volunteers was then compiled and communicated to the professionals who were working in the field. This up front planning and compiling of data contributed to a greater understanding of the resources being surveyed in SurveyLA.

Training in advance

In all three case studies there was extensive advance training. In SurveyLA one of the volunteer opportunities, the Speakers Bureau, created a program that trained representatives to go out and be ambassadors for the survey. These volunteers would participate in an advanced training program that involved two sets of classes to train those involved in the Speakers Bureau to travel around the city to inform and solicit input from area residents, advocates, and enthusiasts.

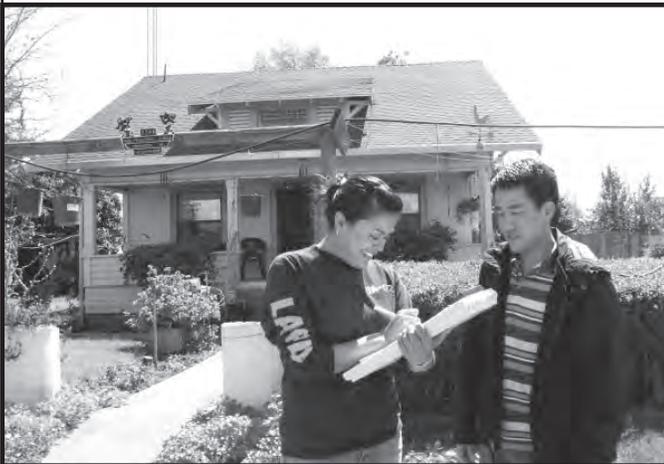
In San Juan Bautista, the up-front effort was similarly focused by creating "fool proof" forms and an instruction booklet that was combined with training in the use of these

forms. By creating enough defined data fields on the forms, the volunteer input was put to its best use and the product did not suffer because of the constraints in place.

In Riverside, the students were trained for their volunteer work in [an academic] quarter long class. This type of training worked very well in that it allowed for 11 weeks of classes and field trips in preparation for the final assignment where each student chose a building to intensively survey as part of a larger district. This work became the basis for which a District form was later prepared by professionals and paid interns.

Oversight of volunteer work & Volunteer management

Providing oversight by a qualified professional who meets the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for the volunteer work can ensure project standards are adhered to, as well as provide a level of consistency and credibility for the project. In SurveyLA, a volunteer coordinator helps coordinate the 200 volunteers for the project through a database of contact information to ensure that the appropriate volunteers are being used in the best way. More importantly, a professional provides needed administration, management, and uniformity for the final work product. The office of Historic Resources in LA state on the website that, "to ensure the overall credibility and consistency of a large citywide survey project, the actual survey field work and significance assessments will be made by historic preservation professionals, not by volunteers." In both San Juan Bautista and in Riverside, just as in Los Angeles, qualified professionals provided that professional oversight. This type of supervision, as well as the transparency of the process, provides necessary credibility and consistency.



GPA Staff conducting surveys.
Photo courtesy of Galvin Preservation Associates.

Goals/Benefits

Community Investment

Community buy-in and investment in your resources and the survey process may be more valuable than the money you save and a good goal of any survey project. In an article from the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review on the Mt. Lebanon neighborhood, survey volunteers were recognized for the benefit to the community: "Recording this data and having people recognize the value is of enormous importance to the community and the community's vitality and attractiveness." In San Juan Bautista, the residents who volunteered became invested citizens who better understood not only the process but the reason for the process and the resulting survey. In turn, they shared their volunteer experience and knowledge with others and there was a positive domino effect in the community to invest in the survey. In SurveyLA, because of the political nature of the project at times garnering

community buy in, support, and participation, helped provide the needed exposure and support to continue the ongoing multi-million dollar effort. Without this kind of support, it is likely that both projects could have failed. With it, their success continues.

Financial Savings

Using volunteers may not provide financial savings due to the oversight required by a trained professional and the fee involved. Perhaps, if very well defined and front loaded with training, the project costs can be lowered and the volunteer management can be minimized; or better yet—the volunteers themselves are trained professionals. In truth, however, there really is no such thing as a free lunch and free help is no different. There are

costs associated with volunteers whether it be the cost of time, or the cost of up-front planning, or whatever else the case may be; but for many organizations and boards, volunteer time comes more easily where donations and funding are absent.

Time Savings

Using a group of volunteers, especially in instances where there has been adequate up-front planning and training, has the potential to save time. In Riverside, by training twelve UCR students in a classroom setting, each student was prepared to intensively survey a building. This training resulted in a total of twelve intensive level surveys that would become district contributors to a Modernism era historic business district. The final project took place over the course of several weeks, which is far beyond what could be accomplished by one volunteer (or many professionals), during the same time frame. In this instance, and in others where best survey and management practices are employed, use of a group of volunteers provided a substantial savings of time.

Build Relationships

Using volunteers in a local government survey process provides layers of benefit, as evidenced by the three success stories reviewed in this article. In San Juan Bautista, while volunteers provided cost savings, the benefit of their involvement became a commitment to the community and an investment by those who volunteered in the long range preservation goals of the City. In Los Angeles, use of volunteers in SurveyLA provided insight to local resources, more faces in the community representing the survey, and became an essential component of the organizational effort. In Riverside, using UCR student volunteers for survey work, through the process of creating the City-wide Historic Modernism Context Statement, helped redefine a relationship between UCR and the City of Riverside's Historic Preservation Office. The result helped create UCR student citizens that became invested in Riverside's future and Modernism.

In Both Survey LA and San Juan Bautista, the volunteer component provided a community investment in the survey process. In Riverside, the volunteer component redefined a relationship between the city's Historic Preservation Office and UCR which created a partnership that will be used in the next Historic Preservation practicum, also taught at UCR.

The benefits of these projects provides a true community benefit beyond the superficial ideas and helps meet project goals to create people invested in the history of their community, and, really, that's what doing survey work is all about.

Resources:

Survey LA:

<http://www.preservation.lacity.org/survey/>

How to volunteer for Survey LA:

<http://www.preservation.lacity.org/survey/volunteer>

City of San Juan Bautista: <http://www.san-juan-bautista.ca.us/>

San Juan Bautista Survey:

http://www.san-juan-bautista.ca.us/PDFs/Planning/SJB_Historic_Context_Report_0906_FINAL.pdf

City of Riverside Modernism Context Statement:

http://www.riversideca.gov/historic/pdf/ModernismContextStatement_Part%201.pdf

http://www.riversideca.gov/historic/pdf/ModernismContextStatement_Part%202.pdf

Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards:

http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_9.htm

1. Name of resource**3. Location****5. Classification**

Building Site Landscape Feature Structure Object
(Outbuilding)

6. Current & 7. Original Use*Domestic/Residential*

Single dwelling

Multiple dwelling

Apt bldg

Rowhouse

Duplex

Secondary structure

Storage shed

Garage/Carriage house

Kitchen

Privy

Wellhouse

Springhouse/Ice house

Smokehouse

Dwelling (secondary)

Dairy

Greenhouse/Pool house

Commercial

Business/office

Professional/office

Bank/savings & loan

Retail store/shop

General store

Restaurant/bar/café

Hotel/inn/motel/b&b

Department store

Warehouse

Multiple coml/shop ctr

Professional assn/trade org

Market

Religious

Church/religious structure

Church school

Church-related housing

Campground/arbor/retreat

Ceremonial site

Educational

School

College/university

Library

College-related housing

Research facility

Agriculture/food processing

Agricultural outbuildings

Barn/shed (Mule/Cattle/

Horse/Dairy/wagon/machin

ery/implment)

Tobacco

Chicken coop

Silo/Windmill

Corn crib

Agricultural storage

Cotton/ Peanut warehouse

Grain elevator

Tobacco warehouse

Agricultural processing

Animal/Fishing facility

Agricultural fields

Tree farm

Irrigation facility

Industrial/engineering

Mill/processing/mfg

Mill/company housing

Waterworks/reservoir/

dam/water tower/canal

Extractive facility or site

Communications facility

Energy facility

Transportation

Rail/Road/H2O/Ped/Air

Government/Public

Fire station

Post office

City/town hall

Jail/prison/police station

Public works

Courthouse (co/fed)

Militia district

Govt office (type)

Public housing

Entertainment/recreation/cultural

Theater/opera hall/

cinema/playhouse

Museum/gallery

Sports facility

Outdoor rec/camp

ground/ picnic

Auditorium

Fair/amusement park

Music fac./bandstand

Zoo

Commem. monument/ marker

Resort

Work of art

Bot./horticultural garden

Funerary

Cemetery

Grave/mausoleum

Mortuary/funeral home

Military

Battle site

Fortification

Military facility (type)

Armory/arms storage

Military housing

Health care

Hospital/Clinic/Medical

business/office

Spa/springs

Nursing home/sanator.

Civic/social

Fraternal/patriotic org

Club (common interest)

Social/civic org.

Philanthropic housing

*Work in progress**Vacant/not in use**Unknown**Write-in***8. Date of construction****9. Altered** (Date, Description)**Addition** (Date, Description)**Moved/Destroyed**

(Details on #25)

12a. High style
Elements**12b. Style(s)**

No academic style

Craftsman

Colonial revival

Folk Victorian

English vernacular revival

Queen Anne

Greek revival

Italianate

Stripped Classical

Beaux Arts Classicism

Academic Gothic revival

Gothic revival

Neoclassical revival

Mediterranean revival

Italian Renaissance revival

Second Empire

Richardsonian Romanesque

Stick

Federal

High Victorian Gothic

Shingle

Prairie style

Romanesque revival

High Victorian eclectic

Dutch Colonial revival

Federal revival

Spanish Colonial revival

Chicago School

Early Classical revival

French Vernacular revl

Moderne

Exotic revival

Georgian

Art Deco

International

Unknown

Write-in

13. Building Type(s)**1 to 1 ½ stories**

single pen

(rect./square)

double pen

hall-parlor

saddlebag

(2 doors/cent.door)

central hallway

dogtrot

Georgian cottage

Sand Hills cottage

Shotgun/Double shotgun

Gabled ell cottage

Queen Anne cottage

New South cottage

Pyramid cottage

Saltbox

English cottage

Extended hall parlor

2 story

Bungalow (Front gabl/

Side gab/Hip/Cross gab

Ranch

Side Gable Cottage

I-house (Central hall

way/Hall parlor/Double

pen/Saddlebag)

Plantation plain

Side hallway

Gabled ell house

Queen Anne house

New South house

American foursquare

Georgian house

Split level

N/A

Unknown

Write-in

Contact Print

14. Floor plan (Original)

one room (square/rect)	central hallway
two equal rooms	side hallway
two unequal rooms	
three or more rooms	

14b. Depth

one room	more than two rooms
two rooms	unknown
	write-in

15. Plan shape

rectangular	Circular
square	Octagonal
L / T / U / H / E	Triangular/flatiron
Greek cross	Irregular
Latin cross	Unknown
	Write-in

16. Number of stories _____

17. Façade symmetrical asymmetrical

17b. Front door 1 2 3 or more

18. Roof types

gable (side-/ front- / cross / multi-/ clipped/ stepped / parapet hip	shed/pent flat
pyramidal	truncated hip/deck-on-hip dome
gambrel	conical
mansard	complex
	write-in

18. Roof materials

composition/asphalt shingle	clay tile
metal (standing seam/ pressed shingle/ pressed sheet/ corrugated sheet)	slate
built-up tar and gravel	asphalt roll
	wood shingle
	concrete tile
	unknown
	write-in

19. Chimney location

gable-end, exterior	lateral interior
both gable ends	lateral exterior
gable-end, interior	multiple random
both gable ends	outside add-on
double gable end	three or more chimneys
both gable ends	see item #25
center	no chimney observed
off-center, ridgeline	unknown
off-ctr within roof surf	write-in

19b. Chimney material

brick	cobblestone/rustic
fieldstone	stuccoed masonry
coursed stone	concrete block

20. Type of Construction (max 3)

balloon frame/platform frame	concrete frame
brick bearing	plankwall framing
stone bearing	tile block bearing
log	concrete slab
mortise-and-tenon/brace frame	glass block
post-and-beam (wood)	tabby
metal/steel framing	unknown
concrete block	(write-in)
poured concrete (bearing wall)	

21. Exterior Material (max 6)

wood	metal
weatherboard/clapbrd	wrought iron
board-and-batten	cast iron/pressed tin
vertical board	sheet metal/corrugated
novelty siding/ shiplap/ drop siding	porcelain enamel steel
shingles	write in
flush board siding	concrete
beaded tongue&groove	concrete block/cinder blk
half-timbering	decorative concrete blk
brick (note if handmade)	poured wall
common/American	cast concrete detail
running bond/veneer	textured concrete
Flemish bond	prefabricated panel
English bond	tabby
stone	stucco
fieldstone/rubble/ regular coursed stone	glass
random coursed stone	glass block
rock-faced stone	plate glass
rusticated stone	pigmented sheet glass
cobblestone/rustic	carrara/prism glass
stone panels	prism synthetics
log	vinyl/aluminum siding
hewn	tarpaper/asphalt sheet/ patterned asphalt
V-notch/ square notch	asbestos siding
half dovetail/dovetail	permastone
saddle notch	masonite siding
ceramic	plastic/fiberglass
terra cotta	plywood/particle board
glazed brick/enameled	insulbrick (composition)
tile block/ tile mosaic	unknown (write-in)

22. Foundation Material (max 3)

ALSO NOTE: pier / pier w/ infill / continous

brick	concrete	metal
stone	wood	unknown

23. Porch Configurations (max 4 porch types)

	location	# stories	width	material	roof type
verandah					
wrap-around					
recessed					
portico					
stoop					
balcony					
porte-cochere					
arcade					

Roof Types: (fill in above)

hip /shed-pent /gable / hood / conical / complex

24. Window Types (max 3)

	head(flat/round,etc)	pattern (6/6, etc.)	shape (rect, etc.)
double-hung sash			
single-hung sash			
casement			
fixed			
factory sash			
triple-hung sash			
jalousie			
pivotal sash			
unknown (write-in)			

26. Outbuildings (max 10)

storage shed / garage	secondary dwelling
barn/shed (mule/cattle/wagon/ machinery/ horse tobacco/dairy)	smokehouse /root cellar windmill / ice house slave/servant house
corn crib / chicken coop	dairy / blacksmith shop
kitchen / privy	silos /dovecote
carriage house	pool house / greenhouse
wellhouse / springhouse (write-in)	outbuilding of unknown use

29a. Landscape Features (max 10)

yard setting	rural landscape/agricultural fields
informal/picturesque	field systems
casual/unplanned	fence/hedgerows
designed fencing/walls	cemetery
designed planting beds	terracing/contouring
designed drives/walks	pecan/other
formal/geometric	groves/orchards
terracing/retaining walls	drainage/irrigation
streetscape	forest/woods
street trees/landscaping	natural
town/cthouse square	planted
street furniture/fountain artwork/monument ornamental paving	(write-in)

29c. Description(s) of Environment

town (residential/commercial)	suburban (residential/commercial)
urban (residential/commercial)	vacant lots
rural (agricultural/ forested/non- agricultural/crossroads comm./dispersed comm.)	industrial setting/park strip development designed landscape mixed use

(write-in)

Surrounding Resources

new	old	mixed old and new
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34a. Historical Themes (max 5)

architecture / agriculture	African American / Indian history
commerce / industry	other minority and ethnic groups
religion / education	engineering/landscape arch planning / military
social/cultural development	exploration/settlement
transportation	conservation /public works
government/politics/law	arts/letters
recreation/entertainment (write-in)	

architectural type (common/rare)	architectural design
architectural style (common/rare)	craftsmanship
architectural technique(com/rare) (write-in)	history (development/activity/ person/event)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

40. SHPO Evaluation

appears to meet NR criteria
 may meet NR criteria
 more information needed
 appears NOT to meet NR criteria b/c of integrity/age/signif

25. Physical Description (write-in)

Site Plan

Quad:

UTM:

Mid-Century Modern Survey in St. Louis



By Besty Bradley, Director, Cultural Resources Office, City of St. Louis, MO



1



2



3

St. Louis is known as an historic city constructed almost entirely of red brick. Nevertheless, it has a wonderful collection of mid-century modern (MCM) buildings. Recent threats of demolition to two distinctive buildings highlighted the fact that MCM occupy desirable locations that are considered prime redevelopment sites. However, the interest shown in the threatened buildings – particularly among the young adult residents of the city – was surprisingly high and indicated that it was time to get serious about MCM buildings in St. Louis.

This city of 66 square miles has not grown since its boundaries were set in 1876. Consequently, much of St. Louis was built out before World War II. In contrast to other cities where extensive housing was constructed during the post World War II building

boom, in St. Louis single-family houses are not the dominant resource of the era. Instead, the non-residential buildings of the period — built in some concentrations as infill along arterial streets and in urban renewal areas — are noticeable markers of post-war building. This broad category of resources includes many of the most significant buildings and seems to be most at risk. (SEE PHOTO 1)

A Tiered Thematic Survey

The City’s Cultural Resources Office, a Certified Local Government, applied for a Historic Preservation Fund grant through the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to perform a survey of non-residential buildings

1

2

3

Captions: **Photo 1:** Examples of Mid-Century Modern buildings in St. Louis. Top: Lambert Terminal, Hellmuth, Yamaski & Leinweber, 1957. Lower left: James S. McDonnell Planetarium, Hellmut, Obata & Kassabaum, 1963. Lower right: Lashly Branch Library, William B. Ittner, Inc. 1967. Photo courtesy of the author. **Photo 2:** W.A. Sarmiento, while an architect at the Bank Building & Equipment Co. of St. Louis, designed the 1959 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Union Hall, one of the buildings included in the “Defining an Era” group of buildings the survey identified. Photo courtesy of the author. **Photo 3:** Public meeting attendees ponder their votes for buildings to be documented further. Photo courtesy of the author.

constructed between 1945 and 1975. As the City's demolition review criteria afford more protection to buildings that are eligible for listing in the National Register, we wanted to have a group of properties determined eligible by the SHPO as a project product. A tiered survey with varying levels of documentation, accompanied by the usual survey report and contexts, became the plan. The nearly 20 properties from the time period already listed in the National Register, and thereby already protected, were not included in the project. The City's Cultural Resources Office selected Peter Meijer Architect, of Portland, with Christine Madrid French on the team, as the consultant for the project.

The Cultural Resources Office began the reconnaissance level survey by using the City's land records database to provide locations and building construction dates. Over 2,280 properties were documented with photographs and classified by property type.

As Cultural Resources Office staff explored the city with camera and clipboard, the full extent of the construction that took place during the period under study became evident. Discovering a MCM church in a residential neighborhood, sharing "finds," puzzling over the function of what was finally determined to be a "drive-up" rather than "drive-thru" bank, and gradually understanding where building occurred lightened the work of the survey. The reconnaissance survey confirmed what we had supposed: there is a lot out there, a good portion of which is utilitarian in nature, and recording it all to the same level of detail would not be the best use of resources.

Peter Meijer Architect project staff then reviewed the recorded properties and, in conjunction with SHPO and the Cultural Resources Office, selected 200 properties to be recorded on the State's standard architectural survey form. The group includes schools, libraries, health care buildings and churches. Commercial buildings, mixed use complexes, banks, and office buildings are also represented. The consultants took additional photographs, wrote descriptions of the buildings, and carefully examined the historic integrity and architectural merits of these properties.

Putting the Public Meeting to Work: Defining an Era

From this list, 40 properties were selected, based on architectural excellence and National Register and City Landmark eligibility, for further scrutiny and consideration at the project's first public meeting. (SEE PHOTO 2)

About 30 people met to consider the progress of the St. Louis MCM Survey. A series of presentations set the scene for the "work" of the meeting. Posters presenting the buildings hung on the walls of the meeting room. Attendees were asked to place adhesive stars on the buildings that they felt were critical in defining the era of MCM St. Louis. As each person had 16 stars to place on the flyers, hard choices had to be made.

Why would we ask the public: "Which buildings do you think deserve additional documentation?" The counter question is, why not find out which buildings the interested public finds

compelling? Historic Preservationist Kristin Hagar's assertion that a recent past resource is more likely to be valued as having historic significance over time if multiple sources and layers of significance can be found at the time of identification and evaluation prompted the public meeting format. Asking for more than the usual amount of public comment on this grant project seemed to be a constructive addition.

The placement of the stars revealed a fairly strong consensus on which buildings warranted further study. A group of 13 buildings were clearly considered to define the era and eight more received almost as many stars. With the public's help, it was much easier to settle on a group of buildings to be documented at the most intense level. After the public meeting, Peter Meijer and the Cultural Resources Office considered building type, geographic and architect distribution as well, and soon had a "short list" of properties that would have extended statements of significance included on their survey forms. (SEE PHOTO 3)

Survey Results and Looking Ahead

The Survey Report includes analysis and recommendations that will carry this work forward. We now know more about the geographical distribution of the resources, the overall popularity of the various Modern Movement expressions, and the use of style by decade and by property type. The use of materials was also quantified and supports the observation that brick remained St. Louis' favorite building material.

The survey historic contexts and report support the plan that the next step will be the preparation of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. The survey highlights the presence of clusters of Modern Movement, some built in redevelopment areas and some as infill along a thoroughfare. Some are located in established historic districts with earlier periods of significance and have the potential to constitute a second period of significance for the historic district.

As for the properties on the "Defining the Era" list, the survey forms and information on how to seek listing or designation will be provided to property owners and the next step will be theirs. Given the interest in buildings of this time period, no doubt work will proceed on listing and designation and some MCM buildings will be recognized for architecture, community planning, and development, and as historically significant for other reasons.

This project is only a starting point. The term "Defining the Era" was selected to signal that while these properties are significant and define the "Gateway Years" in St. Louis, they are not the only ones that can be considered significant and are eligible to be important historic resources.

Thinking about a similar project?

The historic context research has been instructive, both in finding sources and in the resulting narrative. There were few secondary resources to draw upon. Several editions of an AIA-sponsored book on significant architecture during the period and a local construction industry monthly have been invaluable. Clipping files in local libraries become less complete as the

period progresses. Sanborn maps for the period are scarce. Studies of St. Louis during the time frame are narrowly focused and do not provide an overview. Primary research will be necessary and time consuming. On the other hand, some of the architects whose work you are documenting may be available as oral-history resources. Imagine lunching with a group of retired architects and talking about their important projects.

A thematic survey, as opposed to a geographically based one, worked for St. Louis because of its development pattern. Focusing on two areas of significance – architecture and community planning and development – highlighted factors that are closely allied with broad patterns. Take some time to define the scope of a survey project. Look broadly enough to have a sense of the big picture even as you address the most important property types and areas of significance.

The 1950 to 1970 period turned out to be a distinct period in the community planning and development history of downtown St. Louis. But we didn't know that before establishing the parameters of the project. Again, take time to define a time period for a survey based on the history of your community. The broad patterns of the era – suburbanization, construction of interstate highways, use of urban renewal tools and growth of a metro region – have distinct histories in each urban area. Communities did not experience them in a constant manner. Also, be aware that some topics, such as the demolition associated with urban renewal and freeway construction and the dislocation of residents, were controversial at the time. What was problem solving during the 1960s may now look like the initiation of several unintended consequences. Actions require explanation through the lens of that era and with a minimum of judgment.

The St. Louis survey was intended to establish some credibility as historic resources for buildings from this time period. For most baby-boomers, this period challenges their sense of history. Although they know the Vietnam War and the 1960s are over, and even the Cold War is a historic period in the past, it is difficult to translate that understanding to buildings constructed during those times. People may have a personal relationship with a MCM building under discussion, one based on an experience at a young age and without understanding of the time beyond their own lives. Yet the fact that they have an association may keep them from understanding a resource as historic or historically significant. This aspect of resource recognition requires some interpretation and salesmanship.

Be aware of project significance creep: the way a current project seems to involve significant resources because you now know and understand them. The odds are that you will find a group of resources to be interested in and excited about. As we integrate MCM resources into the longer history of our communities, it will become clear that some will be architecturally and historically significant, but many will not be. Don't give up subject matter authority through over-enthusiasm.

Finally, look for the preservation stories as you read about the new construction of the period. I found a growing sense in the architectural community that some old buildings were worth preserving. A local group of architects stated in 1965 that, as the "cause of modernism" was largely won, they could assume the leadership of preservationist activities, as was their duty. The attitude toward the built environment during the post World War II period was complex and varied, and is certainly worth investigating in your community. ■

A few additional questions for Betsy about St. Louis & Mid-Century Modern (MCM)

How is it that properties in the National Register are "already protected" in St. Louis?

St. Louis has a strong demolition-review section in its ordinance. All properties listed in the Register must be approved by the Preservation Board for demolition, and the demolition criteria address condition of the building, effect of the demolition, proposed subsequent construction, and other factors. Recently, the Board denied demolition of a 1976 building designed by Peruvian-born modernist architect W. A. Sarmiento for replacement by a CVS pharmacy. The protection is in the City's historic-preservation ordinance, using listing in the Register as one of the protected categories.

Was there a national outreach for consultants for the Mid-century Modern Project?

We published our RFP widely, including on PreserveNet, to get experience in a broad survey project and MCM architecture. Two out-of-town firms submitted bids.

Is there a greater awareness of mid-century architecture in St. Louis than other places because of the internationally celebrated monument, the Gateway Arch, and, even, the former Busch Stadium?

Probably not. The Arch is of the city but not of the city as it is the National Park Service Arch that tourists visit. The historic context examines the relationship during the period and I ended up naming the period "The Gateway Years." The fact that the Arch was being built was a major boost to St. Louis during the 1960s – most likely, it's just that more people living in the city appreciate MCM and make that known. Washington University's class on MCM architecture, a couple of years old, is evidence of the interest in the architectural community and elsewhere.

Was there any reluctance at first from the local commission to apply for a CLG grant for this project?

No – the link between young people and MCM appreciation is strong enough, coupled with the fact that this is the demographic group that is moving into the city, that there was no reluctance. The Mayor's office and Preservation Board are very aware of the interests of the Millennials and want to present a city government that "gets it." Plus, we presented it as the "thing to do": to be in the forefront of what communities are doing in historic preservation.

Is there a second phase for MCM residential properties—and will the context report for the MCM survey be added to the city's preservation plan?

The residential properties are a second phase being considered. We have some other smaller grant projects to take on first. The long contexts and survey forms will be presented in the survey report via our website and SHPO's. Shortened, more popular, and more like the earlier ones, versions of the contexts will be added to the preservation plan, which is also on the website.

Information on the project is available at the Mid-Century Modern Survey page on the Cultural Resources Office website: <http://stlouis-mo.gov/cultural-resources>

Cultural Resources

PARTNERSHIP NOTES

Technical assistance in historic preservation planning, related planning/land use topics, and preservation strategies for Federal agencies, Indian tribes, States, and local governments

Issues Paper:

CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

ALTHOUGH THE TERM HAS SEVERAL MEANINGS, *conservation areas* or *districts* suggest to many in preservation a method of achieving preservation ends at a neighborhood scale without some of the perceived burdens of the traditional historic district approach. The two articles included here broach a number of important issues, among them: definition of conservation districts, consequences of designation as a conservation district (especially with regard to the regulation of alterations and new construction), relationship to existing historic districts, and the administration of conservation districts by local governments.

The article by Robert E. Stipe entitled “Conservation Areas: A New Approach to An Old Problem” presents a somewhat idealized concept of the conservation area as a neighborhood, by virtue of its special qualities, slated to receive coordinated and enhanced attention and service from local government. Mr. Stipe makes the case against including regulatory controls in the conservation area designation by arguing that to do so would deprive preservation of an important “carrot” to be used when the “stick” of the traditional historic district may not be appropriate. Carole Zellie’s article, “A Consideration of Conservation Districts and Preservation Planning: Notes from St. Paul, Minnesota,” presents the results of her study of 20 conservation districts in place around the country. The analysis was conducted at the behest of the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office and the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission. Ms. Zellie finds that the conservation district approach, as it is currently implemented, can be characterized in two ways: those having a neighborhood planning focus and those with architectural or historic preservation aims. The author concludes that, in certain circumstances, conservation districts can be a useful complement to traditional historic districts. However, she warns against dismissing the design review component entirely by making the case that



design review is critical in neighborhoods in which the housing stock has suffered from unsympathetic alteration.

The articles in this Issues Paper reflect the still evolving nature of the conservation district concept and its place in the preservation tool kit. This publication aims to assist preservationists in evaluating the usefulness of conservation districts by highlighting multiple perspectives on the issue.

CONSERVATION AREAS: A NEW APPROACH TO AN OLD PROBLEM

*by Robert E. Stipe, Emeritus
Professor of Design, School of Design,
North Carolina State University*

Ever since the first Old and Historic District was established in Charleston, South Carolina in 1931, American communities have relied heavily on local historic district regulations for the protection of neighborhoods of distinguished architectural and historic character. Presently there are approximately 2,000 such districts in the United States, and their number has roughly doubled each decade since the 1930s.

That this approach has proved its worth time and time again is beyond dispute, notwithstanding occasional difficulties encountered in the processes of administration and enforcement. But times have changed. Good planning and modern preservation philosophy, as well as an increasingly conservative public mood that is increasingly anti-regulation, suggest that it is time to supplement this traditional regulatory stick with a pro-active carrot. For descriptive purposes, this might be called the "conservation area" technique.

Discussion of the overall con-

cept of conservation areas, which is the subject of this essay, is complicated somewhat by the fact that several dozen cities across the county have already designated areas called conservation areas or districts, each slightly different from the others. Whatever called, and for reasons discussed later, these are for the most part more closely related to the traditional historic district than to the concept of a conservation area as defined here.

The need for a supplemental approach springs partly from new thinking about the inherent value of neighborhoods and their associative values to both residents and the larger community, and partly from strategic necessity.

Preserving neighborhoods, historic and near-historic, takes on special significance in today's changed political climate. The designation of a local historic district, whether through zoning or some other source of authority, is a vexing issue for elected officials in many cities and towns. Historic district ordinances require all property owners within a proposed district to comply with a police power regulation that carries with it both criminal and civil penalties for violation. They are also seen as regulating "taste" through the review of proposed additions or new construction. Mistakenly or not, the process is

often perceived as government interference with individual rights of free speech and the unfettered use of private property. Thus, the local political sieve through which additional regulations must be filtered is an increasingly difficult one.

The conservation area approach—and the term “area” is used here throughout to make clear that ideally it is not a special kind of zoning district—offers a number of distinct advantages. It fits well with contemporary thinking about what is worth preserving. It is more susceptible to local definition, more flexible in interpretation, and less threatening or restrictive to the average property owner. The conservation area approach melds easily with contemporary local planning processes and administrative structures; and, most important, admits to the evaluation process additional associative values, including human ones, without demeaning history or architecture.

What is a conservation area?

In the best use of the term, the ideal conservation area is one that is crisply, if broadly, defined and easily distinguished from the traditional historic district. A working definition which originated in North Carolina more than a

decade ago, defines a conservation area as one that “possesses form, character, and visual qualities derived from arrangements or combinations of topography, vegetation, space, scenic vistas, architecture, appurtenant features, or places of natural or cultural significance, that create an image of stability, comfort, local identity, and livable atmosphere.”

This definition goes considerably beyond the defining element of a traditional historic district. The customary associative values, which focus on history and architecture and which stress the stylistic and material integrity of the place and its component parts, have broadened considerably. While architecture and its appurtenant features remain as explicitly enumerated values, history as such is expanded to take in the generically broader concept of culture. The form, character, and visual quality of the streetscape and landscape, as the staging area for architectural elements, predominates. Natural areas and landscapes are added to emphasize a special concern for a broader range of environmental considerations. Vernacular elements, now widely fashionable among preservationists, are also implicitly recognized as respectable associative values, as are aesthetics and spatial structure. Age, as such, is not a major consideration. Because the definition

tends overall to place relatively greater importance on the preservation of a natural larger landscape, the word “conservation” seems a more apt descriptor than does “preservation.”

Most important, it is the presence of any one of these values or several of them in combination leading to “an image of stability, comfort, local identity and livable atmosphere” that takes center stage. Thus, integrity is replaced by imagery, and the values and perceptions of local citizens are weighted equally with the academic and scholarly credentials of experts.

It is also useful to define this ideal conservation area in terms of what it is not. Unlike zoning historic districts, exemplary conservation areas are not regulatory in nature. While there are criteria by which they might be defined, they do not establish or even attempt to establish additional regulations above and beyond those that already exist. And the burden imposed by conservation area designation lies most heavily on the local government itself—the mayor, manager, council, planning staff, and several line and staff agencies of the city government—rather than upon individual property owners. In other words, the ideal conservation area becomes a device by which a city or county imposes

upon itself a special responsibility to undertake ambitious, specifically defined planning and design tasks targeted to the maintenance and improvement of the area so designated. From the standpoint of the property owner, conservation area designation thus becomes a carrot, rather than a stick.

What kinds of areas might be designated?

In theory, there are three kinds of areas or neighborhoods to which the designation might appropriately be attached:

First, the designation would be appropriate for those areas surrounding or bordering on an existing local historic district. In this sense, conservation areas might be regarded in customary planning parlance as “buffers,” or transitional areas designed to protect the edges of an existing district.

Second, the conservation area approach would be highly appropriate as a tool to protect what might be called “pre-natal” historic districts that don’t yet meet the usual 50-year rule or which have not yet acquired the patina of age or character associated with the traditional district, but which skilled observers feel certain will qualify in perhaps 5 or 10 years. Conservation area designation would thus provide incentives to the private sector to

protect and maintain a maturing but not-yet-ripe historic district of the traditional kind.

Third, the designation would be appropriate for areas or neighborhoods that while they might never qualify for “historic” status, are important to preserve and maintain solely for their social and economic value, or for their utility as affordable housing. It is important to stress that regardless of motivation, the limits on the utility of the concept are local imagination and creativity.

How is a conservation area established?

Like a zoning historic district, the model conservation area is defined by precise boundaries shown on a map. Here the similarity to the traditional historic districts ends. Since the designation of conservation areas does not impose on property owners any regulatory burdens other than those already in effect, the mapping and designation of conservation areas would best be accomplished by a resolution of the governing board as a policy directive, rather than by an ordinance. Designation might, of course, be accomplished through an executive order of the mayor or city manager, but this would not normally carry the political clout of a mandate from an elected board.

What would be the consequences of designation?

For the property owner, conservation area designation would have little impact insofar as restrictions or costly maintenance obligations are concerned. Although existing land use regulations would remain in effect, as would private deed restrictions of one kind and another, there would be no architectural review of additions or new construction, and there would be no restrictions on demolition. The impact of conservation area designation would fall primarily on public agencies and upon the city itself.

The designation resolution or order would simply state, as a finding of fact that the area was one of special interest deemed desirable and necessary to conserve for present and future owners, and to that end it would direct various local government agencies to undertake a number of activities:

- To prepare or update, as appropriate, land use, transportation, public utilities, public facilities, housing, open space, historic preservation, urban design, and other comprehensive plan elements for the area being designated.
- As part of such planning, to have special regard for and

to give special attention to the design, construction, and maintenance needs of public thoroughfares, pedestrian ways, open spaces, landscape elements (including street trees), recreation areas, and comparable amenities of the area, and to prepare detailed plans, designs, sketches, and models proposing public improvement of these facilities and areas;

- To prepare special and detailed recommendations with respect to improved housing, education, employment, health, protective, and other human resource requirements of the area designated;
- To establish appropriate means of communication between and among the public authorities involved, and provide for the active participation by residents of the area in the preparation of plan elements and program elements noted above;
- To designate a responsible local government official to coordinate these activities, both from an inter-governmental and an intra-governmental standpoint;
- To recommend to the manager and council, by a date certain, ways and means by

which the local government should step up its maintenance and operating programs within conservation areas;

- To recommend to the governing board specific changes or additions to both the annual operating and capital budget programs of the local government for implementing the plans and programs suggested for the conservation area; and
- To ensure that no local government program of any kind resulted in adverse impacts on a designated conservation area.

The activities listed above are not an exclusive list of activities that should be included in a conservation area program. Such a list would vary according to the special problems and needs of each such area. The council should, of course, provide the necessary financial resources for the additional planning, design, and other studies to be carried out in designated conservation areas. Target dates for the completion of individual tasks might be specified.

The main burden of implementing the council's mandate would fall upon the local planning, historic preservation, housing, and renewal agencies. Other

operating programs of the city, such as public works, parks and recreation, engineering, health and human services, etc., would also be involved. Depending on the organizational structure of the city, the city manager and/or mayor would be major players in the implementation process. In effect, designation as a conservation area would serve to force a variety of public officials and agencies, most of whom normally work in isolation from one another, to come together in a coordinated and energetic way, to focus their attention on the special character of designated areas.

Should there be some modest additional regulations in a conservation area?

Whether or not to impose regulatory restraints in a conservation area, such as one prohibiting the demolition of older structures that might in another setting be regarded as "contributing," or reviewing new construction, raises a policy issue that must be decided in each local situation. However, the basic concept of a conservation area strongly implies a presumption against such regulation. The reason, as noted earlier, is that the times call for a new approach—one that maintains a balanced carrot and stick philosophy, so to

speak. Unless the conservation area approach is perceived as one that is less burdensome or threatening to the average property owner, as well as one that is more positive and forward-looking, it will be perceived as more regulation in disguise.

Legal and administrative aspects of conservation areas

Since local historic district regulation is an exercise of the sovereign authority of the state, whether carried out through zoning or stand-alone enabling legislation, it may be done only in accordance with state legislation and within state and federal constitutional limits. On the other hand, conservation area designation, as described in this article, does not involve the exercise of any additional regulatory authority, and so the planning enabling legislation of every state, coupled with the council's discretionary authority to manage the affairs of the city or town, is probably already adequate in and of itself. Depending on the form of government, the same would be true of the executive authority of the mayor or city manager to carry out the council's mandate.

In other words, new legislative authority for a city or county to undertake concentrated conservation area planning programs is

probably not necessary, even though specific state enabling legislation would probably be useful for its educational or incentive value, or as a foil to the innate conservatism of most city attorneys.

What is required, however, is the political will to shower special attention on special areas of the city. Also required is the creativity and imagination to see the usefulness of the conservation area approach and to utilize it effectively. While it is a requirement in virtually all states that property taxes be collected on a uniform basis, there is no corresponding requirement that the public funds be spent equally on every neighborhood. Given the special qualifications that lead to designation of conservation areas in the first place, justification for the extra expenditure involved should not be politically difficult.

Clearly, such studies, plans, designs, public consultation, and other tasks related to conservation areas will impose additional responsibilities on city employees, and this can be a significant stumbling block to initiating the process unless additional fiscal and personnel resources can be found. Because of the absolute necessity in conservation area planning for extensive public and resident participation and consul-

tation, the use of out-of-town consultants will usually be inappropriate.

As noted earlier, the limits to conservation area efforts are essentially the limits of local imagination and political and financial feasibility. For example, public conservation area planning efforts might in many cases be supplemented by such private sector initiatives as revolving loan funds. Or they might be supplemented by special education programs in local schools or the establishment of local city offices in affected neighborhoods. It remains crucial, however, that efforts targeted to improving the physical environment be balanced by programs that equally benefit the human aspects of the problem. It is clear that sound conservation area planning will require a more broadly based collection of special skills than those traditionally associated with historic preservation planning. The role of the local historic preservation community, lay, and professional, will be even greater.

What about existing "conservation districts"?

That something less restrictive than the traditional historic district is needed to round out the kit of local preservation tools is evidenced by the fact that several dozen cities around the country

established conservation districts during the 1980s. Various named (“conservation district,” “historic conservation district,” “neighborhood conservation overlay district,” “architectural conservation district,” etc.), these have tended strongly to be variations on the traditional historic district, notwithstanding the nominal difference.

Some are administered by a preservation commission; others by a planning or zoning commission. The nature of the activity regulated varies, the majority restricting demolition, and almost all controlling new construction to some degree, some less strictly than others. Who may nominate such districts also varies: in some cases designation is by property owners or a majority of them, and in others it is by a preservation commission or the governing board itself. Where there are specific design standards, application varies. In some there is control of architectural style, and in others only land use is regulated. The designated reviewing authority also varies: in some districts it is a preservation commission or architectural review board, and at others it is a planning or building official. Occasionally, design review is only advisory.

The existence of these districts raises the question, “What’s in a

name?” While called “conservation” districts, they rely heavily for their effectiveness on a regulatory approach and are in reality lenient versions of the traditional historic district. While this does not lessen or reduce their usefulness, the proliferation of names and the casual reference to “conservation” values engenders confusion and makes it more difficult for the conservation area planning effort described above to achieve their full potential.

Conclusion

While historic zoning districts and their milder cousins continue as useful implements in the preservation tool kit, such regulations are essentially sticks. Conservation areas represent more of a carrot approach, in that they emphasize the possibility of significant public contributions to the maintenance of environmental quality. Of special importance is the non-threatening character of conservation areas, with their promise of “no new regulations” and, by implication, additional public investment in operations and maintenance and, through capital improvements, in neighborhood infrastructure. While there is always a tendency to concentrate on design issues and on the improvement of the physical environment, conservation areas, as the planning descen-

dants of earlier approaches to urban renewal and community development, also offer an increasingly relevant and constructive means of dealing with human issues as well. In the long run, conservation area planning and designation, if and when it catches on in the somewhat idealized form presented here, may provide benefits that equal those of the traditional historic district with which we have been preoccupied for so many years.



A CONSIDERATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS AND PRESERVATION PLANNING: Notes from St. Paul, Minnesota

by *Carole Zellie, Principal,
Landscape Research, St. Paul,
Minnesota*

At first examination, conservation areas or districts appear to offer appealing features to planners seeking an alternative to traditional historic districts with components such as binding design review for exterior alterations. As drafted in some cities, conservation districts offer a means to recognize the special historic and or/neighborhood character, and provide planning assistance and improvement without passing through the often arduous process of historic designation and design review. In 1991, the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission studied the conservation district concept to determine if other types of designation might be used to supplement the city's existing local historic districts. The study concluded that although a conservation district model might have some future utility, there were good reasons to continue with the city's program of historic district designa-

tion and design review.

Combined with broad design criteria, an aggressive public education program, and coordination with St. Paul's existing neighborhood planning effort, the sometimes controversial design review component can be supported as a critical tool for the maintenance and improvement of historic character.

The study was sponsored by the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission and the State Historic Preservation Office and conducted by Carole Zellie of Landscape Research. Prior to 1991, all of St. Paul's local historic districts, including high-styled residential areas such as Summit Hill and Irving Park, were also listed in the National Register. Their architectural and historical significance was without dispute. However, a "new crop" of potential districts, characterized by older, largely vernacular buildings and a great need for housing improvement provided some challenge to the past designation process. Although these areas meet the Heritage Preservation Commission's designation criteria—which recognize the significance of urban and social history as well as architectural history—as districts most of these new areas were not eligible for the National Register because of a low level of integrity. Planners and Commission mem-

bers were interested in examining if a conservation district could provide special recognition and treatment for the architectural and landscape character of these areas without the burdens of traditional designation and design review.

During the course of the study, an excellent test case was evolving in Dayton's Bluff, an historic neighborhood just east of downtown St. Paul. Dayton's Bluff is one of the earliest neighborhoods in the city with some fine examples of late nineteenth-century residential architecture. However, much of the current building stock includes unsympathetically altered houses as well as many simple vernacular house of a type which is ubiquitous across the city. Many residents are of low to moderate income, and there are a good number of absentee landlords. Residents in the area have worked aggressively on strategies to improve the area and have employed several city-sponsored planning and rehabilitation programs. In 1991, Dayton's Bluff was under consideration for designation as a local historic district but did not meet National Register eligibility. Residents lobbied for designation as a local historic district, not as a conservation district, which they regarded as inferior in status and benefits. Design review was understood by many residents as

an important new tool to halt further deterioration of the streetscape.

Although the public's distaste for the interference of design controls is widely discussed, this is not always the case, even in areas where private rehabilitation funds are limited. In Dayton's Bluff, residents viewed the design review controls as a positive benefit, and had a vision of the "Dayton's Bluff Historic District" rather than the "Dayton's Bluff Conservation District" from the beginning.

The conservation district overview

The St. Paul study examined 20 ordinances in 18 states and Vancouver, British Columbia. Interviews with a selection of planners were intended to learn how well the districts worked from a practical as well as the theoretical perspective. The relationship between co-existing historic districts and conservation districts was of particular interest. Concurrently, existing neighborhood planning programs and the operation of the Heritage Preservation Commission in St. Paul were examined in detail.

These 20 ordinances represented nearly 20 separate variations of a theme related to the conservation of neighborhood character. At one extreme, con-

servation has been interpreted with rigorous standards for exterior alterations with guidelines based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. At the other extreme, only a review of new construction was provided. In general, the ordinances showed how communities differentiate issues of historic character from those of general neighborhood character. Most conservation districts have not been created primarily to meet historic preservation goals; "conservation district" is most often an umbrella term for "neighborhood planning district."

Definitions

In their introductory language nearly all conservation district ordinances addressed the need to promote the health, safety, economic, cultural, and general welfare of the public by encouraging the conservation and enhancement of the urban environment. The single term conservation (as opposed to conservation district) is seldom defined. Terms such as "built environment," "neighborhood character," and other elements vary in their usage. Language selected from three ordinances illustrates several approaches and conservation district definitions:

Boston, Massachusetts

Architectural Conservation

District: "Architectural Conservation District," any area designated by the commission in accordance with section four (designation by commission) as an area containing any physical features or improvements or both which are of historical, social, cultural, architectural, or aesthetic significance to the city and cause such area to constitute a distinctive section of the city.

Memphis, Tennessee

Historic Conservation

District: "A local historic district established by the city council requiring architectural design review guidelines for demolition, new construction, or additions to habitable areas of buildings, structures, sites and objects in the public right of way and within the boundaries of the historic conservation district."

Omaha, Nebraska

Neighborhood Conservation

Overlay District: "The NC Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District is intended to accommodate unique land use, urban design, and other distinctive characteristics of older established neighborhoods. The NC District, used in combination with a base district, allows variations in permitted uses and site development regulations

that are adapted to the needs of a specific neighborhood.”

Purposes and characteristics

The need for a conservation district with a historic preservation focus was apparent in Dallas in 1976, when the City was awarded a HUD 701 Demonstration Study Grant entitled “Conservation Strategies.” Today there are eight conservation districts and 11 historic districts in Dallas; six of the historic districts and all of the conservation districts are residential. The conservation district ordinance authorizes the city to regulate and restrict the construction, alteration, reconstruction, or razing of buildings and other structures in “designated places and areas of historic, cultural, or architectural importance and significance.” The ordinance notes that “whereas the city has historic districts and areas, the conservation district is established to provide a means of conserving an area’s distinctive atmosphere or character by protecting or enhancing its significant architectural or cultural attributes. A separate ordinance is created for each conservation district with a plan which includes design guidelines. While the historic districts in Dallas generally use the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehab-

ilitation, the conservation districts write their own. Many of the conservation districts appear to be eligible as historic districts but have used the conservation district as an alternative.

In other cities, preservation-oriented conservation districts have been created to perform primarily as historic districts. This occurred most often where there exists inadequate state or local legislation or local political support to create or administer historic districts. Conservation districts have often been created primarily to organize neighborhood planning efforts and coordinate housing rehabilitation programs as well as focus land use and zoning controls at the neighborhood scale. In some cities, such as Raleigh and Phoenix, the creation of the ordinance established a structure for creating neighborhood plans.

From the ordinances, it was difficult to determine which conservation areas were not eligible for local historic district designation because of low integrity or other issues. The designation process for conservation districts operates with diverse designation criteria. Conservation districts which evolved from a neighborhood planning base tended to have very broad eligibility criteria. Most of those districts developed as a means to assist historic

preservation planning have designation criteria quite similar to those used for traditional historic districts, usually that based on the National Register of Historic Places criteria.

All of the conservation district ordinances reviewed were regulatory and over three-quarters were overlay zoning districts. The choice of form appears to relate primarily to local precedent and the provisions of state enabling legislation. The approval of a majority of residents is required for the creation of conservation districts in most cities and, in most cases, the application appears to have been initiated by neighborhood groups. Where required, application fees paid by neighborhood organizations partially covered the costs of a study, and fee waiver procedures are also provided. The level of citizen participation in the designation process and design review varied greatly.

Some conservation districts appear to serve areas that aren’t physically “quite ready” or “quite there” for traditional historic district designation (to quote planners), or where it is thought that the needs of low and moderate-income homeowners are not well served by the creation of a traditional historic district. Conservation districts can offer recognition and some level of

design review to these areas. However, several planners interviewed were careful to note that without design review for exterior alterations, they felt an important revitalization tool was lacking. Some planners endorsed the conservation district as a good interim measure for areas currently not eligible for historic district designation, with later redesignation as historic districts. However, no examples of this kind of transformation were identified.

Relationship to local historic districts

The relationship of local historic districts and conservation districts within each city varied greatly. In Nashville, the Neighborhood Conservation District, the Historic Preservation District, and Historic Preservation Landmarks are created by the same ordinance and serve the same general goals. Known locally as Historic Zoning and Conservation Zoning, they are promoted as a coordinated pair of strategies designed to conserve areas of historic and architectural significance. Both types of zoning require review of demolition proposals and the design of new construction by the city architectural review board, the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC). Nashville's

Historic Zoning Districts, however, provide an additional level of review and protection, in the review of exterior changes such as alteration to porches, doors, windows, and roofs. Similarly, the Cambridge, Massachusetts Historical Commission coordinates both the city's historic and conservation districts. In a number of cities, however, there is little relationship between the staff or programs which administer the two types of districts.

Some type of design review is a component of all conservation districts. However, **what** is reviewed varies greatly and this is the critical distinction between historic and conservation districts. Most ordinances provide for the tailoring of guidelines for design review to a specific area, but binding review of exterior architectural alterations is usually not a component of conservation districts. More typical in conservation districts is review of "built environmental characteristics," to quote Raleigh's ordinance, usually focusing on new construction considerations such as building height, scale, placement and setback, and materials. Review of demolition permits and the treatment of vacant lots are also standard components. Written guidelines and criteria for design review were included in all ordinances, but few examples included illustrations in the ordinance

or in another document such as a handbook.

Public information directed at conservation area residents varied. Some programs, such as those in Cambridge and Nashville, appear to have carefully planned this component of the effort while other programs provided few if any special publications. Vancouver, British Columbia, is among the few cities where the ordinance and design guidelines were illustrated with many drawings and photographs.

Most planners gave mixed reviews of the success of the preservation-oriented conservation districts that they administer. Probably the most frequent critique of note for St. Paul was that some public as well as planner confusion seemed to prevail in cities with both heritage conservation and heritage preservation districts. Nearly all planners endorsed the positive public education role that conservation district designation played, but most wished for stronger design controls.

Nashville as a model for St. Paul

The conservation districts in this study did not sort into tidy models. This is due in part to the architectural and historical diversity of the cities for which they were written, the diverse plan-

ning objectives at which they are directed, and the political frameworks in which they are administered. However, a primary division between the ordinances can be characterized as the “neighborhood planning model” and the “architectural or historic preservation model.” In its final phase, the St. Paul study examined ordinances and conservation district programs in Phoenix, Dallas, Nashville, and Cambridge in additional detail and concluded that the second model, with a focus on historic resources in addition to new construction, land use, and other neighborhood planning issues promised to be most useful for St. Paul.

Nashville was of particular interest. As noted above, Historic and Conservation Districts were created here under one ordinance which gives the two classifications equal status and similar operation. The districts and landmarks were provided “to ensure preservation of structures of historic value to Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County.” Among the specific purposes of the districts are to:

- Preserve and protect the historical and/or architectural value of buildings, other structures, and historically significant areas;
- Create an aesthetic appearance which complements

the historic buildings or other structures;

- Stabilize and improve property values;
- Foster civic beauty; and
- Strengthen the local economy.

There are currently two conservation and two historic districts. The largest conservation district includes 1,200 buildings. The general designation provisions of the ordinance incorporate National Register criteria for both types of districts.

Nashville’s planner, Shain Dennison, reported that the Conservation Districts “provide a choice.” The difference between the Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Conservation Districts is that in the former, no structure shall be “constructed, altered, repaired, relocated, or demolished” unless the action complies with the requirements of the ordinance. In the latter, only construction, relocation, demolition, and increase in habitable area are reviewed.

By the criteria, both conservation and historic districts would appear to be eligible for the National Register although planning staff applied the criteria quite flexibly in the conservation districts. It appears that Nashville’s historic districts contain the more high-styled build-

ings. Here, as in other cities attempting to supplement historic districts with conservation districts, the conservation districts were best suited to areas where there was already good maintenance, a pattern of relatively little exterior change, or where residents were strongly opposed to design review. The conservation district, although offering some control, did not offer much to low-maintenance areas where review of exterior alterations was regarded as critical.

The Nashville model provides a well explained process and rationale for its two-tier system. The recognition provided by the conservation district the Nashville planner noted, was regarded as a positive benefit and served to reassure new buyers that some type of control was in place. Well-designed public education materials included a handbook and several brochures.

Conclusions for St. Paul

St. Paul’s neighborhoods already benefit from 17 District Councils, each staffed with a community organizer and a District Planner, and there already exist specific long-range plans for each area. Each district has prepared a plan which inventories its physical, social, and economic components and makes

recommendations for treatment. However, the District Council plans do not follow a standard format with regard to components of historic and/or neighborhood character. A Heritage Conservation District might encourage recognition and protection of historic neighborhood character in areas where the Commission or area residents do not feel existing Heritage Preservation District controls are appropriate. In particular, a Heritage Conservation District with limited design review, perhaps only of new construction and demolition, might be created in stable “newer” areas of twentieth-century residences where existing historical research does not fully support designation as a Heritage Preservation District. Here, historic architecture might contribute to neighborhood character, but if houses are not poorly maintained or subject to unsympathetic alteration, design review might not be critical but recognition of the area’s special qualities would assist in focusing public interest and planning assistance. A Heritage Conservation District might also be created as a buffer around new or existing Heritage Preservation Districts. Review of demolition permits and new construction would be of great use in older areas undergoing selective building clearance and redevelopment.

The study recommended that a Heritage Conservation District for future study should be based on models where:

- The district was administered by the existing Heritage Preservation Commission and planning staff and was well coordinated with historic district planning.
- The district was perceived by residents as having equal status and recognition with other local historic districts.
- The objectives of the Heritage Conservation District were clear and the review process efficient.
- Public information and education were used to further the goals of the district and planning program.

It was also recommended that criteria for eligibility should be the existing Heritage Preservation Commission Guidelines. In their current form, these guidelines provide for broad interpretation of historical significance and would accommodate many types of areas. Activity regulated within the St. Paul Heritage Conservation District would include demolition, exterior design of new buildings, additions which increase habitable areas, and relocation. Activities not regulated within the Heritage Conservation District would include exterior design of alterations to existing

buildings and alterations to existing property (including fences, sidewalks, lighting, and signs).

The designation process should include an inventory of buildings and features, initiated by the Heritage Preservation Commission or the District Council; the development of preliminary boundaries and guidelines; and provisions for presentation for approval by residents through a public hearing and informal meetings.

Design guidelines which address the exterior design of new buildings and the design of additions should be developed for each Heritage Conservation District. Additionally, this information should be made available to property owners in the form of a brochure or handbook.

Finally, the permit review procedure should follow that specified in the current Heritage Preservation Ordinance. (It should be noted that unless the Heritage Conservation District met National Register eligibility criteria, Federal rehabilitation tax certification could not be extended to the area.)

Study follow-up

Heritage Preservation commission members, St. Paul Planning and Economic Development staff, and State Historic Preservation Office staff were among reviewers of drafts of this study. Although the useful applications of the model proposed for St. Paul were recognized, several reviewers commented on the possibility for confusion between Heritage Conservation and Heritage Preservation Districts. Although it has been emphasized that the districts would be presented as of equal status, as has been done in Nashville, a number of reviewers reiterated that the existing guidelines were already flexible enough to designate a broad range of areas as historic districts. This does not, however, provide for special intervention in the buffer zones which usually lie at the edges of districts.

The Heritage Preservation Commission follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation Planning in its evaluation and designation process. However, the Commission takes a broad view of the existing integrity of properties in evaluating their significance. Integrity is not specifically mentioned in the designation criteria. This contributes to the opinion that the existing Heritage Pres-

ervation District ordinance is sufficiently broad to protect many types of areas.

The study recommended new opportunities be created to work with the District Councils on strengthening the relationship between historic preservation and neighborhood planning. A good deal of effort has been put into creating legislation and administering historic districts for specific areas. However, while many people recognize the value of a designated historic building, appropriate conservation of older housing stock everywhere in the city is desirable. Much could be accomplished if public education programs encouraged homeowners to use care in planning exterior alterations, and if city-funded rehabilitation programs took a leading role in setting a high standard for affordable maintenance and rehabilitation work, particularly for siding and window replacement and porch repairs. The entire city, with the great bulk of its traditional housing built before 1930, might be regarded—if not designated—as a conservation area. Here, public education and housing improvement programs rather than design regulations could be leading tools in the effort to maintain building condition and integrity.

General conclusions

Evidence from around the country indicates that architectural and historic preservation-oriented conservation districts with limited design review can be a useful supplement to the traditional historic district. They function best in this role when they are applied to areas with a history of good maintenance and little exterior change and/or where residents are strongly opposed to full-fledged design review. In areas where there is a pattern of low maintenance and unsympathetic exterior alterations, conservation districts with limited design review are less effective at preserving neighborhood character.

Footnote: In August, 1992 the St. Paul City Council approved the Dayton's Bluff Historic District which contains over 500 properties. A design guidelines handbook has been prepared for distribution to all property owners in the area.



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CULTURAL RESOURCES PARTNERSHIP NOTES

HERITAGE PRESERVATION SERVICES, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Series editor: Susan L. Henry Renaud, Coordinator, Historic Preservation Planning Program
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Benefits of Residential Historic District Designation for Property Owners

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Historic district designation has become an important tool for local governments in efforts to preserve the character of central-city neighborhoods. Designation of historic districts based on a national level of significance, called National Register Historic Districts, has occurred widely in the U.S. since the passage of the enabling legislation of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966. In addition, some states have created state historic registers and many municipalities have established local historic registers and special zoning for local historic landmarks and districts. The number of local historic districts in the U.S. has grown from approximately 100 in 1966 to more than 2,000 in the late 1990s (Listokin et al. 1998).

National- and state-level designations convey more prestige to an individual property or historic district, and makes federal and state tax breaks available to owners of individually listed properties and properties listed as contributing to the significance of a district. However, national- or state-level designation offers no real protections, as both listing and participation in tax abatement programs is voluntary, and owners can renovate or demolish a significant historic property to replace it with a “highest and best use” building that maximizes income or sale price.

In contrast, local-level historic designations typically require review of significant exterior alterations, demolitions, and new construction within historic districts in order to restrict incompatible development, and thereby maintain the historic character and integrity of designated structures and neighborhoods. Reviews are conducted by community commissions or neighborhood advisory groups, or both, composed of local residents, and are based on specific design standards and guidelines developed by the community.

The City of Tucson currently has 21 National Register Historic Districts. Six of the nationally designated districts are also designated as local Historic Preservation Zones (districts), as enabled by a 1972 ordinance revising the Land Use Code. In the locally designated districts, there are two levels of review of exterior renovations, demolitions, and new construction. The level of review is determined by whether the property is a contributing or noncontributing property in a National Register District, or whether the proposed changes are major or minor.

Higher Property Values and Rates of Appreciation

Higher property values and rates of appreciation are important economic benefits of historic district designations of residential neighborhoods. Recent studies in Arizona

document this effect of historic district status on property values. A study of the Speedway-Drachman National Register Historic District in Tucson showed that between 1987 and 2007 the average assessed value of homes in this district appreciated 15 percent higher than the average in a nearby neighborhood with housing stock of similar age, construction, and design (L'Orange 2007:4). A study of 25,975 single family homes sold in Phoenix in 2005, including 212 located in National Register historic districts, showed that historic designation increased the average marketable sales price of a house by 31%, or more than \$100,000 (Poppen 2007:7). A study in Mesa comparing house market value changes between 1997-2004 in the Mesa Evergreen National Register Historic District compared to those in two comparable, undesignated neighborhoods identified a +26 percent difference in the historic district (Bellavia 2007:3-4).

There is some data that national-level historic designation has a slightly greater positive effect on property values than local-level historic designation alone (Leichenko et al. 2001:1982-1983). However, this difference is not statistically significant, and the same comparative data shows that properties that carry only local designation also tend to have higher values compared to similar, undesignated properties (Leichenko et al. 2001), and relative to the entire real estate market (Rypkema 2002).

Local landmarking and design review can actually boost property values by introducing certainty into the marketplace and improving the overall economic climate, which benefits all property owners (Clarion Associates of Colorado 2002).

Comparison of a number of independent studies of local historic districts in New Jersey, Texas, Indiana, Georgia, Colorado, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Kentucky, and Virginia showed that this economic effect of local designation is typical across the country.

The results of these studies are remarkably consistent: property values in local historic districts appreciate significantly faster than the market as a whole in the vast majority of cases and appreciates at rates equivalent to the market in the worst case. Simply put—local historic districts enhance property values (Rypkema 2002:6).

Other data indicates that the greatest impact on rates of property appreciation occur with the addition of local designation (which usually includes a design review process and more restrictions on property renovations, demolitions, and new construction) on top of national designation. In a recent study conducted in Memphis, Tennessee, combined local/national designation added 18.6% to assessed property values over a four-year period compared to 13% added by national designation alone (Coulson and Lahr 2005:494-495). In Evansville, Indiana, the rate of appreciation between 1980 and 1995 was significantly greater within a locally designated portion of a larger National Register District (Rypkema 1997:7). Over the same period in Indianapolis, average property values appreciated faster in a district with combined local/national designation compared to a neighborhood with only a national designation (Rypkema 1997:9). Between 1976 and 1996 in Georgia, assessed property values in districts with both local and national designations increased at a rate of 47% compared to 23% for properties in districts with

only the national designation (both figures adjusted for inflation) (Athens-Clarke County Planning Department 1996:4).

Table 1 summarizes the findings of 15 recent studies of the effect of historic district designation on property values over time. These studies were conducted in several different regions of the United States, and include both nationally and locally designated districts. These studies vary in the specific aspects of value over time examined, such as assessed value, sales value, and rate of appreciation. However, all of the studies in Table 1 can be compared in terms of average property values in historic districts relative to similar, undesignated neighborhoods.

Table 1. Property Values* in Designated Historic Districts Compared to Similar Undesignated Neighborhoods in the Same Communities

Study Area	Data Interval	Ave. Value Difference (%)	Annual Rate (%)	Reference
Athens, GA	1976-1996	+14	+7	Leithe and Tigue 1999
Denver, CO	1993-2000	+3-6	+4-1.2	Clarion Assoc. of CO 2002
Durango, CO	1993-2000	+7	+1	Clarion Assoc. of CO 2002
Galveston, TX	1975-1991	+85-360	+5.3-22.5	Govt. Fin. Res. Center 1991
Memphis, TN	1998-2002	+14-23	+3.5-5.7	Coulson and Lahr 2005
Mesa, AZ	1997-2004	+26	+3.7	Bellavia 2007
New Jersey	?	+5	—	New Jersey Hist. Trust 1997
New York, NY	1975-2002	+13	+5	NYC Ind. Budget Office 2003
Phoenix, AZ	2005	+31	—	Poppen 2007
Rome, GA	1980-1996	+10	+6	Leithe and Tigue 1999
San Diego, CA	2000-2005	+16	+3.2	Narwold 2006
Savannah, GA	1974-1997	+264-588	+11.5-25.6	Leithe and Tigue 1999
Texas (9 cities)	(variable)	+5-20	—	Leichenko et al. 2001
Tifton, GA	1983-1996	+2	+2	Leithe and Tigue 1999
Tucson, AZ	1987-2007	+15	+7	L'Orange 2007

* Phoenix and Mesa studies used sales values; all other studies used assessed values.

A few of the designated districts experienced extremely high rates of appreciation, or very modest rates, but most saw property values increase by 5-35% per decade over the values in similar, undesignated neighborhoods.

Within these data, another important pattern is that newer properties within historic districts benefit just as much as older properties. In Memphis, both older and newer (less than 10 years old) buildings in a local/national historic district appreciated to levels higher than similar properties in undesignated neighborhoods (Coulson and Lahr 2005:502-504).

Insulation from Extreme Market Fluctuations

Local historic district designation has proven to insulate property values from wild swings in the housing market, including both downturns tied to larger economic trends, and “bubbles” caused by cycles of real estate speculation. This stability is related to investor confidence that, because there are explicit design limits in the zoning code, home investments in historic districts will not be adversely affected by construction of an inappropriate, out-of-scale building next door. It is also due to the fact that neighborhoods with stable values do not offer opportunities for “flipping” (purchase followed by quick resale at a high profit margin). In these ways, local historic district designation reduces the uncertainty facing the buyer regarding the future value of the investment.

In short, it may be that historic districts are more likely to experience a certain indemnification from extremely modulating property values, perhaps because of a higher degree of investor confidence in these officially recognized and protected areas (Gale 1991:8).

Tax Breaks

Increasing property taxes associated with rising property values in nationally designated and state-designated historic districts can be offset by state and federal tax reduction programs. In Arizona, contributing properties in a National Register District are eligible for the State Historic Property Tax Reclassification program. This program reduces the taxes of listed properties by up to 50 percent over 15 years, and reduces assessments of improvements to commercial properties to 1 percent of their full value over 10 years. The Federal Investment Tax Credit program provides a 20 percent tax credit and accelerated depreciation for rehabilitated investment properties listed as contributors in National Register Districts. The reductions in property taxes available in National Register Districts provide needed economic relief for moderate-income neighborhoods experiencing rising property taxes during real estate boom cycles. The tax incentives also provide alternatives to demolition of historic homes, thereby providing stability to the built environments of neighborhoods.

Stabilization of Residence

Designation as a historic district raises the value of investments, promoting increased levels of home ownership and longer residence. This stabilizing effect on residence patterns has been documented by a study conducted in Indiana, which found that designated historic districts have higher rates of owner-occupation, and longer durations of residence by both homeowners and renters, than do similar, undesignated neighborhoods (Rypkema 1997:2, 6, 10).

Increased Connections among Neighbors and Community Involvement

Neighborhoods with a significant proportion of owner-occupied homes tend to have higher rates of participation in neighborhood associations and improvement projects, which protects shared spaces from decline (Rypkema 2005:51-52). All proposed exterior modifications, new construction, and demolitions in locally designated historic districts require review by neighborhood advisory groups and historical commissions, thereby ensuring community involvement in neighborhood planning.

Summary

The findings of recent comparative studies of the effects of historic district designations over time, conducted in many different regions of the U.S., converge on a few key findings:

- Historic district designation typically increases residential property values by 5-35% per decade over the values in similar, undesignated neighborhoods.
- Both nationally designated historic districts and locally designated historic districts outperform similar, undesignated neighborhoods, but districts that carry both local and national designation experience the highest relative increases in property values.
- The values of newer properties within designated historic districts increase along with those of older properties.
- Local historic district designation decreases investor uncertainty and insulates property values from wild swings in the housing market.
- Increasing property taxes due to rising property values in historic districts designated at the national or state levels can be offset by state and federal tax reduction programs.
- The tax incentives also provide alternatives to demolition of historic homes, thereby providing stability to the built environments of neighborhoods.
- Historic district designation leads to increased levels of home ownership and longer residence by both homeowners and renters.
- Designated historic districts tend to have higher rates of participation in neighborhood associations and improvement projects, which protects shared spaces from decline.
- Proposed exterior renovations, demolitions, and new construction in locally designated historic districts are reviewed by neighborhood advisory groups and historical commissions, thereby ensuring community involvement in neighborhood planning.

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The (Economic) Value of National Register Listing

To ask if properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places have value is to ask a tautological question. Of course they have value or they wouldn't have been listed in the first place. The nomination process to the National Register itself implicitly requires the source and the substantiation of the property's value—architectural, cultural, associative, historical, etc. Further, by implication the National Register property is more valuable on some set of criteria than non-listed properties, otherwise everything would be National Register eligible.

So historic preservation in general and National Register listing in particular doesn't have one value, it has a multitude of values—cultural, environmental, social, educational, aesthetic, historical. The question becomes, “Do these values manifest themselves in economic value?” Let's begin with what we do know, and that is about local designation. Over the last decade a number of analyses have been conducted asking, “What is the impact on property values of local historic districts?” Using a variety of methodologies, conducted by a number of independent researchers, this analysis has been

undertaken in New Jersey, Texas, Indiana, Georgia, Colorado, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, and elsewhere. The results of these studies are remarkably consistent: property values in local historic districts appreciate significantly faster than the market as a whole in the vast majority of cases and appreciate at rates equivalent to the market in the worst case. Simply put—local historic districts enhance property values.

Anecdotally, it has been found that when a local district has the greatest positive impact on property values four variables are usually in place: clear, written design guidelines for the affected properties; staff for the preservation commission; active educational outreach by the staff and commission to property owners, real estate brokers, architects, builders, etc.; and consistent and predictable decisions by the commission.

Since listing in the National Register provides little protection for an individual property, sources of value enhancement created by a local district do not exist. There are, however, at least four situations in which listing in the National Register does often add economic value to the listed properties:

- When the properties are commercial, rather than owner-occupied residential, the eligibility for the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit can add economic value to the properties. At a recent symposium funded by the National Park Service and chaired by the Urban Land Institute, some developers noted that in their communities, sellers of unrehabilitated properties were raising the price of listed buildings to reflect the tax credit opportunity potential of the investment.
- In some communities the creation of a National Register district triggers the creation of a corresponding local district. This local district then would provide the protections (and perhaps incentives) as noted above, leading to economic value enhancement.

Listing can add economic value to commercial properties since National Register status is a pre-requisite to using the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit.





National Register residential neighborhoods may command a premium if local buyers and the real estate community understand and appreciate the significance of designation.

- In real estate markets that have a level of knowledge and sophistication among both real estate professionals and buyers regarding historic properties, National Register listing can have an economic premium attached. How do you know if the local market has reached that point? When the real estate ads say, “This house is located within the XYZ National Register Historic District,” or “This house is listed in the National Register.” The broker wouldn’t pay for the extra lines in the ad if he/she didn’t believe that potential buyers responded knowingly and positively to that information.
- A common characteristic of neighborhoods—both residential and commercial—that are seen as places of sound investment is the existence of a strong citizen-based advocacy organization. Often the creation of a National Register district is a catalyst for the creation of such a citizen advocacy group. The group may have been formed for the specific purpose of getting a neighborhood listed, but once that mission is accomplished the organization expands its focus to broader neighborhood advocacy. This can have a positive affect on property values.

But perhaps it makes sense to step back briefly from the specific question, “Does National Register listing add economic value?” to a broader identification of the variables that affect value. In real estate economics there are identified the Four Forces of Value, those factors in the marketplace that push the value of a given piece of real estate—historic or otherwise—up or down. Those forces are physical, social, economic, and political. If as preservationists it is our intention to positively influence the value of

historic properties it will be necessary to knowingly bring those forces into play.

The physical force of value is the only one of the four even partially emerging from within the property lines. A leaky roof, the wrong kind of mortar, deteriorating foundation walls, sandblasted bricks are all examples of physical forces that will diminish the economic value of a building. But physical forces beyond the lot lines will also have an impact. The condition of the streets and sidewalks, the proximity of parks, levels of public maintenance, and whether nearby properties are vacant or occupied are all examples of the physical force of value over which the individual property owner has no direct control.

The social force of value is how people understand and attach importance to any given property characteristic. When more people hold historic resources “valuable” by any criteria, there will be a corresponding increase in the economic value of those resources.

The economic force of value is more complex than it may seem. If financing is more difficult to obtain for historic properties than for new properties, there will be a relative adverse impact on historic properties’ values. Adaptive re-use of historic properties, when the use for which they were built is no longer in demand, is central to the buildings having economic value. The proposed Historic Homeowners Tax Credit, by adding an economic incentive for re-investment, will add economic value.

The last of the four forces of value is political. To the extent that elected officials and other political decision makers recognize and emphasize the importance of heritage buildings and correspondingly take public policy actions to encourage appropriate rehabilitation, the economic value of historic buildings will increase.

Listing in the National Register of Historic Places does not necessarily add economic value to a given piece of real estate. Rather, National Register status can be an important catalytic tool to utilize all four forces of value. National Register listing is one of a basket of tools that can be used to assure that the economic value of historic preservation takes its rightful place among the multiple values that historic buildings contribute to American communities of every size.

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Photos by the author.

Historic Preservation and Residential Property Values: An Analysis of Texas Cities

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Summary. Designation of historic districts is increasingly used as a tool to revive or halt the deterioration of central-city neighbourhoods. While historic designation is generally thought to have a positive impact on property values, evidence on this issue is mixed. One limitation of previous research is that it typically focuses on historic neighbourhoods in one city and thus bases its conclusions on a very limited sample. This study expands upon previous work by examining the effects of designation on property values across a larger set of cities. The study employs hedonic regression models to estimate housing prices in historic districts and comparable neighbourhoods in nine Texas cities. Results suggest that, in most cases, historic designation is associated with higher property values.

1. Introduction

Historic designation has become an important tool in efforts to preserve central-city neighbourhoods and to promote urban economic development (Listokin *et al.*, 1998; Slaughter, 1997; Rypkema, 1995; Wojno, 1991). Designation of historic districts has been employed on a broad basis in the US since the 1960s, following legal decisions that upheld landmarking and passage in 1966 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (Listokin, 1986). The act gave the Secretary of the Interior the authority to maintain a National Register of Historic Places, comprising districts, sites, buildings and objects of local, state or national historic significance (Wojno, 1991, p. 297). In addition, many municipalities have established local historic registers that allow local governments to establish historic districts and to

designate properties as historically significant. Although establishment of many local historic districts preceded NHPA—for example, Charleston, South Carolina, established historic district zoning in 1931 (Lockhard and Hinds, 1983)—the rate of establishment of local registers dramatically accelerated after 1966 (Listokin, 1986). In 1966, there were approximately 100 local historic district commissions in the US. Presently, there are more than 2000 such commissions (Listokin *et al.*, 1998).

One of the main justifications for designation of a historic district within a city is that it provides a means to protect a historic neighbourhood from physical deterioration. With regard to property values, however, designation of a historic district may be either value-enhancing or value-detracting.

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Historic designation is thought to have a positive impact on property values by providing a form of insurance of future neighbourhood quality. The prestige of official landmark designation in conjunction with assurance that its desirable historic amenities will be fostered into the future by public regulation, may make property-owners in historic districts more willing to invest in rehabilitation and maintenance of their properties. One study of New York City, for example, concluded that historic district designation, by fostering neighbourhood pride and other attributes, “serves to strengthen both property values and social fabric” (New York Landmarks Conservancy, 1977, p. 2).

In addition to direct effects on property values in a district, historic designation is also thought to have positive spillovers for neighbouring areas, whereby designation of a district leads to a ripple effect of rehabilitation and upgrading of properties in surrounding neighbourhoods (Listokin *et al.*, 1998; Rypkema, 1994; Coulson and Leichenko, 2001). Thus, historic designation is seen as more than just a way to preserve historic buildings; it is also increasingly regarded as both a community preservation and an economic development strategy. A recent article noted that economics and revitalisation have taken their rightful places as the pillars upon which the preservation ethic is based (Rypkema, 1995). A prime example of the growing recognition of the linkages between preservation and local development can be seen in the Community Partners Program, a new initiative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which aims to demonstrate the “effectiveness of preservation-based community development” (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1998, p. 1).

There are, however, a number of potential value-detracting aspects of historic designation. Designation of a historic district may impose restrictions on alterations and demolition (or it may at least require administrative review and/or some delay of such actions) and it may require maintenance of exterior ornamentation and other historic

façade treatments over and above those required in the jurisdiction’s general maintenance code. For example, in the city of Abilene, owners of designated properties must apply for a ‘certificate of appropriateness’ (C of A) prior to performing any type of work on the property’s exterior (Coulson and Leichenko, 2001). A ‘C of A’ is, in fact, a requirement in many of the 2000 or so communities with local landmarking. Furthermore, maintenance work on the historic property is often more expensive than it might otherwise be because it has to conform to fairly rigorous guidelines (for example, only certain types of paint may be allowed). These landmark restrictions and demands can exert a downward pressure on prices.

In addition to control over a property’s appearance, designation may also detract from a property’s value by prohibiting the conversion to other uses or to a more intensive use. This type of argument would suggest that, in some instances, designation of historic districts might not reflect the ‘highest and best’ use of land—i.e. the most profitable use incorporating those uses that are legally permissible, physically possible and financially or economically feasible (Kinard, 1971, p. 39).

The practice of historic designation also raises a number of broader legal and equity-related issues. These issues have been addressed in literature on preservation and property rights and on urban renewal and gentrification (see, for example, Smith and Williams, 1986; Smith, 1996; Schuler *et al.*, 1992) and therefore will be only briefly described. With regard to the legal aspects of designation, debate continues to surround the issue of whether designation is a ‘taking of property’. The courts have overwhelmingly decided that designation is not a ‘taking’ but rather a police power regulation that justifiably furthers the public’s health, safety and welfare while recognising the rights of private property-owners (see, for example, *Penn Central Transportation Company v. New York City*, 438 vs. 104 [1978]); yet designation’s property value impact continues to be discussed (as does the more general

issue of public land-use regulations) in both legal and non-legal forums (Duerksen, 1983; Rypkema, 1994; Miller, 1998).

Other issues raised include equity considerations. For example, how should the burden of a public good—in this instance, preservation—be borne and shared between the affected private property-owner and the public at large? Another equity issue is the possibility of displacement of low-income residents who can no longer afford to live in historic neighbourhoods (Smith, 1998). According to this argument, higher property values as the result of historic designation lead to increased rental prices and higher property taxes, and these, in turn, may displace low- to moderate-income residents (Wojno, 1991). Although designation of historic districts cannot be equated with urban redevelopment and gentrification, which have been associated in many cases with the attraction of higher-income residents and increased housing prices, the potential for displacement of low- to moderate-income residents continues to be an important consideration. For this reason, the potential benefits of designation in terms of higher property values and increased tax revenues must be weighed against the possibility of displacement of lower-income renters, particularly in cities with very limited low-income housing supplies.

2. Empirical Studies of Historic Designation and Property Values

The question of the effects of historic designation on property values has been explored in the empirical literature for more than 20 years (Table 1). Many studies employ a difference-in-difference methodology whereby the changes in property values of houses within a district and houses outside a district are compared.¹ If prices increase (decrease) more within the designated district, then designation is inferred to have a significant and positive (negative) effect. A number of difference-in-difference studies have found that designation has a positive effect on property

values (for example, Scribner, 1976; Rackham, 1977; US Advisory Panel on Historic Preservation, 1979). Other difference-in-difference studies found, however, that designation has a neutral or negative effect on property values (for example, Heudorfer, 1975; New York Landmarks Conservancy, 1977; Samuels, 1981; Gale, 1991).

One important limitation of the above studies of historic designation and property values is that they rely solely on comparing sample averages of the growth rate in property values in historic areas with those in non-historic areas. Typically, no other variables (for example, property characteristics) are controlled and, to the extent that there may be variables independent of designation that explain the changes in property values, the results may be biased and inconsistent. In an effort to rectify the above limitations, most of the more recent studies of the effects of historic designation employ hedonic regression models. This method of analysis provides a means to assess the implicit value of the structural characteristics of a house.² Use of a hedonic approach enables assessment of the effect of historic designation on housing values while holding constant property and neighbourhood characteristics.

A number of studies employing hedonic methods have concluded that designated historic properties and properties located within historic districts typically sell for a premium when compared with similar, non-designated properties (for example, Ford, 1989; Asabere and Huffman, 1994a; Clark and Herrin, 1997; Coulson and Leichenko, 2001). Other hedonic studies, however, have found mixed or negative results (for example, Schaeffer and Millerick, 1991; Asabere and Huffman, 1994b; and Asabere *et al.*, 1994). In accounting for their mixed results, Schaeffer and Millerick (1991) note that the effect of historic designation on price may depend upon whether a property is locally or nationally designated. Their study found a positive impact on values with national designation but a negative impact with local designation. This difference, according to the authors, resulted from more stringent controls in the

Table 1. Results of previous empirical studies

Study	Location	Method	Impact of designation on property values
Heudorfer (1975)	New York City	Difference-on-difference	Neutral
Scribner (1976)	Alexander, VA	Difference-on-difference	Positive
Rackham (1977)	Washington, DC	Difference-on-difference	Positive
New York Landmarks Conservancy (1977)	New York City	Difference-on-difference	Neutral
US Advisory Panel on Historic Preservation (1979)	Alexandria, VA; Galveston, TX; Savannah, GA; Seattle, WA	Difference-on-difference	Positive
Samuels (1981)	Washington, DC	Difference-on-difference	Neutral
Ford (1989)	Baltimore, MD	Hedonic	Positive
Gale (1991)	Washington, DC	Difference-on-difference	Neutral
Schaeffer and Millerick (1991)	Chicago, IL	Hedonic	Mixed
Asabere and Huffman (1994a)	Philadelphia, PA	Hedonic	Positive
Asabere and Huffman (1994b)	Philadelphia, PA	Hedonic	Negative
Asabere <i>et al.</i> (1994)	Philadelphia, PA	Hedonic	Negative
Clark and Herrin (1997)	Sacramento, CA	Hedonic	Positive
Coulson and Leichenko (2001)	Abilene, TX	Hedonic	Positive

local districts and from the prestige associated with location in a national district.

Overall, the more recent, hedonic studies represent an important improvement over the earlier difference-in-difference studies. However, one limitation of the multivariate studies—and one possible reason for their mixed findings—is that they typically look at a small number of historic neighbourhoods in one city and thus base their conclusions on a relatively limited sample within a single housing market. This study expands upon previous hedonic studies by examining the effects of historic designation on residential property values across a larger sample of cities. The advantage of our approach is that we employ a roughly common econometric framework across the different models (although there are some differences in the various city-models) and this facilitates comparison across a large pool of cities—a comparison which is not otherwise available given the disparate models that previous research has provided. Nine Texas cities—Abilene, Dallas, Fort Worth, Grapevine, Laredo, Lubbock, Nacogdoches, San Antonio and San Marcos are included in the hedonic analysis.

3. Data

3.1 Selection of Historic and Comparable Properties

Prior to the estimation of the hedonic models, it was necessary to select historic and comparable properties for inclusion in the analysis of each city. A complete list of designated historic properties was obtained from city-planning and/or historic preservation officials in each city.³ In six of the cities (Dallas, Grapevine, Lubbock, Laredo, San Antonio and San Marcos), all of the historic properties included in the analysis are located within designated historic districts. In these cases, residential properties within the historic neighbourhoods were compared with properties located in comparable neighbourhoods in the city. Criteria for the selection of comparable neighbourhoods

included similarity in general characteristics of the housing (for example, age of the buildings, size and architectural style), similarity in income levels and similarity of demographic characteristics. City planners and/or historic preservation officers selected the comparable neighbourhoods in each city.

In the cities of Abilene and Nacogdoches, historic properties are designated individually; the cities do not have designated historic districts. Comparable properties in each city were selected based on location in the same neighbourhood or in neighbourhoods similar to those where the designated houses were located. In Fort Worth, historic properties included properties located within historic districts as well as a large number of properties (93) with individual historic designation that were not located in a historic district. In order to take into account both types of historic properties, the Fort Worth analysis used property value data for the entire city. Designated properties were compared with all other residential properties in the city.

3.2 Type of Historic Designation

In several of the cities, we were able to distinguish between different types of historical designation. In the cities of Abilene and San Marcos, we were able to differentiate between nationally and locally designated historic properties or historic districts, while in the city of Lubbock, we were able to differentiate between national, State of Texas and local historic designation. National designation means that a property or district is included on the National Register of Historic Places. State of Texas designation is a historic designation category that has been granted at the state level. Local historic designation may include designation of a local historic district, designation of individual properties as historically significant, or inclusion on special listings of historic local properties.

Because national or state designation seems likely to convey more prestige to an individual property or historic district and

Table 2. Data sources

City	Data Source	Sample size	Average property value	Number of historic properties in the sample
Abilene	Appraisal	7 620	\$39 160	222
Dallas	Appraisal	4 920	\$64 838	2 200
Fort Worth	Appraisal	102 948	\$54 519	1 338
Grapevine	Appraisal	59	\$44 673	27
Laredo	Appraisal	338	\$45 396	177
Lubbock	Appraisal	1 922	\$30 471	440
Nacogdoches	MLS	30	\$93 130	15
San Antonio	Appraisal	3 806	\$47 970	1 912
San Marcos	MLS	80	\$94 920	34

may therefore make the property or district more desirable, we expect that, all other things being equal, nationally or state-designated properties will have higher values than will properties that carry only local designation. In addition to conveying greater prestige than that conveyed by local designation, national and state designations are typically less restrictive (Schaeffer and Millerick, 1991). If there is no federal or state funding or other involvement (for example, federal or state rehabilitation grants or licenses), then the owner of a federal or state landmark can, by and large, make alterations without historic 'C of A' approval. In the same vein, the owner can demolish the federal/state landmark and replace it with a 'highest and best use' structure. It is only with local landmarking that significant restrictions on alterations and demolishing are sometimes triggered. These differences should further contribute to the more pronounced value-enhancing effect of national or state designation. We were able to test this hypothesis in Abilene, Lubbock and San Marcos.

3.3 Data Sources

For the majority of the cities, data on residential property values were obtained from county appraisal district databases (Table 2). These cities include Abilene, Dallas, Fort Worth, Grapevine, Laredo, Lubbock and San

Antonio. Appraisal district data were selected as our primary data source because these data are comprehensive, covering all of the historic properties in an entire neighbourhood and all properties in comparable neighbourhoods. While appraisal data have been used in other recent studies of the property value impacts of historic preservation (see, for example, Gale, 1991; Coulson and Leichenko, 2001), potential limitations of appraisal data include possible inflation or reduction of housing values by appraisers due to historic status. In each city where appraisal data were used, we enlisted the aid of city planners in compilation of the datasets in order to ensure that the historic and comparison properties (neighbourhoods) included in the sample had been recently appraised based on a consistent method.

In two cases, San Marcos and Nacogdoches, where appraisal data were not available or were not consistent, property values were obtained from Real Estate Multiple Listing services. Data from Real Estate Multiple Listings, which include the actual price at which a property sold, provide an accurate reflection of the market value of a home. The key problem with these data, however, is that the sample sizes tend to be smaller because the data are based on actual sales. In the city of Nacogdoches, for example, there were only 15 sales of designated historic properties during the study period. Smaller sample sizes limit the accuracy and reliability of the

hedonic analysis of the impact of historic designation.⁴

4. Modelling Approach

The property value analysis involved the application of multivariate regression models to assess the impact of historic designation on residential property values. The model form used in the study involves estimation of house price as a function of property characteristics, neighbourhood location and historic status. Since we are primarily interested in determining whether historic status exerts a statistically significant effect on housing price, and whether this effect is positive or negative, the key variable of interest is historic status.

The basic form of the hedonic model is as follows

$$\ln Price = f(\text{structural characteristics, neighbourhood, historic}) \quad (1)$$

where, $\ln Price$ is the natural logarithm of the assessed total value (or sale price) of the house; *structural characteristics* of the house include variables such as square footage, year built, number of bathrooms, number of bedrooms; *neighbourhood* indicates the neighbourhood in which the house is located; and *historic* indicates whether or not the house is individually designated as historic or is located in a historic district.

Definitions of all of the variables used in the analyses are presented in Table 3. To ensure as much comparability as possible across the cities, each model started with a similar set of basic explanatory variables, such as square footage, year built and historic status. For most of the cities, we were also able to add additional explanatory variables such as number of garage spaces or presence of central air-conditioning.⁵ Several models (Abilene, Lubbock and San Marcos) include variables designating type of historic district,⁶ and the larger city models include variables designating neighbourhood type.⁷

The hedonic models are specified in semi-logarithmic form, meaning that the house price is specified as the natural log and the

explanatory variables are specified in linear units (for example, *bath* is simply the number of bathrooms in the house). With the semi-logarithmic form, the coefficient on each explanatory variable (square footage, number of baths, etc.) is interpreted as the percentage change in the house's price that is associated with a one-unit increase in the explanatory variable. For example, a coefficient of 0.07 on the variable *bath* implies that the addition of one bathroom is associated with an increase in house price of approximately 7 per cent.

As is typical in hedonic studies of this type, it is important to control for covariates of historical designation in our specifications, as this variable can be correlated to some degree with other attributes. To address this issue, we examined bivariate correlations between designation and the other housing attributes in each sample. Designation is obviously correlated with the year built in each case, but in a number of our samples it is also (positively) correlated with land or interior area at least as strongly as it is with year built. Hence inclusion of these and other attributes is appropriate, as omission of them would bias upwards our measurement of the price difference between designated and non-designated properties.

5. Empirical Results

Detailed results of the hedonic models for each city are presented in Table 4. Interpretation of the individual estimated values in each city model may be illustrated through the example of Abilene. For houses in the Abilene area, other things being equal, an increase in size of 1 square foot is associated with an increase in property value of 0.059 per cent; based on the average house value (\$39 160), each additional square foot increases house value by \$23. Similarly, an increase of 1 square foot in land area is associated with an increase in property value of 0.0091 per cent, implying that each additional square foot of land area increases property value by \$0.36. An additional bathroom adds 16 per cent to the value of the

Table 3. Variable definitions

Variable name	Variable definition
<i>Housing characteristics</i>	
<i>Bath</i>	Number of bathrooms (full and half)
<i>Fullbath</i>	Number of full bathrooms
<i>Halfbath</i>	Number of half bathrooms
<i>Yearbuilt</i>	Year the house was built
<i>Squarefoot</i>	Square footage of the house
<i>Lotsize</i>	Square footage of the house's lot
<i>Bedroom</i>	Number of bedrooms
<i>Heatac</i>	Presence of central heating and central air-conditioning
<i>Numstory</i>	Number of storeys
<i>Numporch</i>	Number of porches
<i>Garagesp</i>	Number of garage spaces
<i>Structure</i>	Number of buildings on the property
<i>Condition</i>	Condition of the house
<i>Depreciation</i>	Depreciation of the house (alternative indicator of housing condition)
<i>Yearsold</i>	Year in which the house was sold
<i>Historic designation</i>	
<i>Historic</i>	Located in a historic district and/or designated as a historic home
<i>National</i>	Located in a nationally designated district or on the National Register
<i>Texas</i>	Designated as a Texas historic property
<i>Noncontrib</i>	Located in a historic district but not contributing to the district (Lubbock)
<i>Neighborhood controls^a</i>	
<i>Abilene</i>	
<i>Census track</i>	Census track in which the property is located (13 tracks in total)
<i>Dallas</i>	
<i>Rosemont Crest–Sunset Hills</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Winnetka Heights–South Winnetka</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Tenth Street–Bottoms</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Munger Place–Junius Heights</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Queen City–Charles Rice</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>South Blvd/Park Rw–comparison area</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Colonial Hill–Saint Phillips</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Kessler Park–East Kessler</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Miller-Stemmons–Kidd Springs</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Kings Highway–Dallas Land and Loan</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Lake Cliff–South Lake Cliff</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Peak's Suburban–Mill Creek</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Fort Worth</i>	
<i>Elizabeth</i>	Located in Elizabeth Ave. Historic District
<i>Grand</i>	Located in the Grand Ave. Historic District
<i>Fairmont</i>	Located in the Fairmont Historic District
<i>Isolated</i>	Historically designated property, but is not a district
<i>School District</i>	School district in which the property is located (12 districts in total)
<i>San Antonio</i>	
<i>Dignowity Hill–comparison</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>King William–comparison</i>	Historic District location–comparison area
<i>Monticello Park–comparison</i>	Historic District location–comparison area

Note: A selection of these variables were included in the individual models for each city.

^a Not all cities required neighbourhood variables.

house, an increase of \$6268. On average, houses with central heating and air-conditioning have values that are 45 per cent greater (\$17 628) than similar houses without this amenity. (While it seems unlikely that central heating and air-conditioning alone would have such a large effect on housing values, the presence of central heating and air-conditioning is likely to be associated with other amenities that raise the value of a house—for example, higher-quality roofing, carpeting and so forth.) With regard to year built, more recently constructed houses have higher values; each additional year of age decreases the house's value by 1.4 per cent. All of the above estimates are statistically significant at standard levels of confidence and all of the coefficients are of magnitudes similar to those found in other studies of this type.

The housing characteristic coefficients in the other city models may be interpreted in a similar fashion. In general, the housing characteristic variables tend to have the expected signs and are generally statistically significant. Basic characteristics, including numbers of bathrooms, square footage and lot size generally have the expected, positive signs⁸ and are statistically significant in almost all cases. A positive coefficient on *yearbuilt* indicates that older houses generally have lower values than do newer houses. Although the sign pattern on the *yearbuilt* variables is generally as expected, the coefficients are not statistically significant in all cases.⁹

Most of the additional structural variables, including presence of central heating and air conditioning (Abilene, Fort Worth, Grapevine), number of garage spaces (Fort Worth, Grapevine), number of porches (Laredo) and number of structures on the property (Fort Worth, San Antonio), have the expected (positive) sign and most are statistically significant. While the negative effects of number of storeys (Abilene) and number of bedrooms (Nacogdoches and San Antonio) seem to be counterintuitive, the reason for these negative results becomes clear if one keeps in mind that we are controlling for

square footage. Given the control for square footage, the negative sign on number of storeys in Abilene simply implies that a 2500-square-foot ranch-style house would have a higher value than a 2500-square-foot 2-storey house. Similarly, in the Nacogdoches and San Antonio models, the negative sign on bedroom tells us that a 2500-square-foot house with 2 (large) bedrooms is worth more than a 2500-square-foot house with 3 (small) bedrooms. The individual coefficients for the neighbourhood controls (not reported) were generally found to be statistically significant.¹⁰

Concerning the interpretation of the coefficients on historic designation, we again use an illustration from Abilene. The *historic* coefficient of 0.19 (Table 4) suggests that values for designated historic houses are approximately 19 per cent higher than for similar, non-designated properties. The coefficient on *national* indicates that nationally designated historic properties sell for approximately 5 per cent more than locally designated historic properties. However, the effect of national designation is not statistically significant; we therefore cannot state that national designation has a positive impact above and beyond that of local designation within the city.

In general, the results indicate that historic designation has a positive effect on property values in all of the cities. The positive effect of historic preservation is statistically significant in Abilene, Dallas, Fort Worth, Grapevine, Lubbock, Nacogdoches and San Antonio. The effect of historic preservation is negative in San Marcos, but it is not statistically significant. The (positive) effect of historic preservation is also not significant in Laredo. Among those cities where historic designation has a statistically significant effect on property values, historic designation is associated with average property value increases ranging between approximately 5 per cent and 20 per cent of the total property value. In percentage terms, the smallest average increases in property values occur in Dallas, where the value of historic properties is 4.9 per cent higher than the value of

Table 4. Results for all cities

Variable	Abilene	Dallas	Fort Worth	Grapevine	Laredo	Lubbock	Nacogdoches	San Antonio	San Marcos
<i>Bath</i>	0.160 (13.1)**	—	0.14 (37.2)**	0.0628 (0.75)	—	—	0.174 (1.85)*	—	8.43E-4 (0.013)
<i>Fullbath</i>	—	-0.0253 (-4.23)**	—	—	—	—	—	0.0714 (5.64)**	—
<i>Halfbath</i>	—	0.0673 (4.75)**	—	—	—	—	—	0.109 (4.85)**	—
<i>Yearbuilt</i>	0.0144 (33.7)**	-0.00347 (-12.1)**	0.00671 (88.7)**	0.00156 (1.0)	-7.5E-07 (-0.64)	0.0175 (13.3)**	0.00397 (1.4)	—	0.00251 (1.47)
<i>Squarefoot</i>	5.86E-4 (46.9)**	4.17E-4 (60.7)**	6.07E-4 (257)**	3.27E-4 (5.84)**	1.84E-4 (9.84)**	-5.1E-05 (-2.98)**	4.83E-4 (4.92)**	3.79E-4 (30.4)**	5.95E-4 (8.92)**
<i>Lotsize</i>	9.1E-5 (9.0)**	—	2.35E-06 (21.5)**	9.85E-06 (7.6)**	7.43E-5 (1.27)**	—	—	3.31E-5 (18.1)**	—
<i>Bedroom</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	-0.174 (-3.51)**	-0.00237 (-0.76)	—
<i>Heatac</i>	0.452 (41.6)**	—	0.409 (110)**	0.157 (1.8)*	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Numstory</i>	-0.144 (-4.67)**	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Numporch</i>	—	—	—	—	8.51E-5 (3.05)**	—	—	—	—
<i>Garagespace</i>	—	—	0.103 (67.2)**	0.0436 (1.62)	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Structure</i>	—	—	0.185 (24.5)**	—	—	—	—	0.0737 (12.8)**	—
<i>Condition</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.156 (3.24)**
<i>Depreciation</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Yearsold</i>	—	-0.0215 (-63.7)**	—	—	—	—	0.00156 (0.05)	—	0.0639 (4.14)**
<i>Historic Status</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Historic</i>	0.191 (4.79)**	0.0495 (6.08)**	0.0882 (8.24)*	0.191 (3.03)**	0.044 (1.19)	0.064 (2.01)**	0.201 (2.06)*	0.186 (16.9)**	-0.124 (-1.11)
<i>National</i>	0.0516 (0.834)	—	—	—	—	1.17 (6.71)**	—	—	0.222 (1.80)*
<i>Texas</i>	—	—	—	—	—	0.782 (2.26)**	—	—	—
<i>Noncontrib</i>	—	—	—	—	—	-0.0503 (-1.01)	—	—	—
<i>Neighbourhood controls</i>	Included	Included	Included	—	—	—	—	Included	—
<i>R²</i>	0.77	0.91	0.805	0.819	0.603	0.114	0.839	0.722	0.700
<i>n</i>	7 620	4 920	102 948	59	338	1 922	30	3 806	80

** indicates statistically significant at the 5 per cent level. * indicates statistically significant at the 10 per cent level.

Table 5. Summary of the property value impacts of historic designation

City	Number of historic properties	Is historic designation significant?	Percentage change in value from historic designation	Change in value from historic designation for an individual property (\$)
Abilene	222	Yes	+ 19.1	+ 7 500
Dallas	2 200	Yes	+ 4.9	+ 3 200
Fort Worth	1 338	Yes	+ 8.8	+ 4 800
Grapevine	27	Yes	+ 19.1	+ 8 500
Laredo	177	No	—	—
Lubbock	440	Yes	+ 6.4	+ 1 950
Nacogdoches	15	Yes	+ 20.1	+ 18 700
San Antonio	1 912	Yes	+ 18.6	+ 8 900
San Marcos	34	No	—	—

comparable, non-historic properties. The largest average percentage increases occur in Nacogdoches, where the value of historic properties is 20.1 per cent higher than the value of comparable, non-historic properties.

Among the cities in which we were able to distinguish between nationally and locally designated historic properties, our results were somewhat mixed. In Lubbock, nationally and state-designated historic properties had statistically significantly higher values than did locally designated historic properties. Furthermore, national designation in Lubbock had a larger impact on property values than state designation did. In San Marcos, nationally designated properties also had significantly higher values than did locally designated properties. Because local historic designation, itself, is not statistically significant in San Marcos, this result implies that properties with national designation have values that are significantly higher than all other properties (both locally designated and non-designated) in the city. In Abilene, as noted above, properties with national designation had higher values than did those with local designation, but this difference was not statistically significant. Overall, these mixed results suggest that local housing market conditions and variations in local historic zoning rules determine whether or not national or state designation has a statistically significant effect above and beyond the effect of local designation.

In terms of the overall explanatory power of the models, the R^2 values indicate that in all cities except Lubbock, the attributes included account for a large share—between 60 and 91 per cent—of the variation in house prices. The model for Lubbock explains only 11 per cent of the variation in housing values for the city, which implies that other factors not currently controlled account for the vast majority of the variation in housing values in that city.¹¹

Based on the above modelling results, Table 5 estimates an average dollar value impact of historic designation in each city. To calculate a dollar value impact in each, we multiplied the coefficient on historic preservation (*historic*) by the average property value in the city. In Dallas, for example, where the average housing value in the sample is approximately \$64 000, the 4.9 per cent increase in value associated with historic designation translates to an average increase in housing values of \$3200. Similarly, in the city of San Antonio, historic designation is associated with an 18.6 per cent increase in housing values which translates to an increase of \$8900 for designated homes, based on an average housing value of \$47 970.

5. Summary and Implications

Historic designation is increasingly used as a means to achieve both preservation and com-

munity economic development. This study considered the effects of historic designation on residential property values in nine Texas cities. Results suggest that historic preservation generally has a positive impact on property values and that historic designation is associated with average property value increases ranging between 5 per cent and 20 per cent of the total property value.¹² Results also suggest that type of historic designation—whether national, state or local—tends to have a mixed effect on housing values. In Lubbock and San Marcos, nationally designated historic properties had significantly higher values than did locally designated historic properties. By contrast, in Abilene, this effect was not statistically significant. These results suggest that local housing market conditions and variations in local historic zoning rules within each city determine whether national or state designation has a significant effect above and beyond the effect of local designation.

There are a number of important implications to our findings. Critics of historic preservation often charge that designation negatively impacts property values. While that surely could be the case on an individual basis; overall, it was not true for the Texas cities. The evidence from Texas suggests just the opposite: designation enhances value. Yet, appreciation may displace less-affluent residents of historic areas. Smith (1998), in particular, has warned that the neighbourhood revitalisation fostered by historic preservation also has a downside in that it can lead to the displacement of area residents. While this study has not examined the issue of displacement, rising prices in landmark neighbourhoods surely add to gentrification pressures, which may in turn result in displacement of lower-income residents. Historic preservationists should guard against this. In Savannah, Georgia (Victorian district) and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Manchester district), designation was proactively accompanied by efforts to retain affordable housing (Leopold, 1993). More action of this type is needed when effecting preservation.

Our findings also have implications for the granting of special property tax incentives for the rehabilitation of designated properties. The policy of granting exemptions or abatements is quite common (Beaumont, 1996; Listokin *et al.*, 1982). Our finding that designation enhances property values (in part due to the encouragement of rehabilitation) partially supports such a policy. The rise in property values ultimately means higher property taxes and, given that, landmark-owners might hesitate to engage in rehabilitation in the absence of exemptions/abatements. Yet, there is a counter-interpretation. Given property appreciation, must the public sector give tax-breaks to landmark-owners? Or, if this incentive is extended, perhaps it should be means-tested—that is, limited to the less affluent. Such a policy would dampen displacement pressures and it would also target assistance to where it is needed.

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Notes

1. Sewin Chan of Rutgers University contributed to the literature review contained in this section. We acknowledge and appreciate her contribution.

2. Anderson and Crocker (1971) conducted a pioneering effort in the use of hedonic analysis to assess the value of locational amenities.
3. Within the city of Dallas, we were not able to obtain property value data for all of the historically designated historic districts in the city. The 12 historic districts (and 12 comparable neighbourhoods) included in our analysis—containing a total of more than 4900 properties—were judged to provide a representative sample for the city as a whole.
4. The issue of sample size is important for interpretation of the results of the regression analyses. We have less confidence in the magnitude of the estimated coefficients that are based on very small sample sizes. In Nacogdoches, for example, we had complete data for only 30 properties. Although we are confident that historic designation is statistically significant (see Table 4) among the properties sampled in Nacogdoches, we are less confident about the magnitude of the estimates of the impact of historic preservation on average property values. By contrast, in Abilene, where we had data for more than 7000 properties, we are confident that our estimates present a true reflection of the value of historic designation within the city overall.
5. It should be noted that, while each model included all available 'core' structural variables for each city (for example, square footage, number of bathrooms), we did not include in the final models all of the additional categorical, structural variables that were available. For example, in the city of Laredo, the appraisal data-set included information on type of building exterior (i.e. brick, stone, etc.); however, these categorical variables were not found to add to the explanatory power of the model and therefore are not included in the final analysis.
6. In cities where we were not able to distinguish between different types of historic designation, the designated properties are simply defined as 'historic'. In both Dallas and Fort Worth, for example, all of the historic properties included in the analysis are in nationally designated districts and, therefore, we were not able to distinguish the effects of locally and nationally designated districts in the city.
7. The neighbourhood controls help to account for unobserved differences across neighbourhoods in the larger city samples including Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio and Abilene.
8. There is an anomaly in the Dallas sample, where the coefficient on the *fullbath* variable is negative. This is apparently due to its high collinearity with the *squarefoot* variable. The correlation coefficient between these 2 variables is around 0.67; in our exploration of alternative specifications, whenever *squarefoot* was included in the regression the *fullbath* coefficient was negative, and whenever *squarefoot* was excluded the coefficient was positive, as expected. This pair of results is invariant with respect to the set of remaining regressors. We wish to stress that these high bivariate correlations have no impact on our conclusions about historical designation.
9. Again, the exception is in Dallas where there is a negative value of *yearbuilt*. A similar situation to that detailed in note 8 is observed here. The *depreciation* variable is correlated with *yearbuilt* and, whenever it is excluded from the regression, the *yearbuilt* coefficient becomes positive as expected. Including it causes the coefficient to have the opposite sign; again, this occurs regardless of the rest of the model specification and has no impact on our conclusions about historic designation.
10. For interested readers, the full modelling results for each city are available from the authors.
11. The low value of the R^2 in the Lubbock model does not indicate that the model is 'wrong', but instead suggests that we are not accounting for a large share of the variation in housing value in city. Several 'core' housing characteristic variables, including number of bathrooms and lot size, were not available on a consistent basis in the Lubbock sample.
12. In addition to direct benefits for property-owners, higher property values also imply benefits for a city as a whole in the form of higher property tax payments. Based on the results of the regression analysis, we may estimate the overall impact of historic preservation of residential properties on property tax payments within the State of Texas. Using a conservative assumption that historic designation is associated with a 5 per cent increase in residential property values, the property tax estimate proceeds as follows:
 - (1) According to the 1990 Census of Population, there are approximately 500 000 housing units in Texas that were built in 1939 or earlier. Among these older properties, we assume that approximately 5 per cent are candidates for historic designation. For the state as a whole, we therefore assume that there are 25 000 ($500\ 000 \times 0.05$) candidates for historic designation. To estimate the

total market value of the historic landmark stock, we assume that these historic houses are priced at the median housing value of \$58 900. The total market value of the landmark stock is therefore estimated to be \$1.47 billion ($25\ 000 \times \$58\ 900$).

- (2) Assuming that designation has a conservation value-enhancing effect of 5 per cent, designation increases the value of the state's landmark stock by \$73.5 million ($\$1.47\ \text{billion} \times 0.05$).
- (3) Holding aside the effect of designation, the extant total property taxes paid by the Texas historic landmark stock should be identified separately. Using an average equalised property tax rate of 2.07 per cent, the total Texas historic stock, valued at \$1.47 billion, pays a total of approximately \$30.4 million yearly ($\$1.47\ \text{billion} \times 0.0207$) in total local property taxes.
- (4) Assuming the 5 per cent value-enhancing effect of designation, historic designation results in \$1.52 million ($\$73.5\ \text{million} \times 0.0207$) in added property taxes per year.

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