

*Preserving
Communities and Character*

The Historic Preservation Plan
for the
District of Columbia
2008-2012

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Preserving Communities and Character: The Historic Preservation Plan for the District of Columbia

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***Preserving Communities and Character* identifies the strategic and comprehensive preservation goals for the city over the next five years.**

This preservation plan outlines the specific policies and goals necessary to identify, protect, and capitalize on the District's historic resources, while establishing the framework for implementation and integration of the city's preservation activities. The plan is intended to be used by the D.C. Historic Preservation Office, federal and District agencies, community development corporations, property owners, community organizations, preservation advocates, and others to guide decisions for the utilization and distribution of preservation resources, surveys and documentation efforts, public outreach programming, and the stewardship, reuse, and promotion of our city's heritage.

This five-year plan was developed simultaneously with the update of the city's Comprehensive Plan, taking advantage of the two-year public participation process that went in to the preparation of that document. The updated Historic Preservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan identifies three primary goals for historic preservation activities which provide the guidance and structure for this plan as well. These goals reflect the more traditional purposes of preservation, such as identification and protection of historic resources, while also recognizing the more active role that preservation can play in economic development, community sustainability and quality of life concerns.

The three goals of *Preserving Communities and Character* are to:

- 1. Identify and Recognize Historic Resources**
- 2. Protect Historic Resources**
- 3. Capitalize on Historic Resources**

In the following document, broad strategies and more specific actions for achieving these goals are identified, capturing the needs and desires of a wide range of preservation interests from around the city.

The District of Columbia Historic Preservation Program

The District's municipal and state historic preservation program is administered by the DC Historic Preservation Office (HPO), which promotes the stewardship of our city's historic and cultural resources through planning, protection, and public education. HPO's mission is achieved through the identification and designation of historic properties, review of their treatment, and engagement with the public to promote awareness, understanding, and enjoyment of the historic environment. Unique in the nation, the HPO serves a dual role as a municipal regulatory agency administering a local preservation program under the DC Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act and as the DC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for the purposes of complying with the National Historic Preservation Act. Under federal law, the SHPO is responsible for undertaking preservation planning, reviewing federal projects, conducting survey and registration of historic properties, administering the program for preservation tax credits, managing and distributing HPF grants, and conducting educational programs. The complementary responsibilities of the local and federal programs are integrated within the office and carried out by the same staff. The HPO/SHPO is a component of the city's Office of Planning, providing professional expertise to the city on all planning-related matters affecting historic buildings, sites, and districts.

The HPO also serves as staff to the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB), a group of nine private citizens appointed by the Mayor to represent professional and community viewpoints in the historic preservation process, establish the city's preservation policies, advise the Mayor and City Council on preservation matters, designate landmarks and districts, and review projects. The HPRB serves as a local review commission and as the statewide review board on matters relating to the implementation of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Elected Advisory Neighborhood Commissions and community-based organizations, representing many of the city's historic districts and neighborhoods and non-profit education and advocacy groups, are the critical grass-roots of the city's preservation efforts. Organizations such as the DC Preservation League, the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, and the Historic Districts Coalition are city-wide in their focus, working to lobby, educate, advocate, and promote the preservation and appropriate reuse of historic resources throughout the District. At the neighborhood level, the city is extraordinarily well represented by dozens of community-based organizations, made up entirely of citizen volunteers, for which historic preservation and the protection of neighborhood character are a primary concern. District and federal agencies, the owners of many historic properties, play a crucial role not only in the stewardship of their resources but often in the revitalization of surrounding neighborhoods. The city's Main Street commercial revitalization program, based in numerous historic neighborhoods throughout the city, serves as an important advocate for the revitalization of some of the city's most historic commercial corridors.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it is the private property owners – both those involved in the redevelopment of historic resources and the owners responsible for the upkeep of the 25,000+ historic houses, apartment buildings, churches, commercial and institutional buildings within the city's 42 historic districts – who are the bedrock of the city's preservation constituency.

The District's preservation program and policies are premised on the following basic assumptions:

- Historic properties are finite, non-renewable community resources, the preservation, protection, and enjoyment of which are essential to the public welfare. When historic resources are destroyed, they are gone forever.
- Historic properties are assets intended for use. The goal of historic preservation is to encourage vitality by continuing to use and adapt historic properties for modern needs without adversely affecting their significant and character-defining features.

- Historic preservation is a source of economic development and growth. Preservation conserves usable resources, stimulates tourism and investment in the local economy, and enhances the value of the civic environment.
- Preservation benefits and educates everyone; it honors and celebrates our shared history.

An Overview of the District's Historic Resources

The District's cultural heritage is rich and varied. The city has almost 600 historic landmarks and more than 40 historic districts; in all, over 25,000 properties are protected by historic designation. Historic resources include the iconic monuments and the symbolic commemorative places that define Washington, DC as the nation's capital, as well as the retail and commercial centers, residences, places of worship and recreation areas that make up our neighborhoods.

As early as 14,000 years ago, the area that would become the District of Columbia was an important economic and strategic location for Native Americans. Hunting, fishing, and gathering supported the population while the stream valleys provided rocks that were used as raw materials for stone tool manufacture. Over 330 archaeological sites have been identified in the district, including Native American sites on the bluffs along the rivers and at Upland quarrying sites.

After European settlement, the area was chosen for political, practical, and aesthetic reasons. Located on the symbolic dividing line between North and South, the selection placed the city at the head of river navigation, with access to fertile hinterlands and the potential for waterpower from the falls upriver. The beauty of the Potomac Gorge was recognized from the city's beginnings and has largely been preserved in its natural state. In 1791, Pierre L'Enfant laid out the new Federal City and selected sites for the city's most prominent governmental structures. Following European precedents, the plan includes a system of radiating avenues superimposed on a grid of streets, interspersed with parks and civic open spaces. The plan is nationally recognized as the sole example of a comprehensive Baroque city plan in the United States.

Early development in Washington focused on the new seat of government and around industrial and shipping centers, such as the Navy Yard, Georgetown, Foggy Bottom, and Anacostia, and along major transportation routes. Typical construction was of masonry for the nascent federal government, and modest frame or brick residences. Although architectural styles changed, the rowhouse remained the ubiquitous housing form for much of the city through the 19th and early 20th centuries.

With the development of the railroad and streetcars lines, development expanded beyond Boundary Street (now Florida Avenue) to the north with suburban residential neighborhoods consisting of curving streets and single family detached residences. Development spread outwards from the center city in radiating bands as the need for housing increased, incorporating formerly free-standing villages, such as Tenleytown, Good Hope, Uniontown, and others. In the 20th century, the city's growth continued to the north, east, and west. While the rowhouse form continued to be used - often with the addition of a frame front porch, detached houses in the outer suburbs and apartments closer in became common building types. Developer-built speculative housing dominated the market creating long rows of similar buildings and larger apartment blocks. Neighborhood commercial strips were centers of localized commerce while the large department stores, theaters, and public buildings centered around the city's downtown core.

DC is fortunate in that resources of all periods and types are represented across the city. Each of the District's eight wards contains remnants of our prehistoric resources, diverse ethnic and cultural heritage, and of commercial, institutional, and residential building types. The following description of each ward highlights some of the richness and depth of the city's cultural and architectural heritage, with emphasis on the building types and historic resources that are representative of Washington's development.

Ward 1 lies just within and beyond the boundary of the old Federal City, in the geographical center of the District of Columbia. The ward includes the northernmost section of the original city, which was laid out by Pierre L'Enfant on flat lowlands, and the adjacent neighborhoods situated on the escarpment defining the city's original boundary. Like most of the District, this area evolved from its rural beginnings as the city expanded. Two of the city's first streetcar lines, established along 7th and 14th Streets during the Civil War, ended at Boundary Street (now Florida Avenue), and by the late 19th century, rowhouse neighborhoods reached the city's northern edge. By the 1870s, LeDroit Park was already being developed as a planned, architecturally unified early suburb.

Because sites on the escarpment were felt to have healthier air, cooler in summer, it was one of the first areas outside the original city limits to be subdivided for suburban development. At first the area was devoted to estates and summer homes, but by the 1890s, streetcar extensions along 7th, 14th, and 18th Streets led to more concentrated development. Mrs. John Henderson, the wife of a Missouri senator, was instrumental in establishing Meridian Hill Park and in developing 16th Street as the "Avenue of the Presidents," lined with mansions and embassies. By the early 20th century, major corridors like 14th Street, 16th Street, and Columbia Road were lined with mansions, apartments, and commercial buildings, while nearby neighborhoods, such as Columbia Heights, Mount Pleasant, Washington Heights, and Kalorama, were being developed as prestigious suburban enclaves.

Ward 1 is rich in cultural history—as a home to famous national figures, presidents, Supreme Court justices, and congressmen, and as a major focus of African-American life. In the days of segregation, early black scholars, writers, artists and residents of all classes worked and lived in a "city within the city" in the area around LeDroit Park and U Street. The theaters, banks, fraternal institutions, commercial buildings, and the campus of Howard University comprise one of the most historically significant African-American neighborhoods in the country.

Ward 2 occupies the central section of the city, including the monumental core, business district, and neighborhoods stretching from the perimeter of downtown to the heights beyond Georgetown. This is the oldest area of the city, including the first federal government buildings, residential neighborhoods, and commercial development. Native Americans occupied this area for thousands of years, as documented by a major ceremonial site uncovered near the mouth of Rock Creek. Georgetown was established in 1751, and was already a flourishing port when the Federal City was laid out on the broad flatlands at the confluence of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers. Georgetown retained a separate identity for much of the 19th century, and still possesses a unique character today. Many of the city's oldest remaining structures are located in Georgetown.

In downtown, most of the early city has long since disappeared, but some scattered early buildings remain and much archaeological evidence of the past is as yet uninvestigated. Successive generations of commercial, government, and institutional construction have made the heart of the city especially rich in landmark buildings and districts. The legacy of the L'Enfant Plan provides a fabric of broad avenues, squares, circles, and other open spaces.

Surrounding downtown are some of the city's most distinctive and varied older residential neighborhoods. Many pre-Civil War buildings survive near Mount Vernon Square and in Shaw. Logan Circle is a unique Victorian enclave, while Dupont Circle, 16th Street, and Massachusetts Avenue are dominated by late-19th and early 20th century row houses and mansions. Foggy Bottom and Blagden Alley's historic resources represent their historic merchant and working class populations. Along 14th Street is a unique commercial strip lined with early 20th century auto showrooms.

Ward 3 occupies the far northwest section of the city, between Rock Creek Park, the Potomac River, and Montgomery County, MD. By the late 18th century, farming dominated the area, and there were a number of farm houses, country estates, mills and small settlements along the roads leading to the port of Georgetown. One of the first settlements clustered around a toll station at the juncture of Georgetown Pike (now Wisconsin Avenue) and River Road. About 1790, John Tennally opened a tavern at the intersection, giving his name to the area now called Tenleytown. Early development also followed the C & O Canal, which was completed from Georgetown to Harper's Ferry by 1843. Construction of Conduit Road (now MacArthur Boulevard) atop the city's Civil War era water supply line from the intake near Great Falls stimulated the gradual development of residential estates along the palisades.

During the Civil War, Forts Reno, Bayard, and DeRussy were constructed as part of the city's defenses. After the war, the area just north of Tenleytown and adjacent to Fort Reno was occupied primarily by former slaves who came north in search of homes and land. Known as Reno City, it remained a predominantly black community until 1928, when the National Park Service bought the land around Fort Reno for a new water reservoir. In the 1930s, most of the houses were razed for construction of Deal Junior High and Wilson Senior High School.

Rock Creek Park was created as one of the nation's largest urban parks in 1890. In the same year, Senators William Steward and Francis Newlands founded the Chevy Chase Land Company and were responsible for extending Connecticut Avenue, building a trolley line into Montgomery County, and developing Chevy Chase into a residential community. After the turn of the century, new bridges over Rock Creek valley encouraged more rapid speculative suburban development, resulting in distinct suburban communities, such as Woodley Park, Cleveland Park, and Foxhall Village. The ward is comprised mostly of detached houses, with stores and apartments along Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenues. Vestiges of a number of private estates remain adjacent to major parks, many of which have been subdivided and redeveloped.

Ward 4 occupies the northern central segment of the city east of Rock Creek Park. Native Americans used quarries along Piney Branch, while during the colonial period the area became farmland. Rock Creek Church, established in 1719, is one of the earliest buildings. By 1819, Brightwood Turnpike (now Georgia Avenue) was built as an important artery leading from the old city boundary to outlying agricultural areas. Early development clustered near a water source called Crystal Springs, later to be known as Brightwood. This area grew slowly until horse racing emerged as a major recreational activity in the mid-1800s, with patrons of the races traveling to the area along the turnpike. The U.S. Soldier's Home, established in 1851 near Rock Creek Church Road, also contributed to the development of the area.

During the Civil War, Forts Totten, Slocum, and Stevens were established on the heights near Crystal Springs, and freedmen's settlements clustered near the forts. President Lincoln established the Anderson Cottage at the Soldier's Home as his unofficial summer White House. More farmhouses, estates, and summer homes were built after the war, especially along Brightwood Turnpike and Military Road which connected to the docks in Georgetown.

In 1883, Benjamin Gilbert founded Takoma Park, one of the city's first railroad suburbs, around the station at Fourth Street and Blair Road. By 1889, a streetcar line was opened along the turnpike, and soon Brightwood was subdivided into the suburban neighborhoods known today as Petworth, Brightwood Park, Brightwood, and Lamond. Residential and commercial development expanded greatly as transportation became more convenient. In 1906-07, the streetcar was extended north along 14th Street to the new Decatur Street Car Barn, and by 1910 there was a streetcar from there along Kennedy Street to Takoma Park. The Sixteenth Street bridge over Piney Branch was also completed by 1910. Walter Reed Army Hospital, established in 1909, further sparked development in the area.

The ward's 20th century development is characterized by a variety of housing types. Row houses typify the Petworth and Brightwood Park neighborhoods, while bungalows and frame houses are common in Brightwood and Takoma Park, and large stone and brick houses in Crestwood, Colonial Village, and along 16th Street.

Ward 5 encompasses most of the city's northeast quadrant north of the original city and the Anacostia River. The area lies at the edge of the coastal plain, with a rolling topography rising from the river to ridges at Brookland and Catholic University. This landscape supported a long prehistoric American Indian occupation. The first European settlement occurred before 1700, and during the colonial period the area was largely open countryside, forest, meadows and farmland. Upon the establishment of Washington, routes such as Bladensburg, Brentwood, Lincoln, and Bunker Hill Roads developed as connections from the city to nearby towns and agricultural areas. One of the oldest buildings in the ward, Brooks Mansion, was built about 1840 on a 134-acre farm estate.

During the Civil War, Forts Slemmer, Bunker Hill, Saratoga, and Lincoln were constructed as part of the series of forts and armed batteries encircling Washington. The area began to be subdivided for suburban development soon after the war. One of the first subdivisions became the campus of Gallaudet College. Ivy City was established in 1872 and thrived as a brick manufacturing center contributing significantly to Washington's construction boom. In 1887 the Brooks estate was subdivided to form the community of Brookland. Both Brookland and Bladensburg experienced rapid growth as trolley lines extended outward from the expanding city. By the end of the century, Catholic University had been established, and it soon became the focus of a complex of religious colleges.

Extensive residential growth occurred during the early 20th century. Eckington and Brookland grew along Rhode Island Avenue, a major trolley line and commuter route between the District and Maryland. Between the two World Wars, major industrial and commercial enterprises developed, and major institutions such as the National Arboretum were established. Brentwood Village and Riggs Park were also developed during this period. By the end of World War II, few large tracts of developable land remained, although smaller-scaled residential development occurred from the end of the war until the late 1950s in the Lamond and Fort Totten areas. There was also major industrial development along the B&O and Pennsylvania Railroad tracks, particularly along the New York Avenue corridor.

Ward 6 includes the eastern section of the original city, from Judiciary Square to the Anacostia River, as well as the adjacent area on the east side of the Anacostia River. Native American occupation of this area has been documented along the Anacostia River. After establishment of the city, this was one of the first areas to develop, with row houses, commercial buildings, hotels, and boarding houses clustered near the Capitol. The Washington Navy Yard, one of the city's few industrial facilities, was also an important employment center which spurred development as early as 1800.

Capitol Hill developed along the L'Enfant street plan, with an extensive alley system and large inner courts which now characterize the area. Connected to the city by a wooden bridge across the Anacostia River, Uniontown was one of the city's first suburbs, founded in 1854. Residents included shipmakers and tradesmen employed by the Navy Yard. The suburban location and inexpensive land allowed the construction of detached houses in Anacostia, many of them of wood. Cedar Hill, the home of Frederick Douglass from 1877 to 1895, remains an important landmark.

As did much of the city, Ward 6 developed slowly until after the Civil War, when real estate speculation, a booming population, and new streetcar lines and utilities led to widespread growth. Much of the area's building stock dates from between 1870 and 1920, when speculative developers constructed rows of brick houses for the middle class. Important commercial corridors emerged along the streetcar lines on Pennsylvania Avenue SE, 8th Street SE, and H Street NE. In Anacostia, Nichols (now Martin Luther King) Avenue and Good Hope Road developed similarly. By the early 20th century, several industrial areas had developed. In addition to the Navy Yard, which was a center of military construction during both world wars, industrial and warehousing uses clustered around railroad lines and sidings in southeast and around the Union Station yards in northeast.

Ward 7 occupies the eastern corner of the city, between the Anacostia River and Prince Georges County. The first inhabitants of this area were the Nacotchtank Indians, an agricultural people who settled along river flatlands. Soon after contact with Europeans in the early 1600s, these Native Americans disappeared from the banks of the Anacostia. By the time Washington was established, some rural settlement of the area had already begun. Among the earliest settlements was the crossroads community of Good Hope, developed in the 1820s on the hilltop at the intersection of the present Naylor Road and Alabama Avenue. Another early settlement was Benning Heights, named for the landowner who helped finance a wooden bridge built in 1797 on the site of the present-day Benning Road Bridge.

Fort Dupont was one of the forts that provided a protective ring around the city during the Civil War. After the war ended, freed blacks began to move northeast into the still largely unsettled area. Among the new settlements were DePriest Village (Capital View), Burrville, Bloomingdale, and Lincoln. For most of the 19th century, however, much of the area remained countryside. In 1895, a large parcel of land was purchased for Woodlawn Cemetery. At that time, very few cemeteries would accept black burials, and Woodlawn met this need. Notable among early communities is Deanwood, which originated in 1871 from the subdivision of the Sheriff farm into three subdivisions—Whittingham, Burrville, and Lincoln (today known as Lincoln Heights)—loosely tied by the name Deanwood. Deanwood grew slowly, but by the 20th century, its black community was large enough to require its own public school. Another educational institution came to the Lincoln section of Deanwood in 1909, when Nannie Helen Burroughs founded the National Trade and Professional School for Women and Girls. Deanwood had a stable nucleus of blue- and white-collar black families, as well as laborers and skilled craftsmen in the building trades. These residents built numerous houses in the area and enhanced a strong sense of economic self-reliance.

It was not until the 1920s that widespread land development came to the large open areas the ward. Among the developing neighborhoods was Summit Park, now called Hillcrest. Benning Heights and Marshall Heights appeared in the 1920s, but did not fill out until the 1940s, with the job growth during World War II. Commercial areas grew along Alabama and Pennsylvania Avenues, and garden apartments complexes like the Parklands Apartments, Mayfair Mansion, Fairfax Village, and Naylor Gardens were built.

Ward 8 occupies the southern corner of the District between the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers and Prince George's County. Although the ward is the youngest in terms of urban settlement trends, its tradition as a place of human settlement dates back some 2,000 years to the initial establishment of Native American trading posts and hunting and fishing settlements along the Potomac and Anacostia shorelines. European settlers began to displace the native Nacotchtank tribe during the 1700s, as Native American settlements gave way to farm homesteads and tobacco plantations. This pattern of development was essentially maintained until the early part of this century.

The establishment of institutional uses in the area began with the building of Saint Elizabeths Hospital in 1852. After the Civil War, various industrial uses began to locate along the river shorelines on landfill. In the 20th century, however, large defense installations, including Bolling Air Force Base, the Anacostia Naval Air Station, and Naval Research Laboratory displaced most of the industrial uses. Early residential development clustered along major roads in small settlement clusters like Congress Heights. Significant residential and commercial development did not begin in Ward 8 until the early 1940s. In 1940, the ward's population totaled only a small percentage of the city's total. More than one third of these were residents of Saint Elizabeths, which had become the federal government's largest psychiatric treatment facility.

With the onset of World War II and the rapid expansion of federal agencies and employment, residential development boomed in Ward 8. This development was particularly evident south of Saint Elizabeths in the neighborhoods of Congress Heights, Bellview, and Washington Highlands. Most of this construction was in the form of garden apartments, although some detached and semi-detached houses were built. During the 1950s and 1960s, urban renewal activity in other parts of the city, combined with the systematic construction of moderate-cost housing east of the Anacostia River led thousands of low- to middle-income black households to relocate to the ward.

Preservation Issues and Challenges: 2008-2012

Washington is unique not only because it is the Nation's Capital, but also because it is the great planned city of the United States. Pierre L'Enfant's famous 1791 Plan for the city has been largely followed and respected over the past two centuries, and was reinforced and amplified by the 1901 McMillan Plan. The city's grand plans were implemented slowly and fitfully, and perfected through a shared passion for civic embellishment that took root as the city matured. These plans were brought to life through the personal stories of a multitude of citizens who contributed their own dreams to the city. Washington is the capital of a democracy. In its wealth of different ideas, its rich and its poor, its messy vitality and its evident compromises, it reflects that fact in a multitude of ways its founders could never have predicted.

Images of Washington have also changed, as have ideas about what to preserve from its past. Old Georgetown was rediscovered and protected by 1950, and in 1964 the national monuments ranked high on the city's first list of landmarks worth saving. By the end of the 1960s, the Old Post Office and other Victorian treasures returned to favor as the rallying point for a new generation of preservationists. With Home Rule in the 1970s, the landmarks of the city's African-American heritage finally gained the attention they deserved. In the 1980s, the first concerted efforts emerged to preserve and renovate the city's commercial downtown districts, while the past two decades have seen a continued call for recognizing and protecting many of the city's varied residential and commercial neighborhoods, including the Victorian row house neighborhoods in Shaw, the commercial districts along 14th and U streets, and the early 20th century planned neighborhood of Foxhall Village.

Preservation needs in the city are constantly changing. Fifty years ago, the biggest challenge was to prevent the demolition of entire neighborhoods for freeways and "urban renewal." Today's challenges include unprecedented pressure for new growth, soaring property values, and escalating construction costs. Gentrification is the issue in some historic neighborhoods, but in others it is decay. Unprecedented security considerations, tourism management, and the preservation of buildings from the recent past are high on the preservation agenda. With these challenges come new opportunities. This is an era of revitalized historic neighborhoods, vibrant new design ideas, and a more sophisticated appreciation of the role that preservation can play in rejuvenating the city. Collaboration and consensus about preservation are largely replacing the antagonistic battles of the past. Preservation will move forward with the policies in this Plan.

Significant preservation issues in the District of Columbia include the following:

1. **Increased identification and documentation efforts for all types of historic resources** are particularly important due to recent surges in real estate values, gentrification, and mixed-use redevelopment. Only through careful and comprehensive identification of historic and cultural resources can we preserve the unique local flavor of our neighborhoods, our social, historical and cultural resources that may not have architectural significance, and our increasingly threatened resources from the mid-20th century.
2. **Valuable resources in undesignated and eligible neighborhoods are being lost to demolition and character-destroying alterations as the result of extraordinary redevelopment pressures.** While the resurgent interest in the District as a place of residence and business has resulted in the welcome renewal of many historic neighborhoods, such as Shaw, Mount Vernon Square and Mount Pleasant, neighborhoods such as Brookland, Columbia Heights, Bloomingdale, Eckington, and Deanwood have all lost – and continue to lose – historic resources that could be rehabilitated or sensitively incorporated into redevelopment projects.
3. **Inappropriate development, such as “pop-ups” and oversized additions, threaten to destroy the character and scale of some historic neighborhoods.** Many row house neighborhoods in particular are zoned to allow for redevelopment insensitive to their historic character.
4. **Demolition by neglect and willful destruction** in established historic districts continues to plague some neighborhoods, particularly in Anacostia, despite widespread renovation activity and an active program of preservation inspection and enforcement.
5. **Protecting the historic character of larger complexes** pose particular challenges in the face of proposed redevelopment efforts. Campuses such as St. Elizabeths Hospital, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and the Armed Forces Retirement Home raise complex issues with regard to the identification of resources, conveying the significance of these sites to owners, developers and design teams, and the establishment of the appropriate framework for redevelopment that will preserve the unique characteristics of these campuses while allowing for adaptation to new uses.
6. **Security upgrades to monuments and public buildings** along the Mall and throughout the city by the National Park Service, Smithsonian, GSA and other government agencies are a reality of our time, but need to be carefully planned and designed in a manner that is respectful to the qualities of the L’Enfant and McMillan plans and the character of specific buildings and sites. Ongoing coordination between federal and local agencies is needed to avoid piecemeal installations from diminishing the exceptional historic quality of the nation’s capital.
7. **Greater intergovernmental coordination is needed to improve government stewardship of historic resources.** The varied responsibilities of multiple local and federal agencies and the large federal government presence create complex and often fragmented areas of responsibility. The interaction between federal and city agencies is crucial in identifying and protecting the larger institutional complexes, the historic plan of the city, government-owned resources, and the city’s open spaces.
8. **Archaeological artifacts under the ownership of the city are inaccessible to the public and are deteriorating.** A storage and curation facility for archaeological artifacts is needed.
9. **Ongoing efforts are needed to educate the public,** government leaders, ANC commissioners, community organization members, property owners, design and planning professionals, and developers on the standards, practices, processes, requirements, and most importantly, the value of historic preservation to the District of Columbia.

GOAL 1: IDENTIFY AND RECOGNIZE HISTORIC RESOURCES

The District of Columbia's wealth of historic buildings, neighborhoods and open spaces is matched by few other cities in the United States, ranging from the monumental legacies of the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans to the lesser known social stories embodied in each of the city's neighborhoods. The natural beauty of the District of Columbia is also an inseparable part of the city's historic image; this is a landscape whose inherent attraction made it a place of settlement even in prehistoric times. These historic qualities define the very essence of Washington, D.C. and constitute an inheritance that is significant to both the city and the nation. Recognizing the value of this legacy is an essential duty for those entrusted to pass on this place unharmed to future generations.

The first step in protecting this heritage is to recognize what we have. Some of this work has already been done, with the majority of the city's most important historic features already widely acknowledged and officially recognized through historic designation – Washington's national monuments and some of its neighborhoods, such as Capitol Hill and Georgetown, are well known around the world. However, there are hundreds of historic landmarks and dozens of historic districts in the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites that are likely to be unfamiliar even to native Washingtonians. Future programs must inform the widest possible audience of the riches in our midst, and at the same time safeguard the unheralded properties whose legacy has yet to be understood.

Recognition involves more than academic research and field work to identify and document historic properties. It requires a deliberate effort to educate and inform property owners and the public at large about the nature of those features and places whose historic value may not be readily apparent. It is easy to take historic properties for granted through ignorance or disregard. For this reason it is equally important to publicize the value of potential historic properties, while actively seeking official recognition and the benefits of legal protection.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Define Historic Significance

In any environment some historic properties are more significant than others, but all which meet the basic test of significance should be accorded civic respect and protection under the preservation law. It is appropriate for levels of significance to be reflected in preservation program priorities and actions, but this should not come at the expense of excluding attention to properties of more modest or localized value and those properties contributing to the overall character of a district or ensemble.

STRATEGIES:

- Recognize the historic image of the national capital as a fundamental aspect of its character. The nation's founders selected a special place for the Federal City. Both northern and southern, the site was a gentle flatland surrounded by a bowl of hills interlaced with broad rivers and streams. This topography allowed for the creation of a brilliant geometric plan with a spectacular array of civic buildings that gives the capital city its unique symbolic profile. After two centuries of growth, the original vision of the city remains strong and remarkable in an increasingly homogenous world. Over the years this fundamental character has been protected by local and national laws and policies. It must remain inviolate.
- Adopt an encompassing approach to historic significance. Recognize the city's social history as well as its architectural history, its neighborhoods as well as its individual buildings, its natural landscape as well as its built environment, its characteristic as well as its exceptional, and its archaeology as well as its living history. Buildings create a sense of place, but a community is a repository of social and cultural history as well.

- Trace many roots and celebrate the diversity of our history. Native Americans inhabited this land for thousands of years before it was a national capital. Prehistoric sites have been found in all parts of the District, revealing the features that sustained both ordinary and ceremonial life. The remnants of colonial settlement have also been identified and unearthed. Once the city was established, many ethnic and immigrant groups constructed its buildings and developed its culture over the span of two centuries; a multitude of citizens both famous and ordinary wrote its history. Historic preservation should bear witness to the contributions of all people.
- Anticipate the need to preserve the record of our own time. History is not static, and historic preservation must respond as history evolves. As the pace of change in modern life accelerates, and as more modern properties are lost before their value is fully understood, there is growing awareness of the need to protect the historic properties of the future. Significant structures and settings from after the Second World War are the products and places of the recent past whose preservation will tell the story of our era for future generations.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 Identify Potential Historic Properties

A long-range goal of the historic preservation program is the completion of a comprehensive survey to identify historic resources in the District of Columbia. Over the past 30 years, community-based organizations have surveyed many of the District's older neighborhoods with support from the city's preservation office. A database of nearly a century's worth of building permits is in progress, and a photographic inventory of the city's buildings is also available through the District's Master Address Repository. Thematic studies and directories of historical architects and builders also help the survey work, yet much remains to complete this massive task. Better information about potential historic properties provides greater certainty to property owners and developers contemplating major investment decisions, thus lessening the potential for conflict over demolition and redevelopment.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify properties that merit designation as historic landmarks and districts through a comprehensive program of thematic and area surveys that document all aspects of the prehistory and history of the District of Columbia. Support these surveys with scholarly research and analytical tools to aid evaluation.
- Organize surveys by historical theme or by neighborhood so that survey efforts proceed according to a logical plan with clear priorities.
- Conduct surveys to identify not just buildings, but all types of potential historic properties, including sites of cultural significance, historic landscapes, and archaeological resources.
- Include property owners, neighborhood and city-wide preservation organizations, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, and community and neighborhood associations in the survey process.

ACTIONS:

- Give priority to surveys of endangered resources and those located in active redevelopment areas. As factors in setting survey priorities, consider the surpassing significance of some properties, the under-representation of others among designated properties, and the responsibility of government to recognize its own historic properties.
- Continue the development of a computerized database of information (from the complete archive of 19th and 20th century District of Columbia building permits and archival sources) and use this information as a foundation for survey efforts.

- Complete the documentation and evaluation of the significant features of the historic Plan of the City of Washington, including added minor streets. Survey the extensions of the original street plan and the pattern of reservations throughout the District, and evaluate elements of the 1893 Permanent System of Highways for their historic potential.
- Complete comprehensive surveys of Anacostia, Capitol Hill, Cleveland Park, Georgetown, LeDroit Park, Takoma Park, Dupont Circle and other historic districts where building-by-building information is incomplete.
- Evaluate completed surveys periodically to update information and to determine whether properties that did not appear significant at the time of the original survey should be reconsidered for designation.
- Maintain and distribute the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites and Inventory Map depicting the location of historic landmarks and districts in formats readily available to the public. Improve the value and effectiveness of the Inventory as an educational tool by creating an interactive internet version with photos and descriptive information on all properties and improve the utility of the Inventory Map by creating an interactive GIS-based version accessible to the public.
- Make survey and designation information widely available to the public through open access to survey and landmark files, assistance with public inquiries, website updates, and distribution of educational materials documenting the city's historic properties. Display archaeological artifacts and make data from excavations available to the public through educational programs.
- Implement a coordinated program for public identification of historic properties through street signage, building markers, heritage trail signage, and other means.
- Publish and maintain an Index of Places of Historic Interest, a list of properties identified through surveys and other efforts as potentially eligible for historic designation, thereby reducing uncertainty for owners, real estate developers, preservation organizations, Advisory Neighborhood commissions, and the general public. Update the list regularly and make it available via the OP/HPO website.
- Develop a searchable on-line database of survey information, providing basic historical documentation on surveyed and designated properties, including individual properties within historic districts.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 Designate Historic Landmarks and Districts

Historic properties are recognized through designation as historic landmarks or historic districts in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites, the city's official list of historic properties, in accordance with the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places provides additional recognition by the federal government. Listed properties gain protection under District and federal preservation laws, and are eligible for benefits such as preservation tax incentives. The following policies are adopted to guide the designation process:

STRATEGIES:

- Recognize and protect significant historic properties through official designation as historic landmarks and districts under both District and federal law, maintaining consistency between District and federal listings whenever possible.
- Maintain officially adopted written criteria and apply them consistently to ensure that properties meet objective standards of significance to qualify for designation.
- Encourage government agencies and private owners of significant properties to nominate their properties for designation.

- Use historic district designations as the means to recognize and preserve areas whose significance lies primarily in the character of the community as a whole, rather than in the separate distinction of individual structures. Ensure that the designation of historic districts involves a community process with full participation by affected neighborhood organizations, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, property owners, businesses, and residents.
- Ensure that the views of property owners, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, neighborhood organizations, and the general public are solicited and given careful consideration in the designation process.

ACTIONS:

- Act on designation nominations without delay to respect the interests of owners and applicants, and to avoid accumulating a backlog of nominations. When appropriate, defer action on a nomination to facilitate dialogue between the applicant and owner or to promote efforts to reach consensus on the designation.
- Nominate for local historic landmark or historic district designation any National Register listed properties not yet listed in the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites.
- Identify and nominate for listing in the National Register of Historic Places those properties already listed in the DC Inventory and determined eligible for the National Register.
- Develop a list of federal and District owned properties eligible for designation on the National Register of Historic Places and the D.C. Inventory of Historic Sites.
- Complete the documentation and designation of the historic Plan of the City of Washington as a D.C. and National Historic Landmark.
- Evaluate existing historic landmark designations and systematically update older designations to current professional standards of documentation. Evaluate historic district designations to augment documentation, amend periods or areas of significance, or adjust boundaries as appropriate.
- Develop and disseminate technical information to owners of historic property and community groups undertaking historic survey and designation efforts to assist them in their efforts.
- Provide technical expertise, guidance and support to community organizations contemplating historic designation, such as Chevy Chase, Foxhall Village, Takoma Park and the outlying areas of Capitol Hill.

GOAL 2: PROTECT HISTORIC RESOURCES

Protection is an integral part of the community planning, development review, and permitting processes shared among several agencies, and is often the means by which citizens and property owners come into contact with the historic preservation process. Protection functions include developing effective preservation tools through preservation planning, ensuring the use of proper rehabilitation standards and preservation techniques through building permit review, promoting compatible new design in historic neighborhoods through the development review process, and ensuring the opportunity for public participation in larger projects that may substantially affect landmarks and districts.

Historic properties receive their protection under both District and federal law. Under the DC Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act, before a building permit can be issued to demolish or alter the exterior appearance of a designated historic property, the application must be submitted to the Historic Preservation Review Board for a review to determine whether the proposed work is compatible with the character of the historic property. Similar reviews are required for subdivision of historic property or new construction on the property. While applications for minor work are generally reviewed and approved by the HPO under delegation from the HPRB, larger and more complex projects are reviewed in public meetings where interested groups and individuals may participate.

Under the National Historic Preservation Act, federal agencies must consider the effect of their projects on designated or eligible historic properties. This review is known as Section 106 review and occurs in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer wherein interested parties are invited to participate. District agencies utilizing federal funds or seeking licensed by a federal agency are likewise required to undertake the Section 106 review process. In a recent amendment to the DC Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act, a similar consultation process is now required for all projects undertaken by District government agencies regardless of whether they involve federal funding.

OBJECTIVE 2.1 Improve and Integrate Preservation Planning

STRATEGIES:

- Give full consideration to preservation concerns in the development of neighborhood plans, small area plans, campus plans, public agency facility plans, master plans, and major revitalization projects.
- Involve public preservation officials, private preservation groups, DC agencies, and Advisory Neighborhood Commissions at the earliest possible stages of planning effort and continue coordination throughout the planning process.

ACTIONS:

- Ensure opportunities for public participation in updates of the Preservation Plan, that the Preservation Plan is coordinated with the Comprehensive Plan, and is updated on a concurrent schedule.
- Integrate historic preservation in the preparation and review of proposed facilities master plans, small area plans, campus master plans, and other major development initiatives that may have an impact on historic resources for George Washington University, Catholic University, Trinity College, St. Elizabeths Hospital, the Armed Forces Retirement Home, and Walter Reed.
- Update the Index of Places of Historic Interest, identifying potentially eligible historic properties in coordination with planning efforts, such as the Center City Action Agenda and neighborhood small area plans.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 Protect the Unique Historic Plan of Washington

Washington's unique urban form is world renowned. For more than two centuries, L'Enfant's 1791 Plan of the City of Washington has served as an enduring symbol of the national capital while simultaneously providing the armature for public and private building construction. Buildings have provided three-dimensional form to the plan, while great civic works and public art have embellished it. After its first hundred years, the plan was reinvigorated according to the principles of the City Beautiful movement. The design principles of the plan informed the platting of streets and parks in new neighborhoods as the city expanded beyond its initial boundaries. The McMillan Plan of 1901 resulted in new laws regarding building heights and mandating design review for important civic projects by the Commission of Fine Arts, which has worked to further support and enhance the plan in the last 100 years. And despite alterations and intrusions, the L'Enfant Plan still serves as the basis for a new Legacy Plan adopted by the National Capital Planning Commission for the coming century. The following policies promote protection of the city's defining historic landmark:

STRATEGIES:

- Preserve the defining features of the L'Enfant and McMillan plans for Washington, maintaining and enhancing the public squares, circles, and major reservations as landscaped open spaces. Preserve the historic pattern of streets and associated minor reservations, and protect these historic rights-of-way from incompatible incursions and intrusions.
- Protect and enhance the views and vistas, both natural and designed, which are an integral part of Washington's historic image.
- Preserve the historic skyline and the low-rise character of the District of Columbia through enforcement of the 1910 Height of Buildings Act.
- Protect the generous open spaces and reciprocal views of the L'Enfant Plan streets and avenues. Reinforce the historic importance and continuity of the streets as public thoroughfares by encouraging sensitive design of sidewalks and roadways.
- Preserve the historic statuary and other civic embellishments of the L'Enfant Plan parks, and where appropriate extend this tradition with new civic art and landscape enhancements of the public reservations.
- Adhere to the design principles of the L'Enfant and McMillan Plans in any improvements or alterations to the city street plan. Where the character of the historic plan has been damaged by intrusions and disruptions, promote restoration of the plan through coordinated redevelopment and improvement of the transportation network and public space.

ACTIONS:

- Encourage early consultation with and coordination between city and federal agencies before undertaking the design and construction of public space improvements in the designated areas of the L'Enfant Plan. Provide timely review by the Historic Preservation Review Board and other preservation officials whenever master plans or proposed redevelopment projects envision alterations to the features of the L'Enfant Plan.
- Reinforce the spatial definition of the street network through the historic preservation and other design review processes by encouraging property owners to align primary building facades along the historic building lines and by discouraging inappropriate intrusions into public spaces.
- Provide ample opportunities for public review, comment, and participation on proposals that would alter L'Enfant Plan elements.
- Provide and maintain street trees to help frame axial views and reinforce the city's historic landscape character.

- Avoid inappropriate traffic channelization, obtrusive signage and security features, and other physical intrusions that obscure the character of the historic street network.
- Promote policies and projects that improve the environment for pedestrian and bicycles, and restore altered L'Enfant Plan elements, such as the restoration of Thomas Circle.

OBJECTIVE 2.3 Ensure Compatibility Between New and Old

Historic properties have generated record levels of rehabilitation and construction activity in the District of Columbia in recent years, and this trend is expected to continue. Whether these projects are modest home improvements, major development projects involving extensive review, requests to certify work for tax credits, or monumental new federal buildings, monuments or memorials, all involve the application of similar preservation and design principles. These principles recognize that the District's historic environment can evolve as the city changes and grows.

The District preservation law is the basis for review of most preservation projects, but others are considered under the federal Section 106 process or tax incentive program, where coordination with cooperating agencies -- the Commission of Fine Arts and its Old Georgetown Board, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the National Park Service -- is a key factor. Whether applying the basic standard of compatibility under District law, or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties under federal law, District preservation officials encourage an approach to rehabilitation and architectural design based on the premise of sensitivity to the historic context.

Sensitivity to the historic environment means that new construction should be suited to the fundamental character and the relative importance of an historic building or environment. Delicate historic environments, such as a quiet residential street, generally demand greater design restraint while more robust or disparate environments, such as the densely-developed downtown, can often sustain stronger design statements and more striking juxtapositions of scale.

STRATEGIES:

- Promote appropriate preservation of historic buildings through an effective design review process. Set high standards of design quality, apply design guidelines without stifling creativity, and strive for an appropriate balance between restoration and adaptation for current uses as suitable for the particular historic environment.
- Maintain historic properties in their original use to the extent possible. If this is no longer feasible, encourage appropriate adaptive uses consistent with the character of the property.
- Preserve the important historic features of each historic district and encourage compatible new infill development. Within historic districts, preserve the established patterns and relationships for lot coverage, open spaces and other characteristics that contribute to the character and attractiveness of those areas. Ensure that new construction is in scale with and respects the character of its historic context through sensitive siting and design and the appropriate use of materials and architectural detail.
- Apply design standards in a manner that accounts for different levels of historic significance and different types of historic environments. Encourage restoration of historic landmarks while allowing enhancements of equivalent design quality. In historic districts, allow greater flexibility where the inherent character of historic properties can accommodate greater intervention or more dramatic new design.

- Ensure consistency between zoning regulations and design standards for historic properties. Zoning for each historic district should be consistent with the predominant height and density of the significant and contributing buildings in the district. Where needed, specialized standards or regulations should be developed to preserve the characteristic building patterns of historic districts and to minimize design conflicts between preservation and zoning control.
- Maintain character-defining open spaces, yards and public areas which contribute to the significance of a property or district.
- Protect historic buildings from demolition whenever possible, and protect the integrity of whole buildings. Discourage treatments like "facadism" or relocation of historic buildings, allowing them only when there is no feasible alternative and determined necessary in the public interest.
- Waivers or administrative flexibility should be provided in the application of building related codes to permit maximum preservation and protection of historic resources while ensuring the health and safety of the public.

ACTIONS:

- Sustain and improve the conceptual design review process as the most effective and widely used means to promote good preservation and compatible design of new development.
- Ensure the appointment of highly qualified professionals to the Historic Preservation Review Board.
- Enhance public participation and transparency in the preservation review process through increased use of electronic means to provide public notice, process applications, and posting documents for public review.
- Develop more sophisticated design standards and guidelines for the treatment and alteration of historic properties, and for the design of new buildings subject to preservation design review. Ensure that these tools address appropriate treatment of characteristics specific to particular historic districts. Disseminate these tools widely and make them available on the internet.
- Work jointly with planning and zoning officials to eliminate inconsistencies between zoning regulations and historic district design standards. Where needed, develop specialized standards or revised regulations for historic districts that would protect characteristic features of their built form and minimize design conflicts between preservation and zoning controls.
- Identify areas in historic districts that may be inappropriately zoned based on the scale and height of the outstanding and contributing buildings of the area and pursue rezoning of such areas with more appropriate designation.
- Create and support public education opportunities, such as symposia and conferences, for the discussion and dissemination of information on design, compatibility, traditional vs. contemporary architecture, and the differences between rehabilitation and restoration.

OBJECTIVE 2.4 Protect Historic Landscapes and Open Space

More than almost any other feature, the exceptional width and openness of Washington's streets and parks define the basic character of the city. These spaces include the major monumental greenswards of the Mall, riverfront and stream valley parks, and the green spaces formed by remaining estates, cemeteries, and campuses. Tree-lined streets, landscaped front yards, and small reservations of land formed by the city's unique plan unite many historic neighborhoods, while many small green oases of public parkland and recreation spaces are scattered throughout the city. Many of these green spaces are publicly owned by District and federal agencies, while other spaces are privately owned by institutions or individuals. These green spaces are often an integral part of the significance of historic properties, providing the setting for historic buildings and creating a balance between the natural and built environments that is a unifying feature of the city. Such settings should be protected and maintained as significant landscapes in their own right or as contributing features of historic landmarks and districts.

STRATEGIES:

- Preserve the historic natural setting of Washington and the views it provides. Protect the topographic bowl around central Washington, the Potomac and Anacostia riverfronts, and stream valley parks from inappropriate intrusions.
- Preserve the distinguishing qualities of the District's historic landscapes, both natural and designed. Protect public building and monument grounds, parks and parkway systems, gardens, cemeteries, and other historic landscapes from deterioration and incompatible development.
- Ensure that new public works such as street lights, street furniture, and sidewalks within historic landscapes and historic districts are compatible with the historic context. Emphasize high quality design, whether contemporary or traditional.
- Preserve the open and continuous green quality of landscaped front and side yards, existing topographies, and raised terraces in public space. Take special care at historic landmarks and in historic districts to protect this public environment from excess paving or vehicular intrusions.
- Retain landscaped yards, gardens, estate grounds, and other significant areas of open green space associated with historic landmarks whenever possible. If additional development is determined compatible, retain sufficient open space to protect the setting of the historic landmark and the integrity of the historic property. In historic districts, strive to maintain the communal open space quality in the interior of blocks while balancing the need to accommodate reasonable expansion of residential buildings.

ACTIONS:

- Promote the protection of historic landscapes through documentation, specific recognition in official designations, and public education materials. Work cooperatively with federal agencies and private landowners to promote the preservation of historic landscapes as integral components of historic landmarks and districts, and to ensure that new construction is compatible with the setting of historic properties.
- Protect views of and from the natural escarpment around central Washington by working with District and federal land-holding and review agencies to accommodate reasonable demands which conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for new development on major historic campuses like Saint Elizabeths Hospital, the Armed Forces Retirement Home, McMillan Reservoir, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, and other major reservations in a manner that harmonizes with the natural topography and preserves important vistas over the city.
- Promote the preservation of original street patterns in historic districts by maintaining public rights-of-way and historic building setbacks. Retain and maintain alleys in historic districts where they are significant components of the historic development pattern.

OBJECTIVE 2.5 Protect and Improve Understanding of Archaeological Resources

The District has a rich heritage of pre-historic and historic archaeological resources. Often, this archaeological evidence of the city's history is hidden from view below ground or in storage and is not part of the experience of the city. The sites and artifacts are important evidence of the city's history. The identification and protection of archaeological resources currently occurs primarily via the Section 106 process and utilizes the National Register criteria for determining significance. The following policies and actions provide for the investigation and protection of archaeological resources.

STRATEGIES:

- Retain archeological resources in place where feasible. If sites must be excavated, follow established standards and guidelines for the treatment of archaeological resources, both in documentation and recording, and in the collection, storage and protection of artifacts.
- Treat archaeological artifacts as significant public property. Ensure that all data and artifacts recovered from archaeological excavations are appropriately conserved and stored in a facility with proper environmental controls.

ACTIONS:

- Assemble collections currently stored in various locations into a single unified collection.
- Establish a facility for the proper conservation and storage of artifacts, archaeological materials, and related historic documents owned by the District. Ensure public access to these materials and promote research using the collections and records. Investigate and consider city-owned and shared facilities with another local institution such as universities or the federal government.
- Increase efforts to identify and protect significant archeological resources outside of the Section 106 process without unduly burdening private property owners and development efforts.
- Promote and raise public awareness of the value and findings of archaeological resources in the District through presentations, publications and other public educational efforts.

OBJECTIVE 2.6 Improve Enforcement Efforts

Inspection and enforcement activities carry the District's preservation process to completion by ensuring that work on landmarks and in the city's many historic districts is consistent with preservation goals. While this activity is primarily undertaken by inspectors within HPO to ensure compliance with approved plans and permits, community organizations and citizens play an active part in enforcement by helping disseminate information about preservation standards and reporting obviously inappropriate work to help curtail illegal and inappropriate construction activity.

STRATEGIES:

- Protect historic properties from unauthorized building activity, physical damage, and diminished integrity through systematic monitoring of construction and vigilant enforcement of the preservation law. Use enforcement authority to ensure compliance with the conditions of permits issued under the preservation law.

- Prevent demolition of historic buildings by neglect or active intent through enforcement of effective regulations, imposition of substantial civil fines, and when necessary, criminal enforcement proceedings against those responsible.

ACTIONS:

- Improve enforcement of preservation laws through a sustained program of inspections, imposition of appropriate sanctions, and expeditious adjudication.
- Strengthen interagency cooperation and promote compliance with preservation laws through enhanced public awareness of permit requirements and procedures. Hold property owners and contractors accountable for violations of historic preservation laws and regulations, and ensure that outstanding violations are corrected before issuing permits for additional work.
- Develop and implement an appropriate method of periodic notification to owners of historic property, informing them of the benefits and responsibilities of their stewardship.
- Establish adequate legal and professional support for the development, issuance and enforcement of historic preservation regulations.
- Develop regulations for Demolition by Neglect legislation.

GOAL 3: CAPITALIZE ON HISTORIC RESOURCES

Historic preservation is fundamental to the conservation and development of District neighborhoods. Recent building permit and development activity in the city confirms that historic preservation is a proven catalyst for neighborhood investment and stabilization. The financial impact and the importance of historic assets as generators of economic activity is also well documented. Preservation has increased real estate values, strengthened the city's tourism industry, and revitalized neighborhood shopping districts like Barracks Row and U Street. Looking to the future, historic preservation policies and plans must be better integrated with urban design, neighborhood conservation, sustainability, housing, economic development, tourism and other government planning and civic functions to maximize their effectiveness.

OBJECTIVE 3.1 Improve Government Leadership

As owner and steward of a significant number of historic resources, the District and federal governments must ensure that properties under their control are maintained and preserved in a manner which meets established preservation standards as a means to ensure protection of resources and preservation of neighborhood property values. The District and federal governments should set the standard for historic preservation in the city, both through committed leadership and exemplary treatment of their own historic properties.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop and strengthen supportive working relationships among the HPO, other District agencies and federal agencies. Maintain the role of the HPO as an integral component of the Office of Planning and as a resource to assist other District and federal agencies in evaluating the effect of their undertakings on historic properties.
- Promote, establish and sustain exemplary standards of stewardship for historic properties under District and federal ownership or control. Use historic properties to the maximum extent feasible when adding space for government activities, promote innovative new design, and ensure that rehabilitation adheres to the highest preservation standards. Properly maintain both designated and eligible historic properties and protect them from deterioration, inappropriate alteration and incompatible uses.

- Evaluate District-owned properties for historic potential before acting on disposition. When disposal of historic properties is appropriate, ensure their continued preservation through transfer to a suitable new steward under conditions that ensure their protection and reuse.
- Coordinate District historic preservation plans and programs with those of the federal government through processes established under the National Historic Preservation Act, and coordinate reviews with the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts.

ACTIONS:

- Adopt and implement procedures and regulations to ensure historic preservation review of District undertakings at the earliest possible stage of project planning.
- Establish standards for District-sponsored construction consistent with the standards applied to the treatment of historic properties by federal agencies.
- Strengthen collaborative working relationships with District and federal agencies including the Commission of Fine Arts, National Capital Planning Commission, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution, GSA and others involved in the stewardship of historic properties.
- Conduct an inventory and compile a database of District-owned historic properties to determine appropriate preservation treatments. Make this information available to the neighborhood preservation organizations and the general public as requested. Schools and libraries – often significant community landmarks and in need of much attention after decades of deferred maintenance – are a particular priority.

OBJECTIVE 3.2 Create Preservation Incentives

STRATEGIES:

- Focus historic preservation financial incentives on low- and moderate-income households as a way to preserve affordable housing and protect neighborhood diversity.
- Conserve churches, synagogues, other places of worship, school buildings, and theaters which are designated as historic landmarks or contributing buildings within historic districts. Use a variety of tools to reduce inappropriate development pressure on these community resources.
- Promote the preservation of the row house as a character-defining resource of the District of Columbia, and an important source of affordable family housing in many District neighborhoods.

ACTIONS:

- Implement a transfer of development rights (TDR) program for special resource types, such as churches and other important neighborhood landmarks, to relieve development pressure and provide a financial incentive for the rehabilitation of these structures. Development rights for such structures would be transferred to properties in receiving zones identified as appropriate to receive such transfers.
- Develop standards and procedures for implementing the DC Targeted Homeowner grant program.
- Promote the federal rehabilitation tax credits for eligible projects.
- Launch the DC Revolving Fund Loan Program.
- Develop other incentives, penalties, requirements, and assistance programs as appropriate to encourage preservation and adaptive reuse by both public and private entities.

OBJECTIVE 3.3 Integrate Preservation with Economic Development and Sustainability Goals

Historic preservation is a fundamental component of the city's redevelopment strategy that is compatible with and supportive of new development, while helping to accommodate the new uses necessary to provide economic growth and community development in the city. The preservation and reuse of existing buildings and neighborhoods also promotes the city's goals of achieving environmental and economic sustainability.

STRATEGIES:

- Promote greater understanding of historic preservation as a tool for economic and community redevelopment rather than as a program merely concerned with aesthetics.
- Develop and support programs and incentives such as the DC Main Streets Initiative to encourage historic preservation as a business district revitalization strategy.
- Increase public use of programs and initiatives sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, and the Advisory Council, including the National Main Street Center, Preservation Services Fund, Preserve America, Save America's Treasures and other programs designed for preservation and promotion of historic districts, neighborhood Main Streets, heritage tourism, African-American cultural heritage, historic schools, organizational development, and other preservation activities in the city.
- Promote greater understanding and awareness of historic preservation as a means of achieving environmental and economic sustainability.

ACTIONS:

- Utilize the internet and electronic media to communicate the value of preservation to economic and community development, and environmental and economic sustainability. Post and distribute articles and information regarding the relationship between preservation, creative cities and economic development.
- Ensure that rehabilitation and the reuse of existing buildings are valued appropriately in the preparation of new environmental building codes and regulations.

OBJECTIVE 3.4 Encourage and Support Preservation Advocacy and Partnerships

The foundation of a strong local preservation effort is an informed and participatory public that understands the purpose, values and methods of preservation. Historic buildings, historic districts and archaeological sites offer a valuable supplement to the written record and provide a unique three-dimensional learning experience. The continued preservation and interpretation of District of Columbia's historic resources contributes to the educational and cultural development of DC residents and visitors alike. The success of local historic preservation activities grows from increased visibility and public awareness of why historic preservation is important, how historic preservation is achieved, and the benefits that historic preservation can provide to residents, businesses and visitors.

STRATEGIES:

- Increase public awareness of and access to historic places and activities of interest to residents and visitors.

- Encourage private sector participation in preservation initiatives through outreach programs and community partnerships and encourage communication and collaboration among different groups and organizations in the city that promote historic preservation, or that have an institutional knowledge of the District's history or historic resources.
- Recognize the potential for historic preservation activities to protect and enhance the distinct identity of District neighborhoods.
- Recognize the value of cultural history as a way to promote community preservation.
- Use cultural tourism as a way of linking neighborhoods and promoting communication between diverse groups.
- Promote special events, festivals, design awards, and similar activities that celebrate the District's history and historic places and raise awareness of historic preservation.

ACTIONS:

- Identify heritage tourism opportunities and strategies that integrate District programs with Cultural Tourism DC, the DC Convention and Visitors Bureau, and other visitor-oriented programs. Ensure that such programs protect the integrity and authenticity of historic resources.
- Develop educational materials on the characteristics and history of each historic district, and the obligations of property owners within these districts. These materials should promote the public's understanding that the social value of historic preservation extends beyond the resource itself.
- Develop display exhibits for libraries, recreation centers, and other public buildings that showcase historic and archaeological resources. Recruit volunteers to assist with the interpretation of these resources.
- Encourage and facilitate more interaction between the HPO, neighborhood organizations, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, nonprofit preservation organizations, and economic development constituents.
- Establish advisory groups to support HPO and HPRB in promoting historic preservation.
- Work with both public and private K-12 schools to develop and implement programs to educate District students on the historic resources of Washington DC, including archaeological resources, and the value of historic preservation as a community activity.
- Support a continuing partnership with Cultural Tourism DC while also pursuing new strategies to preserve, acknowledge and celebrate the cultural history of District neighborhoods.

A Call to Action

The historic preservation movement in the United States is unique in the world. Its successes and traditions have been founded at the grass roots level and have fostered a fundamental change in the way citizens, architects, planners, developers, and government officials view our neighborhoods and cultural heritage. Preservation continues to thrive and build its momentum from the volunteers and non-profit leadership of national and local organizations. Traditionally, preservation has been and must continue to be inclusive of community, political, and professional leaders and volunteers. Without volunteers and local leadership, preservation will not continue the successes of the past or continue to broaden its appeal and the participation of new constituencies. The following ideas are provided to encourage participation in order to create a stewardship culture in the District of Columbia.

Individuals:

- Run for elective office
- Volunteer for preservation causes and activities
- Participate and join neighborhood, civic and national preservation organizations
- Support businesses who own and preserve historic structures
- Become a local heritage tourist
- Respect the environment, whether historic or not

Community, Neighborhood and Not-for-profit Organizations:

- Sponsor and promote neighborhood and ethnic heritage festivals and events
- Locate offices in historic districts and structures
- Take advantage of grant and community programs
- Sponsor and support local preservation activities and organizations
- Participate in Main Street programs and activities
- Support organizations who support preservation and cultural activities

Businesses:

- Locate offices in historic districts and structures
- Sponsor and support local preservation activities and organizations
- Participate in Main Street programs and activities
- Support organizations who support preservation and cultural activities
- Support local politicians who support preservation and cultural activities

Governments:

- Use and promote this plan
- Adopt preservation plans, zoning ordinances and tax incentives that benefit preservation
- Utilize historic buildings and districts for offices
- Increase funding for preservation and community focused programs
- Support surveys and the HPO staffing, technological and operational needs

Plan Methodology

The Historic Preservation Plan 2008-2012 is an update of the D.C. Historic Preservation Plan of 2000. Coordinated with the update of the District's Comprehensive Plan, the public participation process for this plan utilized the same public forums, advisory committees, and interested individuals for gathering comments and input.

Historic Preservation Element of the Updated DC Comprehensive Plan

A new Historic Preservation Element to the city's 20-year Comprehensive Plan was developed prior to completion of this plan and the two documents have been closely coordinated for content, goals and purpose. In reviewing the previous preservation element by the Office of Planning and HPO, an audit undertook to assess successes and failures relating to both the previous Comprehensive Plan preservation element and the 2000 Historic Preservation Plan. As a result of this combined planning process, public comments were solicited and received at four Comprehensive Plan Community Open Houses and a special meeting convened of the Historic Districts Coalition, an umbrella organization representing all interested community-based and city-wide preservation organizations.

Review of other State Plans

The staff and consultants have reviewed numerous other State Historic Preservation Plans, city plans and the National Park Service guidelines for preservation planning. These plans provide a wide array of approaches to preservation planning and taken as a whole, they illustrate the significant contribution historic preservation is making to the understanding of our history, our places and our people.

Advisory Committee and Citizen Input

An advisory committee was formed by the HPO of local preservation leaders and stakeholders to guide this plan's development. The committee met twice – once in the spring and again in the fall of 2006 – to review and provide comments on the previous plan and guidance on the development of this plan. An electronic draft was distributed to the committee members prior to the final public comment period.

An additional group of nearly 50 preservation stakeholders, also selected by the HPO, were identified and comments solicited on the same material contained in this plan as in the preservation element of the Comprehensive Plan. Via email questionnaire, these stakeholders provided critical opinions and assessments that guided the development of the final preservation element and this state preservation plan. An electronic draft was distributed to the stakeholders prior to the final public comments period.

The plan was available at city offices and online for the general public for a 30-day public comment period. At the conclusion of the public comment period, the plan was publicly advertised and presented at a public meeting to the Historic Preservation Review Board, where comments from both the Board and the public were offered. At all stages, comments and feedback were gathered, considered, and incorporated as appropriate in producing the final plan.

An HPO assessment report was prepared by an outside consultant with guidance and participation from HPO staff and task force and stakeholders comments. The report provides a summary of the existing state of the HPO and contains identification of data gaps and recommendations for needs with regard to the city comprehensive plan historic preservation element and the new DC Historic Preservation Plan.

Planning Participants

Public participation in the updating of the DC Historic Preservation Plan was essential to educate the public about the planning process and the role of preservation in the city, to solicit their views in shaping the plan and to establish public consensus and support for the vision and goals of the plan.

Uniquely, the District of Columbia is a very small geographic area with a complicated public and governmental structure. As the nation's capital and a living historic place, the city has numerous levels of "public" interests ranging from the national to the city block. The preservation planning process and its participants represent the full range of interests in the culture and identity of the city. The diversity of public concerns and issues in the District are sometimes in conflict. To accommodate the range of interests, the participants in the planning process were drawn from those who can affect and are affected by the historic preservation plan.

The participants therefore represented all levels of government present in the District, from the neighborhood to the federal levels. They represented local and national preservation leaders, citizens, businesses, housing experts and developers. By coordinating the public participation process with the update of the city comprehensive plan, the "public" also included leaders and community advocates for diverse interests such as urban planning and design, transportation, economic development, environment, public and open spaces.

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Bob Sonderman, HPRB Archaeologist
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Nancy Witherell, National Capital Planning Commission
Jim Abdo, DC Preservation League
Peter May, DC Office of Property Management
Hector Abreu, US General Services and the US Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Denise Johnson, HPRB and National Trust for Historic Preservation

Stakeholders

Alexander Padro, ANC 2-C and Shaw Main Street
Alison Hinchman, National Trust for Historic District
Amanda Ohlke, DC Preservation League
Amy Hecker

Andi Adams, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman
Anne Lewis, HPRB
Bernard Gray, Anacostia
Bill McLeod, Barracks Row Main Street
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Carol Mitten, Office of Property Management
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David Bell, DC Preservation League
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Linda Harper, Congressional Cemetery
Mark Huck, Mount Pleasant
Mary Oehrlein, Architect
Maybelle Bennett, Howard University
Patty Gallagher, National Capitol Planning Commission
Peter Brink, National Trust for Historic Preservation
Richard Nettler, Arent Fox
Rick Busch, Dupont Circle Conservancy
Robert Nieweg, National Trust for Historic Preservation
Sabrina Baron, Takoma Park
Sally Berk, DC Preservation League and Sheridan-Kalorama Historical Society
Shalom Baranes, Architect
Susan Neumann, National Trust for Historic Preservation
Tersh Boasberg, HPRB
Tom Luebke, Commission of Fine Arts
Tomika Hughey
Toni Lee, National Park Service

Organizations

All DC preservation-related organizations were participants via the Comprehensive Plan process and through representatives of the Task Force and Stakeholders. An initial kick-off meeting with the Historic Districts Coalition began this preservation planning process.

Neighborhood Organizations

Advisory Neighborhood Commissions
Anacostia Garden Club

Anacostia Historical Society
Barrack's Row Main Street
Blagden Alley/Naylor Court Historical Society
Capitol Hill Restoration Society
Citizens Association of Georgetown
Cleveland Park Historical Society
Dupont Circle Citizens Association
Dupont Circle Conservancy
Foggy Bottom Citizens Association
Foggy Bottom Historic District Conservancy
Foundation for the Preservation of Historic Georgetown
Foxhall Village Community Citizens Association
Frederick Douglass Improvement Association
Friends of Meridian Hill Park
Friends of Tregaron
Historic Chevy Chase, DC
Historic Mount Pleasant
Historic Takoma
Kalorama Citizens Association
LeDroit Park Civic Association
Logan Circle Community Association
Shaw Main Street
Sheridan-Kalorama Historical Association
Stanton Park Neighborhood Association
Takoma DC Neighborhood Association
Woodley Park Community Association
Woodley Park Historical Society

City-Wide Organizations

American Institute of Architects, Washington DC Chapter
Art Deco Society
Association of Preservation Technology, Washington Chapter
Citizens Planning Coalition
Commission of Fine Arts
Committee of 100 on the Federal City
Cultural Tourism DC
DC Humanities Council
DC Preservation League
Downtown Cluster of Congregations
Historic Districts Coalition
Historical Society of Washington, DC
L'Enfant Trust
Society of Architectural Historians, Latrobe Chapter

National Organizations

Advisory Council for Historic Preservation
General Services Administration
National Conference of State and Historic Preservation Officers
National Park Service, US Department of the Interior
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Preservation Action
US Army Corps of Engineers
US Department of Defense

This preservation plan has been prepared by the DC Historic Preservation Office to meet the relevant requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act.

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Windows and Doors for Historic Buildings

Roofs on Historic Buildings

Walls and Foundations of Historic Buildings

Landscaping, Landscape Features and Secondary Buildings in Historic Districts

Energy Conservation for Historic Buildings

Accommodating Persons with Disabilities in Historic Buildings

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- Capitol Hill Historic District
- Cleveland Park Historic District
- Downtown/Pennsylvania Avenue/Fifteenth Street Historic Districts
- Dupont Circle Historic District
- Foggy Bottom Historic District
- Georgetown Historic District
- Greater Fourteenth Street/Logan Circle Historic Districts
- Sixteen Street Historic District
- Kalorama Triangle Historic District
- LeDroit Park Historic District
- Massachusetts Avenue Historic District
- Mount Pleasant Historic District
- Mount Vernon Square Historic District
- Sheridan-Kalorama Historic District
- Strivers Section Historic District
- Takoma Park Historic District
- U Street Historic District
- Woodley Park Historic District

Ward 1

- Columbia Heights Public Realm Framework Plan
- Convention Center Area Strategic Development Plan
- DUKE: Development Framework for a Cultural Destination District in Greater Shaw/U Street
- Georgia Ave-Petworth Metro Station Area and Corridor Plan

Ward 2

- Convention Center Area Strategic Development Plan
- Downtown Action Agenda Project
- DUKE: Development Framework for a Cultural Destination District in Greater Shaw/U Street

Ward 3

- Upper Wisconsin Avenue Corridor Study (UWACS) Strategic Framework Plan
- Glover Park Commercial District Study

Ward 4

- Georgia Ave-Petworth Metro Station Area and Corridor Plan
- Takoma Central District Plan
- Upper Georgia Avenue Area Land Development Plan

Ward 5

- Brookland/CUA Metro Station Area Plan

McMillan Reservoir Project
The Northeast Gateway Revitalization Strategy and Implementation Plan
NoMA Vision Plan & Development Strategy

Ward 6

Anacostia Waterfront Initiative
H Street Corridor Revitalization
NoMA Vision Plan & Development Strategy
Northwest One Redevelopment Plan
Pennsylvania Avenue SE
Reservation 13 Draft Master Plan

Ward 7

East of the River Project
Lincoln Heights & Richardson Dwellings New Communities Revitalization Plan
Pennsylvania Avenue SE

Ward 8

Anacostia Transit Area Strategic Investment Plan
Barry Farm/Park Chester/Wade Road Redevelopment Plan
East of the River Project
Pennsylvania Avenue SE
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Blacks in the Arts (1988)

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Chevy Chase DC (draft, 2007)

Cleveland Park (1984, partial survey)

Columbia Heights (1988-89; including archaeological resources; 2002)

Congress Heights (1987-88; including archaeological resources)

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Downtown (1979-80)
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Firehouses (1988; 1992)
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Foxhall Village Survey (2004-06)
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Logan Circle/Shaw (1990-92)
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Midtown (1993)
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