

VOLUME 2
chapter

6

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

GOAL	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
1 <i>Historic preservation initiatives are supported by a broad range of constituents who share a common vision.</i>	1.A. Create a community-based, comprehensive citywide preservation plan informed by a broad range of constituencies and interests	6.8 - 6.9
	1.B. Ensure that historic preservation values and interests are coordinated with economic development groups, and ethnic and cultural groups.	6.10
	1.C. Develop principles or guidelines for contemporary design in historic areas.	6.11
2 <i>Historic preservation initiatives support and invigorate neighborhood revitalization.</i>	2.A. Support and develop cultural heritage destinations in less-traveled areas of the city.	6.11 - 6.12
	2.B. Support and promote preservation-based economic development in historic areas.	6.13
	2.C. Foster partnerships among historic preservation advocates and community organizations, small business groups, and other revitalization groups.	6.14
3 <i>New Orleans is a model of “green,” sustainable historic preservation.</i>	3.A. Develop a “Sustainable Preservation” plan and pilot project.	6.16
4 <i>Acquiring and renovating an historic structure is feasible and affordable for a broad range of property owners and investors.</i>	4.A. Provide accessible, user-friendly information and resources on preservation of historic structures.	6.17
	4.B. Provide rehabilitation assistance for low-income owners of historic properties.	6.18
	4.C. Support workforce development initiatives in traditional crafts that support preservation such as traditional construction and artisan trades.	6.18
5 <i>Historic preservation information and administration is enhanced and streamlined.</i>	5.A. Expand communications and information sharing with agencies and the public.	6.18



fact sheet

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic Districts

- An historic district is a defined, geographical area designated for its cultural, social, economic, political and/or architectural significance.
- In New Orleans there are 20 historic districts and over 140 sites on the National Register, and 14 that are locally-designated (in addition to the French Quarter, which is a National Landmark). Their boundaries often overlap.
- National Register districts are designated by the National Register of Historic Places. In Louisiana this program is administered by the Office of Cultural Development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Division of Historic Preservation.
 - > National Register Districts: Esplanade Ridge, New Marigny, Parkview, Mid-City, Bywater, Faubourg Marigny, Vieux Carre, Holy Cross, Carrollton, Upper CBD, Algiers Point, Uptown, Lower CBD, Central City, Lower Garden District, Garden District, Irish Channel, Gentilly Terrace, Broadmoor, South Lakeview
- Locally-designated districts are designated by the New Orleans City Council and administered by two local historic district commissions: The New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission (NO HDLC) and the Central Business District Historic District Landmarks Commission (CBD HDLC); the French Quarter was designated by the state and is administered by the Vieux Carré Commission.
 - > Local Historic Districts include Algiers Point, Bywater, Canal Street, Esplanade Ridge, Faubourg Marigny, Garden District, Holy Cross, Irish Channel, Lafayette Square, Lower Garden District, Picayune Place, St. Charles Avenue, Tremé, Vieux Carre (state-designated historic district), and the Warehouse District.
- There are over 400 designated or nominated local landmarks.

Historic Sites

- An historic site is a building, structure, site, or object that is recognized for its cultural, social, economic, political, archaeological, and/or architectural significance. Generally they are at least 50 years old. Districts can be historic sites as well.
- There are approximately 37,000 contributing buildings within New Orleans' National Register Districts.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER?

- Federal projects must mitigate impacts on National Register properties.
- It is an honor.
- Eligibility for federal tax credits for a portion of qualifying renovations for all uses except private residences.
- There is no impact on property rights. Owners may alter or even demolish the property when private dollars are being used, subject to municipal laws and regulations.
- Owners must agree to nomination for National Register status.
- Eligibility for state tax credits for a portion of qualifying renovations for income-producing properties and for owner-occupied properties

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE IN A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT?

- Local historic district designation does not affect the usage or zoning of any property.
- Changes to the exterior visible from the public way are regulated for properties in local districts. All exterior changes to local landmarks are regulated.
- Owners must file a request for permission to perform new construction, routine maintenance work, or demolition that affects the exterior of the property.
- Owners within an Historic District can be cited for "demolition by neglect" if a property owner fails to maintain a building and allows deterioration to occur to the point where it is demolished through neglect. This may result in legal action and/or a fine if the owner fails to correct the violation.
- The Commissions do not have the authority to force a property owner to restore or renovate his property.
- There are no tax benefits of local district designation, but historic districts have been proven to have a positive and stabilizing effect on property values.
- The HDLC offers technical assistance and advice to property owners on making changes to their property. HDLC also provides free reference materials on the HDLC rules and regulations and guidelines for new construction.

- The National Register of Historic Places currently lists 143 historic sites in Orleans Parish, including houses, neighborhoods, churches, cemeteries, public plazas, statues, monuments, the campuses of Xavier, Tulane, and Dillard Universities, the St. Charles streetcar line, and one steamboat.

FINDINGS

- New Orleans' rich heritage is well known throughout the nation and the world and has potential to be a tremendous asset in the city's global economic competitiveness.
- New Orleans' physical historic fabric encompasses a wide variety of structures and landmarks, including housing, commercial buildings, maritime industrial buildings and structures, cemeteries, cultural landmarks, steamships and streetcars.
- New Orleans' cultural heritage includes unique varieties of music, cuisine, festivals, and visual and performing arts, and is a vitally important aspect of historic preservation.
- Historic New Orleans neighborhoods are characterized by mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environments that continue to appeal to residents of all walks of life and enhance the city's livability and global attractiveness as a place to live.
- Most historic architecture in New Orleans was designed to be compatible with the local climate, providing for cross ventilation and often raised above street level to avoid flooding.

CHALLENGES

- Linking preservation of historic buildings and neighborhoods to cultural preservation in order to broaden the constituency for historic preservation.
- Raising awareness about the potentially powerful link between historic preservation and the global identity and economic competitiveness of New Orleans.
- Making historic preservation and conservation more affordable for all residents.
- Enhancing partnerships to coordinate preservation with neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and sustainability.
- Addressing the vacancy and blight that threaten much of New Orleans' historic architecture.
- Overcoming the perception that preservation is overly restrictive, impractical, bureaucratic, and a factor in the city's stagnant economy.
- Increasing the capacity of local preservation agencies and groups.
- Ensuring the availability of skilled artisans and contractors, and appropriate building materials necessary to achieve high-quality rehabilitation of historic structures.
- Ensuring that all property owners in historic districts understand the benefits and obligations of being located within an historic district.



Acronyms

To aid in reading this section, below is a list of acronyms used within the text:

AIA	American Institute of Architects	NCDC	Neighborhood Conservation District Commission
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer	NORA	New Orleans Redevelopment Authority
CBD	Central business district	OFICD	Office of Facilities, Infrastructure, and Community Development
CPC	City Planning Commission	PRC	Preservation Resource Center
CZO	Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance	USGBC	United States Green Building Council
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency		
HDLC	Historic District Landmarks Commission		

A Introduction

In 2018, New Orleans will celebrate 300 years as a unique and vibrant urban place. Few American cities match New Orleans' extensive and living historic character. As of June 2009, New Orleans had over 140 landmarks and 17 districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Recognition by the US Department of the Interior for listing on the National Register is an honor, but it does not have any effect on a property owner's right to modify or even demolish a listed property. There are approximately 37,000 buildings in the National Register Districts. The French Quarter is a state-designated historic district under the jurisdiction of the Vieux Carré Commission, while the Historic District Landmarks Commission has jurisdiction over 14 locally-designated historic districts and landmarks. As of mid-2009, there are 406 designated or nominated local historic landmarks. Buildings in the Vieux Carré and local historic districts, as well as local historic landmarks, are subject to design review of proposals for exterior alterations. A larger area, comprising land south of I-610 on the East Bank, the historic districts on the West Bank, and all present and future National Register historic districts, has been designated as the Neighborhood Conservation District. Proposals to demolish buildings in the Conservation District must be reviewed for historic significance and other characteristics.

The Master Plan focuses on expanding the meaning, constituency, and overall benefit of historic preservation:

- Embrace preservation of cultural heritage within the mission of historic preservation.
- Provide opportunities to make preservation affordable to property owners in all neighborhoods with buildings of historic or "conserving" value.
- Strengthen partnerships to coordinate historic preservation initiatives with neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and sustainability.

B Recommendations

A recommendations **Summary** linking goals, strategies and actions appears below and is followed by one or more early-action items under the heading **Getting Started**. The **Narrative** follows, providing a detailed description of how the strategies and actions further the goals. Background and existing conditions discussion to inform understanding of the goals, policies, strategies and actions are included in Volume III, Chapter 6.

Summary

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	
1. Historic preservation initiatives are supported by a broad range of constituents who share a common vision.	1.A. Create a community-based, comprehensive citywide preservation plan informed by a broad range of constituencies and interests.	1. Convene a Preservation Plan Committee.	HDLC	First five years	Staff time	6.8–6.9
		2. Consultant assistance and committee of stakeholders including non-preservation groups from traditional neighborhoods.	HDLC, Committee and partners	First five years	Grants	6.10
	1.B. Ensure that historic preservation values and interests are coordinated with economic development groups and ethnic and cultural groups.	1. Ensure cross-representation of interests in initiatives, redevelopment efforts, in advisory committees and planning events.	HDLC; public-privated economic development partnership; others	First five years	Staff time	6.10
		1.C. Develop principles or guidelines for contemporary design in historic areas.	1. Work with the local American Institute of Architects chapter to convene a committee of architects and preservationists to develop principles or guidelines for contemporary design in historic areas.	HDLC; AIA-New Orleans; PRC; National Trust	Medium term	Staff time; volunteers
	2. Use the results in NCDC and HDLC regulatory decision making		HDLC; AIA-New Orleans; PRC; National Trust	Medium term	Staff time; volunteers	6.11
2 Historic preservation initiatives support and invigorate neighborhood revitalization.	2.A. Support and develop cultural heritage destinations in less-traveled areas and expand visitor access.	1. Convene a Heritage Tourism Task Force, potentially as part of the economic development PPP's group on tourism.	Tourism organizations; HDLC	First five years	Staff time	6.11 - 6.12
		2. Develop resource materials on heritage tourism for visitors.	Tourism organizations; HDLC;	First five years	Tourism marketing funds; grants	6.13
		3. Capitalize on the Tricentennial to market heritage tourism.	Tourism organizations	Long term	Tourism marketing funds	6.13
	2.B Support and promote preservation-based economic development in historic areas.	1. Facilitate city or corporate support for Main Streets and Cultural Districts.	OFICD	Medium term	CDBG; corporate donations	6.13

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019** **LONG TERM: 2020–2030**

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	
2. Historic preservation initiatives support and invigorate neighborhood revitalization.	2.B Support and promote preservation-based economic development in historic areas.	2. Offer incentives such as streamlined project approval by the HDLC for projects that also support locally-based economic development.	HDLC	Medium term	Staff time	6.14
		2.C. Foster relationships with neighborhood-based housing and community development initiatives to stimulate preservation as part of overall neighborhood revitalization.	1. Work with neighborhood organizations and NORA to identify blighted historic properties at risk of demolition.	HDLC	First five years	Staff times; volunteers
	2. Provide funds from federal programs to rehab historic homes.	OFICD	First five years	D-CDBG; HOME	6.15	
	3. Consider design guidelines for areas in the Neighborhood Conservation District. .	CPC; HDLC	First five years	Staff time	6.15	
	4. Advocate for and participate in the continued development of the Magnolia Streets program.	HDLC	Medium term	Staff time; volunteers; additional permanent staff	6.15	
	5. Encourage adaptive reuse of existing historic structures through zoning, a database, city choices.	CPC; HDLC; CAO; Mayor and Council	Medium term	CZO rewrite; staff time	6.15	
	6. Conduct cost-benefit analysis of adaptive reuse alternatives to new construction when siting city-owned facilities	HDLC	Medium term	Staff time; volunteers; additional permanent staff	6.15	
3. New Orleans is a model of “green,” sustainable historic preservation	3.A. Develop a “Sustainable Preservation” plan and pilot project.	1. Form a committee to create a framework and funding request from sustainability and preservation organizations.	HDLC; USGBC; AIA; other appropriate groups	First five years	Staff time; volunteers; grants	6.16
		2. Support and promote deconstruction as an alternative to demolition.	NCDC; HDLC	First five years	Staff time	6.17
4. Acquiring and renovating an historic structure is feasible and affordable.	4.A. Provide accessible, user-friendly information and resources.	1. Create a one stop shop for historic rehab resources.	HDLC	Medium term	Grants; additional staff person	6.17
		2. Ensure that building materials are accessible and affordable.	HDLC; building materials retailers	Medium term	Staff time	6.17
	4.B. Support workforce development initiatives in traditional crafts.	1. Work with Delgado Community College and other providers.	PRC; HDLC	Medium term	Staff time; volunteers	6.18
	4.C. Provide rehabilitation assistance for low-income owners of historic properties	1. Provide rehabilitation assistance for low-income owners in historic districts.	PRC; Non Profits	Ongoing	Grants, fund raising; volunteers	6.18

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019** **LONG TERM: 2020–2030**

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	
5. Historic preservation information and administration is enhanced and streamlined.	5.A. Expand communications and information sharing with agencies and the public	1. Use the Neighborhood Character Studies to inform decision making by the NCDC.	HDLC, NCDC	First five years	Staff time	6.18
		2. Remind property owners in local historic districts on a regular schedule of benefits and responsibilities	HDLC	First five years	Staff time	6.18
		3. Provide as much information as possible on the HDLC web site.	HDLC	First five years	Staff time	6.18
		4. Consider co-locating HDLC and CPC	HDLC and CPC	Medium term	Staff time	6.19
		5. Extend the FEMA survey to all historic areas of the city.	HDLC; consultant assistance	Long term	Grants; \$1.5 M	6.19

Getting Started

These items are short-term actions that can be undertaken with relatively little expenditure and will help lay the groundwork for the longer-term actions that follow.

- Create a Sustainable Preservation Committee with national and local preservation and sustainable building partners to create the framework for grant applications for a sustainable preservation plan and pilot project.
- Create the Preservation Plan Committee to create the framework for grant applications for the community-based preservation plan.
- Identify a vehicle for regular communication with property owners in local historic districts.
- Create a 2018 Tricentennial Committee to begin planning for the Tricentennial year.

Narrative

Below is a more detailed narrative of the various goals, strategies and actions highlighted in the “Summary” chart.

GOAL 1

Historic preservation initiatives are supported by a broad range of constituents who share a common vision.

STRATEGIES

1.A Create a community-based, comprehensive citywide preservation plan informed by a broad range of constituencies and interests.

Many U.S. cities with extensive historic resources like Los Angeles, Chicago and Philadelphia have recognized the need for a new approach to historic preservation for the 21st century. They have created community-based historic preservation plans to guide policies and practices, and to foster partnerships with housing and neighborhood revitalization organizations that can help to achieve preservation goals in the course of their work.

A community-based, 21st century preservation plan for New Orleans should involve not only historic preservation professionals and advocates, but also housing, small business, and neighborhood revitalization interests; developers and community development corporations; lending institutions; and the city agencies whose actions involve historic buildings. It should be guided by a broadly diverse Advisory Committee that includes civic, business, and government leaders from all over the city, including preservation skeptics as well as enthusiasts. The plan should focus on how preservation of the city’s historic fabric can contribute to the goals that preservation interests share with advocates of economic development, neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing, and sustainability.

The preservation plan should include a vision, goals, strategies and an action and funding agenda for:

- Broadening audiences and support through enhanced interpretation of the links between people and the history of buildings, not just architectural styles.
- Enabling wider participation by persons of limited means and income.
- Achieving more effective incentives to encourage private investment in historic buildings, including property tax relief, granting bonuses to developers of historic commercial buildings in the CBD, and including financial vehicles for closing the gap between the cost of substantial renovation versus market values.
- Developing new appealing heritage tourism experiences that pull visitors into historic areas of the city beyond the French Quarter.
- Expanding job opportunities in the building crafts related to historic preservation.
- Incorporating preservation into neighborhood and commercial corridor revitalization.
- Adapting cost-conscious rehabilitation materials and practices for application in historic districts.
- Engaging the African American community in dialogue about historic sites and areas, such as Pontchartrain Park, linked to the history of African Americans in the city.

Expanding the FEMA survey to all historic neighborhoods with a complete and thorough parcel-by-parcel survey of New Orleans’ historic buildings would be too time-consuming and intensive for this type of plan, though a worthy goal over the long term. This plan should take a strategic

PRESERVATION AND REVITALIZATION IN BALTIMORE, MD

Baltimore's innovations in historic preservation go back to the 1970s with its "dollar houses." As part of a larger neighborhood revitalization strategy, in target neighborhoods dilapidated vernacular row houses were acquired by the city for failure to pay taxes, and sold to new owners for \$1 if they rehabbed and occupied them within three years. Hundreds did. Today, the federal funding sources that helped such programs do not exist, but Baltimore's commitment to preservation and neighborhood revitalization continues. Recently, the city enacted a Historic Restoration and Rehabilitation Tax Credit for all qualifying property in designated historic districts. With more than 30 locally designated historic districts, and scores of historic neighborhoods, approximately 54,000 structures qualify for the city's tax credit program. The credit is granted on the increased assessment directly resulting from the qualifying improvements. The city calculates that it is worth an average of \$40,000 on commercial properties, \$11,000 on owner-occupied houses, and \$28,000 on residential

investment properties. Such innovations go a long way in making the rehabilitation of historic buildings an attractive option, particularly if they are marketed and promoted actively as Baltimore is doing.

Baltimore's clear and easy to follow procedures and design guidelines, coupled with a streamlined design review process have been important factors in expanding public and neighborhood support for historic preservation. How well is it working? As part of a conscious strategy for neighborhood reinvestment, Baltimore's bargain-priced historic housing stock is now being marketed successfully to potential homebuyers who work in high-priced Washington DC, 45 minutes away.

www.livebaltimore.com

planning approach in light of pressing needs aimed at stemming the loss of historic fabric through disinvestment—tackling the issue in a wholesale manner rather than exclusively building by building.¹

The plan should develop preservation approaches for areas within the Neighborhood Conservation District that are not otherwise regulated, as well as the more closely-regulated local districts. The ranking categories already in place for historic districts (*see Volume 3, Chapter 6*) can serve as a foundation for a strategic approach that would acknowledge the need to attract private investment to rehabilitate and preserve historic housing stock in neighborhoods of differing market conditions and demographic profiles. While it is appropriate and desirable to use the current approach to acceptable preservation practices in the French Quarter, a more strategic approach to design review may be more appropriate in Holy Cross and areas with similar economic and market profiles. Similarly, a more flexible approach to preservation standards might be appropriate in areas of with historic buildings where there has been significant loss of integrity or character either through abandonment, demolition or damage from Hurricane Katrina.

A preservation plan will take 9–12 months and require assistance from consultants with expertise in historic preservation, planning and urban design, skilled at facilitating cross-disciplinary dialogue and collaboration, and mindful of neighborhood and commercial area revitalization strategies.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Convene a Preservation Plan Committee comprised of leaders from preservation, development, business, housing, historic districts and city planning and reflecting racial diversity.*

Who: HDLC

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

¹ City of New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission: <http://www.cityofno.com/pg-99-10-building-ratings-guide.aspx> <<http://www.cityofno.com/pg-99-10-building-ratings-guide.aspx>

Working with the HDLC, the initial function of this committee would be to identify the goals of the plan, a statement of purpose, a framework for development and a time line, in order to apply for grant funding for the plan.

2. *Develop the plan with the advice of the committee and a public participation process.*

Who: HDLC; Committee and partners

When: First five years

Resources: Grants

1.B Ensure that historic preservation values and interests are coordinated with economic development groups, and ethnic and cultural groups.

Some economic development interests view historic preservation efforts as overly restrictive, bureaucratic obstacles that contribute to economic stagnation. However, the sections of this plan that discuss economic development (see Volume 2, chapter 9 and Volume 3, chapter 9) emphasizes the importance of quality of life and unique character to New Orleans' economic success in the 21st century. Young workers and knowledge workers tend to prefer living and working in authentic, culturally vibrant, and walkable environments such as New Orleans' historic neighborhoods. Protecting and restoring the character-giving elements of New Orleans' historic assets will be critical in giving the city a global competitive economic edge. To this end, fostering partnerships between economic development and historic preservation initiatives will be an important step in ensuring the city's future success.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Ensure cross-representation of historic preservation, cultural development and economic development interests in initiatives that promote either of these interests to leverage historic assets as part of*



IMAGE: PRESERVATION RESOURCE CENTER. WWW.PRCNO.ORG.

Citywide preservation initiatives have succeeded in restoring, one building at a time, irreplaceable historic structures such as this one. The historic character of New Orleans' neighborhoods, however, comes from more than just individual buildings. The tout ensemble of overall setting gives each neighborhood its distinct flavor and this intangible quality will require a comprehensive, strategic approach to preservation planning to assure its survival for future generations of New Orleanians.



IMAGE: GREEN COAST ENTERPRISES

These new, energy-efficient homes represent the latest technologies and strategies for resilient and energy-efficient building while reflecting their historic contexts in character and scale.



IMAGE: TULANE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE GREENBUILD PROGRAM.

the city's competitiveness as a place to live, visit, invest, and do business.

Who: HDLC; public-privated economic development partnership; others

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

The proposed economic development public-private initiative (**see Volume 2, Chapter 9 and Volume 3, Chapter 9**) should work with historic preservation interests in developing tourism, business attraction, workforce attraction, downtown development, and other economic development initiatives. Similarly, redevelopment efforts led by NORA or housing agencies should coordinate with the HDLC and other preservation interests. Historic preservation advocates can be commissioned to develop marketing materials to “sell” the city as a place to live and work. In addition, New Orleans’ historic elements should be marketed to the film and media industries. Images of New Orleans in media such as TV and film will in turn serve to further advertise the city’s unique historic character. New Orleans’ ethnic and cultural heritage is as much a part of its uniqueness and identity today as its physical and architectural heritage. Both physical and cultural preservation initiatives can support and bolster one another. In addition, neighborhood-based arts and entertainment venues provide opportunities for creating heritage tourism destinations, generating jobs and enhancing quality of life. The 19 Cultural Districts—areas established by the State which provide tax credits for economic development in historic cultural areas (**See Volume 3, Chapter 5**) in New Orleans have established this link. **See below for further discussion of heritage tourism development, and Volume 2, Chapter 9 and Volume 3, Chapter 9 for additional discussion of cultural economies.**

1.C Develop principles or guidelines for contemporary design in historic areas.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Work with the local American Institute of Architects chapter to convene a committee of architects and preservationists to develop principles or guidelines for contemporary design in historic areas.*

Who: HDLC; AIA-New Orleans; PRC; National Trust

When: Medium term

Resources: Staff time; volunteers

2. *Use the results in NCDC and HDLC regulatory decision making.*

Who: HDLC; AIA-New Orleans; PRC; National Trust

When: Medium term

Resources: Staff time; volunteers

GOAL 2

Historic preservation initiatives support and invigorate neighborhood

CAPITALIZING ON NEIGHBORHOOD HERITAGE IN WASHINGTON, DC

In Washington DC, more than 10 million people visit the National Mall and its museums each year. Until Cultural Tourism DC—“a non-profit coalition linking you to Washington’s heritage and arts”—began, that was about the extent of the city that tourists typically experienced. How to draw some of them to linger longer, to venture beyond and discover the real city beyond the Federal core? Over the last decade, by working together as Cultural Tourism DC, some 120+ historical and cultural organizations large and small (from the National Symphony to the Frederick Douglass home in Anacostia) have created a common web calendar of tours, events, and

attractive programs for visitors and residents alike. A major project is a series of well-marked heritage trails on topics of wide appeal. The first was “Civil War to Civil Rights,” whose route is peppered with handsome poster-sized markers. For this trail and eight others, visitors can download the map, a companion guide, and a MP3 narrated audio commentary – all for free. Cultural Tourism DC strengthens the image and economy of Washington, DC neighborhood by neighborhood, by linking more than 200 DC cultural and neighborhood organizations with partners in tourism, hospitality, government, and business.

regeneration.

STRATEGIES

2.A Support and develop cultural heritage destinations in less-traveled areas of the city and expand visitor access to these sites.

Growing New Orleans’ heritage tourism sector represents an opportunity for the city to capitalize on its wealth of historic and cultural assets to expand the city’s tourism economy and spread its benefits to a broader cross-section of New Orleans. Heritage tourists seek authentic experiences “off the beaten

path,” typically staying longer and spending more money than other visitor market segments (an average of \$623 a day versus \$430 in 2003). New Orleans contains a wealth of potential heritage tourism sites beyond current popular tourism destinations.

ARCHITECTURE TOURS IN CHICAGO

Chicago’s wealth of historical architecture nearly equals that of New Orleans. Like New Orleans, architecture is spread throughout neighborhoods north, south and west of the Loop, neighborhoods that are in varying states of revitalization and public safety. How is a visitor to know where to go? Thanks to the non-profit Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF), which operates the ArchiCenter near Loop hotels, a visitor can sign up for one or more of scores of guided tours – walking, bus, boat or bike – offered by CAF, whose well-trained volunteer tour guides number in the hundreds. Weekend festivals and specialized tours celebrate Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Sullivan and other native architects and attract thousands. Before CAF developed the tours, trained the guides, and organized the visitor experience, Chicago’s wealth of architecturally interesting historic neighborhoods saw few visitors. Today, the restaurants, galleries and shops of its Main Street corridors benefit from the added business of tourists.

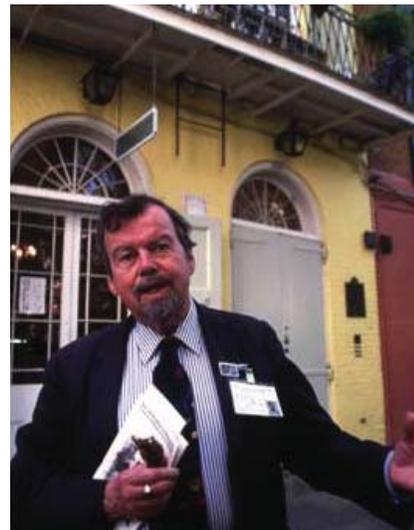
The national Main Streets program established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation provides support for the revitalization of historic, neighborhood-scale commercial areas. The city has six designated Main Streets which, along with the 19 Cultural Districts, promote preservation and provide marketing and small business development

assistance. These districts should be seen as potential heritage tourism destinations. **(See Volume 3, Chapter 5 for maps and other information on the city’s Main Streets and Cultural Districts.)**

In other U.S. cities with successful heritage tourism initiatives, non-profit organizations—with funding support from the city, Convention and Visitors Bureau, foundations, and business—have taken the lead in organizing and creating visitor “products” from the raw materials of historic character, history, arts and cultural expressions. These appealing products can then be promoted. Chicago² and Philadelphia³ offer excellent heritage tourism products, beginning with their robust web sites, and offer outstanding visitor experiences. In both Chicago and Washington, D.C., local governments invest financially in supporting this work, benefiting from heightened economic activity and local pride as residents show off their neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Convene a Heritage Tourism Task Force.*
Who: Tourism organizations; HDLC
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time



New Orleans holds tremendous opportunity for cultural and heritage tourism development, which could create a lucrative new niche for the tourism industry while extending its economic benefits more broadly throughout the city.

2 www.architecture.org
 3 www.gophila.org

The city’s tourism marketing organizations or the proposed economic development public-private partnerships should convene a task force on heritage tourism to define and create new heritage tourism experiences such as guided tours, events and trails. The task force should also include Main Streets and Cultural District program managers, historic preservation leaders, historians, interpreters, guides, storytellers, and representatives of the tourism industry. Initially, the task force should focus on promoting and developing existing cultural tourism attractions and sites. In the long run, the Task Force should also work in partnership with Cultural Arts organizations to develop new cultural tourism attractions and sites.

2. *Develop resource materials on heritage tourism.*

Who: Tourism organizations; HDLC

When: First five years

Resources: Tourism marketing funds; grants

Early action items for the Heritage Tourism Task Force include developing tour guide materials to existing heritage tourism sites. Materials could include Web pages, itineraries, maps, audio tours, and training resources for guides. The Task Force should initially aim to create three to five heritage tourism experiences (tours, events, trails, *etc.*) that will encourage visitors to explore historic areas of the city and can be implemented during the next 24—36 months. Successful heritage tourism initiatives in Philadelphia (www.gophila.com) and Chicago (www.architecture.org) provide good examples of user-friendly resource and planning materials that the task force should emulate.

3. *Capitalize on the city’s Tricentennial in 2018 to promote heritage tourism.*

Who: Tourism organizations

When: Long term

Resources: Tourism marketing funds

To celebrate the city’s Tricentennial, the Convention Bureau and Visitor’s Bureau, the Heritage Tourism Task Force, and a broad spectrum of representatives of the Cultural Arts should plan and market special events and exhibitions throughout the city as part of an extended Tricentennial celebration.

2.B Support and promote preservation-based economic development in historic areas.

As mentioned earlier, the city’s six Main Streets programs and 19 Cultural Districts are initiatives that currently promote the dual causes of historic preservation and economic development at the neighborhood scale. The districts targeted by these programs enhance economic opportunities and quality of life for residents, and also provide the basis for expanding heritage tourism as described above. As state-designated programs, Main Streets and the Cultural Districts do not receive direct support from the City. A possible approach to enhance funding for these programs is to follow the example of the Boston Main Streets Program. In addition to CDBG funds from the city, each Main Street program in Boston has a “corporate buddy” that provides some funding and other assistance to the program. Corporations recognize that strong neighborhood commercial districts can benefit them.



Adopting a holistic approach to historic preservation means looking not just at historic structures in isolation, but also preserving the cultural traditions, community and social structures, and socioeconomic diversity that characterize beloved New Orleans neighborhoods.

REVIVING HISTORIC RETAIL DISTRICTS THROUGH BOSTON MAIN STREETS

A very relevant example is Boston Main Streets (<http://www.cityofboston.gov/mainstreets/>), which has achieved documented success in a preservation-based approach to stabilization and rebirth of some twenty neighborhoods over the last two decades.

Created by the National Trust to “stimulate economic development within the context of historic preservation,” the Main Street approach involves an integrated, comprehensive framework of actions and investments by the city, community organizations, property owners and residents towards achieving a community-based strategy. It stimulates significant involvement of

community volunteers in an innovative public – private initiative, generally orchestrated by a full-time Main Street manager. Boston was the first to apply the National Main Street Center’s integrated preservation-based approach to a major city. Others – Chicago, Washington DC, among them – have followed with equal success. Boston’s mayor and council are strong supporters of this nationally-recognized innovative partnership approach. Boston devotes a significant portion of its CDBG funds to supporting staffed Main Street programs in twenty historic neighborhoods, and coordinating technical assistance, training, and support from the city’s Office of Business Development.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Facilitate city and/or corporate support for New Orleans Main Streets and Cultural Districts programs, including financial support for coordination, program management, façade loans and grants, technical assistance and marketing.*
Who: OFICD
When: Medium term
Resources: CDBG; corporate donations
2. *Offer incentives such as streamlined project approval by the HDLC for preservation projects that also support locally-based economic development.*
Who: HDLC
When: Medium term
Resources: Staff time

2.C Foster relationships with neighborhood-based housing and community development initiatives to stimulate preservation as part of overall neighborhood revitalization.

Partnerships between historic preservation and neighborhood revitalization initiatives will support a more holistic approach to preservation that emphasizes all aspects of neighborhood character—not just individual buildings—and strengthen the viability of New Orleans’ beloved neighborhoods for both current and future residents. The PRC’s work in rehabilitating and reselling historic houses is an example of neighborhood-based preservation. HDLC can assist in furthering neighborhood revitalization through historic preservation by providing information and guidance on cost-effective restoration of historic properties. The city’s housing agencies can make federal funds for rehabilitation available to historic projects.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Work with neighborhood-based organizations and NORA to identify blighted properties that are at risk of demolition.*
Who: HDLC
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time; volunteers

The HDLC has handheld computers that could be lent to neighborhood groups who could identify historic properties that could be rehabilitated, as well as other neighborhood information.

2. *Provide funds from federal programs to rehabilitate historic homes.*

Who: Office of Facilities, Infrastructure, and Community Development

When: First five years

Resources: D-CDBG; HOME

A portion of HOME funds for rehabilitation of housing for low- and moderate-income renters and homeowners could be earmarked for historic properties.

3. *Consider neighborhood-based design guidelines for NCDC areas.*

Who: CPC; HDLC

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

Design guidelines, created with neighborhood volunteers, would provide limited regulation and provide guidance to the NCDC in its deliberations.

4. *Advocate for and participate in the continued development of the Magnolia Streets program.*

Who: HDLC

When: Medium term

Resources: Staff time; volunteers; additional permanent staff

The Magnolia Street program is designed after the Main Streets program (**discussed above**), but targets residential rather than commercial areas, and provides revitalization assistance to residential districts near a Main Street district. In 2008, the State created a Magnolia Street program within the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. **(For more information, See Volume 3, Chapter 6.)**

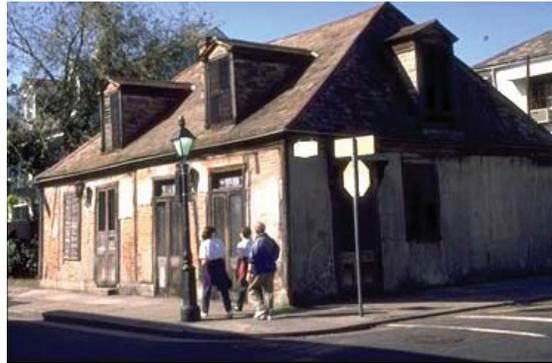
5. *Encourage adaptive reuse of existing historic structures that contribute to overall neighborhood character and quality of life.*

Who: CPC; HDLC; CAO; Mayor and City Council

When: Medium term

Resources: CZO rewrite; Staff time;

Many historic structures are threatened because their original purpose has become outmoded or has outgrown its original home. Schools, churches, corner stores, theaters, warehouses, factories, and other historic structures are threatened by blight and disrepair because they no longer serve their original intended use. However, numerous examples of adaptive reuse preserve these buildings' architectural contribution to the fabric, scale and character of their surroundings while reinvigorating them with new life. Zoning should facilitate adaptive reuse. The HDLC could compile and maintain a database of structures of historic value that are candidates for commercial adaptive reuse by private parties, including specifications such as square footage, zoning, etc.



6. *Conduct cost-benefit analysis of adaptive reuse alternatives to new construction when siting city-owned facilities.*

Who: HDLC

When: Medium term

Resources: Staff time; volunteers; additional permanent staff

When evaluating space for new city facilities or services, reuse of historic structures should be investigated to determine financial feasibility. Studies have shown that in many cases, reuse costs about the same or less than new construction. Cost-benefit analysis should give consideration to the benefits (not always monetary) of maintaining the historic fabric of the city. Adaptive reuse also showcases the city’s commitment to environmental sustainability (**See also Volume 2, Chapter 12**).

GOAL 3

New Orleans is a model of “green,” sustainable historic preservation.

STRATEGIES

3.A Develop a “Sustainable Preservation” plan and pilot project.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the construction industry produced 6 percent of total U.S. industrial greenhouse gas emissions in 2002 (the most recent year of analysis).⁴ Historic preservation is therefore an important component of carbon emissions reduction in the United States. Additionally, historic structures in New Orleans tend to be well-adapted to New Orleans’ ecology, making them inherently energy-efficient: Many are raised above the floodplain, and vernacular architectural features like the shotgun floor plan and elongated windows that characterize many historic New Orleans homes facilitate cross-breezes that decrease reliance on air conditioning. The Preservation Resource Center has exemplified the potential “win-win” of working within the intersection between historic preservation and environmental sustainability in its “green” renovations of many historic homes.⁵



Because of New Orleans’ national visibility as a treasure house of historic architecture and as an environmentally vulnerable location, the city could become a national model for sustainable preservation. The city’s historic preservation agencies and non-profits could join with the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), which has a New Orleans affiliate, the American Institute of Architects, Make It Right, Global Green, and other groups to seek funding for a signature initiative joining historic preservation and sustainable building.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

1. Form a committee to create a framework for a sustainable preservation program and funding request.

Who: HDLC; USGBC; AIA; other appropriate groups

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; volunteers; grants

The program should include a plan to develop integration of green features into historic district regulations and funding for a pilot project to implement the plan. The committee should include members of both the historic preservation and green building communities, and should make recommendations within 12 months of forming.

4 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S.EPA). Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Key Industrial Sectors. Sector Strategies Division, May 2008.

5 www.prcno.org

2. *Support and promote deconstruction as an alternative to demolition.*

Who: HDLC; NCDC

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

Deconstruction saves between 45 and 70 percent of the materials in a building for reuse as components of other structures.⁶ NCDC decisions allowing demolition of historic structures should include a requirement that property owners partner with The Green Project or other deconstruction organizations and with volunteer-based organizations to identify and save salvageable elements.

For more information on pairing resource conservation and historic preservation, **see Volume 2, Chapter 13 – Environmental Quality.**

GOAL 4

Acquiring and renovating an historic structure is feasible and affordable for a broad range of property owners and investors.

STRATEGIES

4.A Provide accessible, user-friendly information and resources on preserving of historic structures.

The new illustrated design guidelines for historic preservation will be a significant help to property owners. **(See Volume 3, Chapter 6 for more information.)** In addition, historic renovation often requires specialized components or materials that, even when newly constructed, maintain the architectural integrity or style of an historic structure.



RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Create a “one-stop shop” for historic rehabilitation resources.*

Who: HDLC

When: Medium term

Resources: Grants; additional staff person

Property owners and others interested in preservation should have all preservation-related resources available in one location (ideally both a brick-and-mortar location as well as on the Web).

2. *Ensure that building materials and components appropriate for historic renovation are accessible and affordable.*

Who: HDLC; building materials retailers

When: Medium term

Resources: Staff time

In addition to salvaged original materials, new materials and supplies that support historic renovation may not be readily available. The city can explore partnerships with a major retailer of building materials (Lowe’s or Home Depot, for instance) to produce and distribute a catalogue of appropriate-to-New Orleans off-the-shelf materials like replacement windows, shutters and other items often installed by small contractors or homeowners themselves.

6 The Green Project: http://www.thegreenproject.org/what_we_do.php

4.B Support workforce development initiatives in traditional crafts that support preservation such as traditional construction and artisan trades.

The craftsmanship that created New Orleans' historic architecture is an art that needs to be consciously preserved. Through its education and workforce development initiatives and in partnership with local educational institutions, the city can promote crafts such as traditional construction techniques, iron and wood working, glass arts, and others that contribute to the historic fabric and character of the city. **See Volume 2, Chapter 9 – Sustaining and Expanding New Orleans' Economic Base** for further discussion of workforce development initiatives in the traditional arts.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Work with Delgado Community College and other providers.

Who: HDLC

When: Medium term

Resources: Staff time; volunteers

4.C Support workforce development initiatives in traditional crafts that support preservation such as traditional construction and artisan trades.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- i. Provide rehabilitation assistance for low-income owners of historic properties.

Who: PRC; Non Profits

When: Ongoing

Resources: Grants; fund raising; volunteers

GOAL 5

Historic preservation information and administration is enhanced and streamlined.

5.A Expand communications and information sharing with agencies and the public

The wealth of historic resources in New Orleans, both in the highly regulated local historic districts and outside them, is a significant responsibility as well as a tremendous asset. A variety of activities can help the HDLC and other preservation agencies be more effective.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Use the Neighborhood Character Area Study to inform decision making by the NCDC demolitions and other matters.

Who: HDLC; NCDC

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

The Neighborhood Character Area Study developed as part of this Master Plan describes the physical character of Character Areas throughout the city. **(It is included in the Appendix of this plan.)** Use of this study will focus discussion on the extent to which properties under discussion contribute to the character of the surrounding area.

2. Remind property owners in local historic districts on a regular schedule (every year or every few years) of the benefits and responsibilities of being located in a local historic district.

Who: HDLC

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

A simple notice in a water bill or tax bill can direct property owners to the HDLC web site for more information.

3. *Provide as much information as possible on the HDLC web site.*
Who: HDLC
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time
4. *Consider co-locating the HDLC office and staff with that of CPC.*
Who: HDLC and CPC
When: Medium term
Resources: Staff time

Proximity can encourage more deliberate oversight and coordination among all city agencies involved in decisions that affect the city's historic fabric.

5. *Extend the FEMA survey to all historic areas of the city.*
Who: HDLC; consultant assistance
When: Long term
Resources: Grants; \$1.5 M

A complete database of historic resources—first the local landmarks and local districts, then the national districts and landmarks, and finally the remainder of historic fabric in the city—would enhance both public and private decision making about historic preservation. This is a large project that will require significant outside resources.