



# The Preservation Component of the City of Syracuse Comprehensive Plan



Faculty of Landscape Architecture  
Urban Design Studio

State University of New York  
College of Environmental Science and Forestry



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# Preface

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## PREFACE

...We are for the most part a disposable society; when something is used up we discard it. New is better than old—tear down the old, build anew.

Happily, there are signs that this attitude is beginning to change. A growing respect for the limits of our resources and the fragility of our environment has caused us to begin recycling everything from newspapers and aluminum cans to automobiles and plastics. Belatedly, we are beginning to recognize that for the same reasons we must recycle our older communities as well.

But when it comes to communities, there are even more compelling reasons to recycle. First, it makes economic sense. We have invested billions of dollars in our older communities...and it is fiscally irresponsible to waste that investment....

Second, recycling connects us with our past in a way that helps us to better understand who we are and where we are going. Losing the physical manifestations of our history...leaves us, in the words of David McCullough, a historically illiterate nation.

Third, we don't make communities that work as well as they used to work, and it would be foolish to discard them when they can continue to serve us....

Finally, we imperil our whole society if we abandon entire neighborhoods and communities, and the people who inhabit them, because they no longer seem to work. We deceive ourselves if we fail to see the grievous consequences that will certainly follow such abandonment....

We are beginning to realize that our communities, new as well as old, are not working as they should, and that the built environment that surrounds them has a great deal to do with it. We are beginning to see that we are indeed shaped in turn by the places that we shape, as Churchill suggested, and that we can do a much better job of shaping.

Richard Moe and Carter Wilkie, *Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl*, 1997.

In August of 2001, political and civic leaders in Syracuse realized that it was necessary for Syracusans to improve upon the shaping of their community, and thereby committed to developing a new Comprehensive Plan for the City of Syracuse. This document comprises the Preservation Component of that Plan. It is one of many sections that

addresses citywide issues, while other parts will focus on specific geographic areas within the community. The Preservation Component is the first section of the Comprehensive Plan to be completed, which is a testimony to how important the community's collective heritage is to its future.



# Introduction





# INTRODUCTION

## The Case for Preserving

In every city there are properties that symbolize the past. They may represent the center of government, commerce and culture, or embody the ideals and values of social trends. Often these are monumental places, ones that literally and figuratively stand out as significant parts of the urban landscape, their importance unquestionably obvious if not universally understood. But there also are simple places from the past that appeal to the heart and soul, the places that embody the memories of one's life: the park where a young child learned to ride a bike, the neighborhood market where essentials were purchased for an evening meal, the first home of a young couple, a family's house of worship. These are the places that give meaning to a city and form its identity. They are the tangible evidence of the past, the pieces of life that provide physical ties to the events and persons that shaped a community—and they are the places that are disappearing at an alarming rate.

In communities across the country 250,000 historic properties are lost annually to inappropriate redevelopment, abandonment, demolition and insensitive new construction. Syracuse shares in this sad trend, as many of its historic places have been irreparably harmed or removed altogether. Each of these destructive physical acts on the city's past is an attack on the community's sense of place, quality of life, and shared values. The unfortunate results are unmistakable in the neighborhoods riddled with vacant lots, business areas torn apart by incongruous development, and a Downtown besieged by an insatiable desire for more parking. In the face of these grievous actions, there is a growing awareness among Syracusans that

the destruction must stop and that a new course must be charted.

Citizens are beginning to realize that there is an unparalleled cultural value in preserving the places that mark the city's past. This understanding must be more pervasive to generate the political and social will necessary to guarantee a greater measure of protection for the city's physical fabric. There must be an increased appreciation for the breath of properties that are symbols of the community's heritage to ensure that the broad spectrum of Syracuse history is recognized and valued. And there must be a better understanding of the financial advantages of protecting such properties, which will clearly establish the undeniable link between a commitment to preservation and the economic benefits to the city.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century ended with a call for Syracuse to embrace environmental sustainability, smart growth and new urbanism. Through these movements, citizens recognized the need to conserve community resources, including natural areas, the built environment and the very people that live here. Preserving the older and historic places that constitute the physical fabric of the city—and embody its spirit—is in keeping with these responsible approaches to community planning.

## History of Syracuse: An Overview

### Development Patterns

The City of Syracuse originated in a series of small independent settlements, formed at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These hamlets clustered around natural resources or along key transportation corridors. Salina, upland from the marshes east of Onondaga Lake,



and Geddes, near its southern end, grew as a result of the shoreline's natural brine springs and subsequent salt production. Onondaga Hollow, farther to the south, had an enviable position along the Great Seneca Turnpike. The central village of Syracuse was nurtured by early use of Onondaga Creek for waterpower, by its position along an important turnpike branch, and later by being astride the Erie Canal. Lodi, just east of Syracuse, also enjoyed early canal connections. Travel and transport on the Erie and Oswego Canals, as well as the successful development and seemingly unstoppable expansion of the salt industry, dominated the area for most of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Syracuse's original Erie Canal packet landing stood adjacent to the Genesee Street turnpike, creating a multi-use commons. Soon named Clinton Square, after the canal-building governor, it became the city's primary civic space. The canal routes dictated good locations for salt boiling blocks and other commercial activity, and both Salina and Syracuse prospered. In 1848, the once rival villages merged under a city charter, providing larger representation in the County's legislative body for both populations plus better taxing mechanisms. Leaders also hoped the larger municipality would improve statewide recognition, increasing the city's chances to become a new more centrally located state capital.

Beginning in the 1830s Washington Street served as a mainline route for tracks of the New York Central Railroad, and the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad skirted Downtown's west side. Dozens of street level trains dominated the central city for over a century, shaping Syracuse's national image. The railroad companies also built passenger stations in the 1870s on Downtown's west side, stimulating nearby development of hotels and wholesale businesses. In addition to nurturing

industrial and commercial districts, the railroads also provided vital visibility for a red-light district of saloons, prostitution and gambling along East Washington Street.

Hanover Square, just south of the Erie and Oswego Canal junction and north of the first Washington Street railroad depot, became an early mercantile center, and retail activity spread south along Salina Street. The area southeast of Hanover Square became a residential district, as did Fayette Park, east of the Square, which was ringed with several mansions by the 1850s. From the 1860s to 1890s, a concentration of grand bank buildings was constructed around Hanover and Clinton Squares. As more bridges improved access across the canals toward the northeast, James Street became the elite residential thoroughfare, in part because its rising topography afforded magnificent views; more modest residential districts continued to spread south from Downtown.

Salina Street was the great north-south axis of the city, with the portion linking Downtown and the north side lined with an array of commercial structures. The corridor terminated in a small business district dating from the old village of Salina. South and east of this district was Salina's residential area, where salt manufacturers and brewery owners built homes of exceptional style. Scattered among them were modest residences of blacksmiths, salt inspectors, mechanics and coopers. Salt blocks, with their distinctive form marked by tall brick chimneys, lined the Oswego Canal through the 1880s and the land stretching south from Onondaga Lake was filled with thousands of solar salt evaporation vats, separating the city from its lakefront.

The hills framing the southern half of Syracuse formed visibly distinctive terrain. Oakwood Cemetery, a rural cemetery



dedicated in 1859, was situated on one such rise to the southeast. Syracuse University, founded in 1870, was located immediately north of the cemetery and grew steadily, along with associated educational and health-related institutions. Further to the east of this area, the land remained predominantly agricultural until the 1880s, when residential development began in earnest. In 1887, the village of Geddes was annexed, evolving into Syracuse's far west side. In the same year, seeking access to Syracuse's school system, the Town of Onondaga's Danforth village merged with the city. Danforth was primarily a residential "suburb," connected by horse-drawn streetcars, and it extended Syracuse further south.

On the hills to the southwest, a number of reservoirs were constructed by private companies that supplied water to the city. In 1894 the city initiated its own water system, a major municipal achievement providing waters from Skaneateles Lake by gravity feed. Within a short time, Woodland Reservoir and its standpipe dominated this portion of the city skyline. The absorption of other neighboring communities continued as the city's professional fire and police departments, expansive school services and modern utilities beckoned. Elmwood, to the southwest, was annexed in 1899, Eastwood in 1926, extending the city further east, and the old "Hollow" or Valley followed in 1927. These additions augmented the city's population, which jumped to over 209,000 by 1930, and formed the majority of Syracuse's final boundaries. As Syracuse incorporated each community, it encompassed the various original street alignments of each village. Yet because none of these systems was laid out in correspondence with the other, streets and blocks met at odd angles throughout the city—giving the young urban fabric an interesting quality that was

further enhanced by the types and styles of its built form.

Prior to incorporation, the areas to become the City were characterized by mostly small wood frame buildings, with a few 2-3-story masonry buildings. The city's first generation of low-rise Federal and Greek Revival architecture, exemplified by the 1842 Hamilton White House, was supplemented after the Civil War by such picturesque mid-Victorian era landmarks as the 1867 Gridley Building, 1875 Syracuse Savings Bank and 1889 City Hall. Between 1902 and 1906, three grand Beaux-Arts landmarks of the era were constructed: the city's Central High School, the Carnegie Library and the Fourth Onondaga County Courthouse. The latter two created Syracuse's second great municipal space, known as Library Circle (today's Columbus Circle). Skeleton steel construction allowed buildings of greater heights, with the 10-story Onondaga Savings Bank in 1896 and the 11-story University Building of 1897. The Hotel Syracuse, a 612-room massive building, opened in 1924 and reflected an era of downtown elegance and social status. This turn-of-the-century building boom peaked in 1927 with construction of the 20-story State Tower Building.

### **Social and Cultural Influences**

Beginning in the 1840s, major immigration brought Irish and German, and then later Italian and Eastern European, groups into the City. The expanding salt industry and eventually a variety of heavy manufacturing facilities provided productive employment opportunities. Not surprisingly, these individuals and their families chose to live and work within neighborhoods having large numbers from their respective "old country." These cultural groups affected the urban fabric through the construction of notable religious structures, fraternal organizations and clubs, in addition to their homes and small commercial





establishments. In time, there were very distinctive German, Irish, Jewish, Italian, Polish and Ukrainian ethnic neighborhoods, among others, throughout the city.

As the economy prospered and the population expanded through to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, there was more opportunity for civic improvements. Largely through the efforts of Elias W. Leavenworth, a local businessman, politician and philanthropist, citizens became interested in enhancing the overall city image and quality. This interest in using nature as a foil to the ills of urban life was expressed best when Syracuse city leaders—through the newly created Syracuse Improvement Society—initiated plans for wide, paved tree-lined streets and a system of parks and open spaces. In its earliest day, the city had few dedicated parks and in the 1870s Fayette Park, a modest example of these first parks, was redesigned into a densely planted ornamental retreat. In 1886 Syracuse initiated efforts towards developing a modern parks system, when John B. Burnet donated sprawling acreage along the city's western boundary for a public park. Further development occurred with the major additions of Onondaga Park a decade later and in the 1920s with the opening of Thornden Park. In the years between the dedication of these two public facilities, the grand Civil War Soldiers and Sailors Monument was commissioned for and installed in Clinton Square, formalizing the square's role as the city's central public space.

This period also saw private enterprises introduce, extend and electrify street railway systems, which in turn began widespread neighborhood expansion. The street railways made it easy for the growing middle class to travel to centrally located jobs from homes situated at the city's fringe, and residential development in the City's neighborhoods intensified. By the early 1900s increased numbers of private

automobiles generated even more new residential districts. Sedgwick Farms in 1908, Berkeley Park in 1911, Scotholm in 1914 and the Strathmore in 1919 featured homes that copied Colonial forms, echoed Mediterranean imagery or exemplified the Arts & Crafts style.

With the salt industry in decline by this time, Syracusans turned their attention to other manufacturing pursuits, many based on inventions developed locally. Some businesses did retain ties to salt production, but eventually diversified their product line. These advances in industry continued to support the local workforce and residential development remained steady. The increasing neighborhood population also had the benefit of improved and new parks, an expanding public school system, and effective police and fire protection.

### **Recent History**

This continued economic prosperity and attendant physical growth reached its peak by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The 1950s and 1960s brought an era of massive change to the urban landscape. Private development transformed much of James Street from a boulevard of distinctive mansions to a corridor of sober suburban-style office buildings. The old Jewish quarter, southwest of Downtown and predominantly African -American by 1960, was leveled as part of local urban renewal efforts to accommodate a grand vision for a governmental and cultural center, which ultimately was only partially fulfilled. Interstate 81 was constructed at the eastern edge of Downtown and Interstate 690 at its north, dividing it from the growing University Hill district and adjacent neighborhoods, respectively. Within the city central business district new landmarks, such as the twin 20-story towers of the MONY insurance complex, were added to the skyline.



The post-World War II years saw many businesses and residents leave the urban core and move out of the city. In a desperate attempt to retain viable commercial entities, elected officials and political leaders became increasingly flexible with local legislation and planning goals in order to entice businesses to remain in the city. This attempt to stabilize the community's economic base usually ignored reliable urban design principles in a misguided effort to expedite development. The results often conflicted with the long-term needs and desires of residents, and therefore did little to convince homeowners to remain. At the same time, neighborhood-based schools were consolidated, leaving some buildings vacant and others the focus of expansion. These and other factors resulted in on-going out-migration, with many owner-occupied properties becoming rental units and some neighborhood areas realizing a decrease in sense of community and cultural continuity.

Beginning in the 1970s, historic preservation, among other efforts, began making some advances in reshaping the urban landscape. Syracuse passed a municipal historic preservation ordinance in 1975, providing a means to recognize and protect important historic resources within the community. Hanover Square became the city's first property listed in the National Register of Historic Places as an historic district, in 1976. In the mid-1980s, the former Walton Tract in the southwestern section of Downtown, once targeted for urban renewal, caught the attention of local artists and, shortly thereafter, a few nascent developers. These visionary investors saw economic and social potential in the 19th century warehouses and old railroad hotels; the area soon was given the name Armory Square and was listed in the National Register. In less than a decade, the area became a bright spot for downtown retail, entertainment and housing. The 1992

conversion of the district's former NY National Guard Armory into a science museum gave the district's namesake a second life as a major educational and tourism destination. During this same time, neighborhoods also were positively affected by preservation actions. The Sedgwick-Highland-James Local Preservation District drew the attention of many individuals and families interested in city living; and the Hawley-Green Streets National Register District was the subject of major private investment, bring many young professionals to the neighborhood for the new apartments created in older buildings.

More recently new, compatible in-fill housing has been constructed within many older city neighborhoods, the North Salina Street corridor has been the focus of public improvements respectful of the street's historic character, major features of historic Thornden and Elmwood Parks have been restored, and Clinton Square has been redesigned to accommodate contemporary festivals while respecting its historic character.

But as the 21<sup>st</sup> century begins, the city continues to fall prey to the impacts of ongoing suburban sprawl, which encourages continued out-migration from city neighborhoods, business areas and Downtown. In addition, new in-city development often lacks careful planning, with little attention given to long-term impacts on site and neighborhood character. Many properties are razed in attempts to spur potential reinvestment or remove "eyesores;" but unfortunately result in incongruous development or, even more discouraging, unkempt and vacant lots. Areas along the major thoroughfares—such as James, Genesee, Onondaga, Geddes and Salina Streets—are examples of where such activity has occurred. It is, in part, the resurgence of unchecked development and lack of a city plan that has generated



concern for the city's physical fabric and its effect on quality of life among today's citizens.

## Methods

Preparation of the Preservation Component of the Syracuse Comprehensive Plan was carried out as a traditional planning and design undertaking. The process included conducting an inventory of pertinent information, evaluating collected material and data, formulating goals and objectives, and developing recommendations. The proposals put forth consist of policy, program and physical actions.

The project process involved a combination of thorough and limited research. A thorough level of research was undertaken with respect to existing local preservation mechanisms and actors, identified and eligible historic resources, and older traditional urban fabric. Other areas of research were investigated on a more limited basis, particularly the wide range of preservation activities that occur in other communities within New York State and across the nation. The economic components of preservation were examined, but not to the extent that data specific to Syracuse was generated.

Primary and secondary source materials were referenced and included books, articles in professional periodicals, conference and seminar proceedings, and publications of public agencies and private organizations; web pages accessed via the Internet also were utilized. Additional information was collected through interviews with staff from the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, and the New York State Historic Preservation Office, as well as a number of not-for-profit advocacy or special interest organizations.

On-site investigations were conducted during the entire project period, providing an opportunity to examine existing conditions from mid-winter through spring. The initial field investigation involved a daylong driving tour of the community, followed by a two-week image study based on the work of noted urban planner Kevin Lynch in his seminal book *The Image of the City*. The result generated an initial indication of those components of Syracuse that contribute to its identity, give it meaning and, therefore, are worth protecting. Various paths, edges, nodes, landmarks and districts were articulated on a city plan and served as a graphic reference throughout the project.

Public participation in development of the Preservation Plan was obtained through a 17-person steering committee. Members included representatives of the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board, Syracuse City Planning Commission, Syracuse Common Council, Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency, Syracuse Department of Economic Development, Preservation Association of Central NY, Inc., Onondaga Historical Association, and Metropolitan Development Association. In addition, other at-large members represented the preservation, development and educational communities within the city. Working meetings involving the entire committee were conducted in conjunction with the first three phases of the project; and, subsequently, smaller work sessions were organized to engage individual committee members in the formulation of recommendations.

## Organization of the Plan

The Preservation Plan generally is organized according to each phase of work conducted. *Inventory and Analysis* gives a summary of all data that was collected. A definition is provided for each topic investigated,





including an explanation of why such information was considered relevant to the plan. A brief summary of facts obtained is presented, with more detailed material included in the plan appendices. The analysis component is structured as problems, constraints and opportunities related to the inventoried topics.

*Goals, Objectives and Recommended Actions* presents the three primary goals for the Preservation Plan. This narrative also provides the objectives pursuant to each goal and the proposed policy, program and physical project recommendations related to each objective.

*Detailed Recommendations* puts forward a number of proposals that are more fully developed and that might serve as this first recommendation to be implemented.









The 1838 Leavenworth House, typical of the impressive mansions which lined James Street at the close of the 19th century, was demolished in the 1950s and replaced with a commercial building.



View east from MONY Tower, 1966.



Route 81 construction c. 1960.

Urban Renewal projects and the construction of Route 81 and 690 were highly disruptive to the organization patterns and social structure of the city.



The 1819 Oliver Yeall House on Beech Street was victim to an attitude which favored new construction over the reuse of historic structures. The building was demolished in 1993 and replaced with a parking lot and an office building.



The Eichel Theatre on Fayette Street, an example of the unique theatre architecture, was demolished in the late 1970s and replaced by a parking lot.



Walnut Place, c.1900s.



James Street, c.1930s.



Golden Street, c.1930s.



Leavenworth Circle on West Onondaga Street, c.1890s.



The Y.W.C.A. building located on East Onondaga Street, was demolished in the 1980s and replaced with a parking lot.



The Bishop's House on James Street was burned and then rebuilt to accommodate luxury apartments.



The 1857 Third Onondaga County Courthouse was replaced by the Syracuse Newspaper building in 1971.



The Kanaky building on West Fayette Street, Army Square's first hotel, was demolished in 1979 and replaced with a parking lot.



The oldest residential building in downtown, located on East Fayette Street, was demolished in the 1980s and replaced with a parking lot.



The 1845 Gothic Revival Sedgwick Cottage, designed by Alexander Jackson Davis, was demolished in 1962 and replaced by a commercial building.

The City of Syracuse originated in a series of small independent settlements formed at the end of the 18th century. Salina and Geddes grew as a result of the Onondaga Lake shoreline's natural brine springs and subsequent salt production. Onondaga Hollow had an enviable position along the Great Seneca Turnpike. The central village of Syracuse was nurtured by early use of Onondaga Creek for waterpower, by its position along an important turnpike branch, and later by being astride the Erie Canal. Lodi, just east of Syracuse, also enjoyed early canal connections. Syracuse's original Erie Canal packet landing stood adjacent to the Genesee Street turnpike, creating a multi-use commons. Soon named Clinton Square, it quickly became the city's primary civic space. Both Salina and Syracuse prospered and in 1848 the villages merged under a city charter.

Beginning in the 1830s Washington Street served as a mainline route for tracks of the New York Central Railroad, and the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad skirted Downtown's west side, and dozens of street level trains dominated the central city. Passenger stations were built in the 1870s on Downtown's west side, stimulating nearby development of hotels and wholesale businesses. Hanover Square became a mercantile center, and retail activity spread south along Salina Street. The area around Fayette Park became a residential district, which was ringed with several mansions by the 1850s, as did James Street, in part because its rising topography afforded magnificent views. More modest residential districts continued to spread south from Downtown.

Salina Street was the great north-south axis of the city. At the north, it terminated in a small business district dating from the old village of Salina. To its south and east was a residential area, where salt manufacturers and brewery owners built homes of exceptional style. Scattered among them were modest residences of blacksmiths, salt inspectors, mechanics and coopers. Salt blocks lined the Oswego Canal and the land stretching south from Onondaga Lake was filled with thousands of solar salt evaporation vats.

The hills south of Syracuse formed visibly distinctive terrain. Oakwood Cemetery, dedicated in 1859, was situated on one such rise to the southeast. Syracuse University, founded in 1870, was located immediately north of the cemetery and grew steadily, along with associated educational and health-related institutions. Further to the east, the land remained predominantly agricultural until the 1880s, when residential development began in earnest. In 1887, the villages of Geddes at the west and Danforth at the south were annexed into the city. On the southwest hills, private companies constructed reservoirs to supply water to the city. In 1894 the city initiated its own water system and within a short time Woodland Reservoir and its standpipe dominated this portion of the city skyline.

Other neighboring communities were annexed to the city—Elmwood in 1899, Eastwood in 1926, and the old "Hollow" or Valley in 1927, increasing the city population to over 209,000 by 1930. Because the various street alignments of each village were laid out in correspondence with the others, streets and blocks met at odd angles throughout the city—giving the young urban fabric an interesting quality. In addition, buildings in the community were mostly small wood frame structures, with a few 2-3-story masonry buildings. The city's first generation of low-rise Federal and Greek Revival architecture was supplemented after the Civil War by picturesque mid-Victorian era buildings; and by 1910 some notable Beaux-Arts properties were constructed. Skeleton steel construction allowed buildings of greater heights, all of which occurred downtown.

Beginning in the 1840s, immigration brought Irish and German, and then later Italian and Eastern Europeans, into the city. Not surprisingly, these individuals and their families chose to live and work within neighborhoods having large numbers from their respective "old country." In addition to their own houses and business places, these groups added notable religious structures, fraternal organizations and clubs to the city fabric. In time, there were very distinctive German, Irish, Jewish, Italian, Polish and Ukrainian ethnic neighborhoods throughout the city.







The Eastside of the 200 Block of South Salina Street contains a fine collection of late-nineteenth century commercial architecture, including Joseph Lyman Silsbee's 1895 White Memorial Building and Charles E. Calver's 1895 D. Martly and Sons block. During the 1960s many of the facades were covered with a "modern" curtain wall. The curtain walls were removed in the 1990s.



By the mid-19th century, citizens became interested in enhancing overall city image and quality of life; and city leaders initiated plans for wide, paved tree-lined streets and a system of parks and open space. In 1886 John B. Burnet donated sprawling acreage along the city's western boundary for a public park. Onondaga Park was dedicated a decade later and in the 1920s the former Davis Estate became Thornden Park. This period also gave rise to street railway systems, which made it easy for the growing middle class to travel to centrally located jobs from homes situated at the city's fringe.

As a result, residential development intensified and by the early 1900s increased numbers of private automobiles generated even more new residential districts. Sedgwick Farms in 1908, Berkeley Park in 1911, Scotchman Terrace in 1914 and Strathmore by the Park in 1919 featured homes that copied Colonial forms, echoed Mediterranean imagery or exemplified the Arts & Crafts style. With the salt industry well in decline by this time, Syracusans turned their attention to other manufacturing pursuits, many based on inventions developed locally. Some businesses did retain ties to salt production, but eventually diversified their product line. These advances in industry continued to support the local workforce and residential development remained steady. The increasing neighborhood population also had the benefit of improved and new parks, an expanding public school system, and effective police and fire protection.



The North Salina Street National Historic District consists of ninety-eight commercial / mixed use properties. Historically the street was a major transportation route between the village of Syracuse and Salina. In 2002-2003, the historic streetscape was rehabilitated on a number of blocks.



Historically, James Street was the commercial center of Eastwood and has remained its "Main Street".



Historic Columbus Circle c. 1890s and Fayette Park c. 1830 continue to be important spaces of contemporary social exchange.



The buildings in Hanover Square date back to the 1830s. In 1989 the space was redesigned and buildings rehabilitated. In 2002 apartments were added on the upper floors of four buildings.



East Smith Elementary School, c. 1920



West Division Street Firehouse, 1915



University United Methodist Church, 1921



Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, 1910

Beginning in the 1970s, historic preservation began making advances in reshaping the urban landscape. Syracuse passed a municipal preservation ordinance in 1975. Hanover Square was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. In the mid-1980s, the former Walton Tract caught the attention of local artists and a few visionary investors. The area was named Armory Square, listed in the National Register, and, in less than a decade, became the focus of downtown retail, entertainment and housing. During this same time, neighborhoods also were positively affected by preservation. The Sedgwick-Highland-James Local Preservation District drew the attention of many individuals and families interested in city living; and the Hawley-Green Streets National Register District was the subject of major private investment. More recently, compatible in-fill housing has been constructed within many older city neighborhoods, the North Salina Street corridor has been the focus of public improvements respectful of the street's historic character, major features of historic Thornden and Elmwood Parks have been restored, and Clinton Square has been redesigned to accommodate contemporary festivals while respecting its historic character.



The 1894 John Truesdell house on North McBride Street is a fine example of Queen Anne architecture and rehabilitation. It is the offices of Reach Out.



Kenmore Avenue  
The Southside has a number of historic residential streets, that retain the character of the turn of the century. A number have been changed from single to multiple family housing.



West Onondaga Street



Onondaga Park, 1907



Schiller Park, 1911



Thornden Park, 1921



Elmwood Park, 1933

The City of Syracuse has over 865 acres of park and open space, many historic and serving contemporary needs.





Image



## IMAGE STUDY

Image is a mental record of an individual's experience of a place. It is formed by using the five senses, experiencing the individual elements of a place and combining them to create a complete image. Elements can, and often do, overlap. In his book, *The Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch describes the five elements of an urban environment that contribute to its overall image. These elements are districts, nodes, landmarks, paths and edges. All or a portion of a city can be described in these terms and were used in recording the image of the study area.

### District

Medium to large sections of a city, having two-dimensional character, which the observer mentally enters 'inside of' and which are recognizable as having some common, identifiable character. Examples of districts found in Syracuse include: the Westcott Street area, Armory Square, and the Erie Boulevard corridor.

### Nodes

Nodes are strategic spots in a city into which the observer can enter and which are intensive points to and from which one is traveling. They may be primary junctions, places of a break in transportation, a crossing or convergence of paths and movements or shifts from one structure to another. There were two types of nodes identified in the study, major and minor nodes. Major nodes include: Syracuse University, city high schools, and Onondaga Park. Minor nodes identified include: Washington Park, Folk Art Community Center on Genesee Street, and Lexington Park.

### Landmarks

Landmarks are another type of point reference. Here, the observer does not enter

within them. They are external and are simply physical objects such as bridges, mountains or statues. Landmarks have been put into three categories, major, minor and local. Major landmarks included Thornden Park Rose Garden, minor landmarks included Burnet Park Zoo, and local landmarks include neighborhood churches.

### Paths

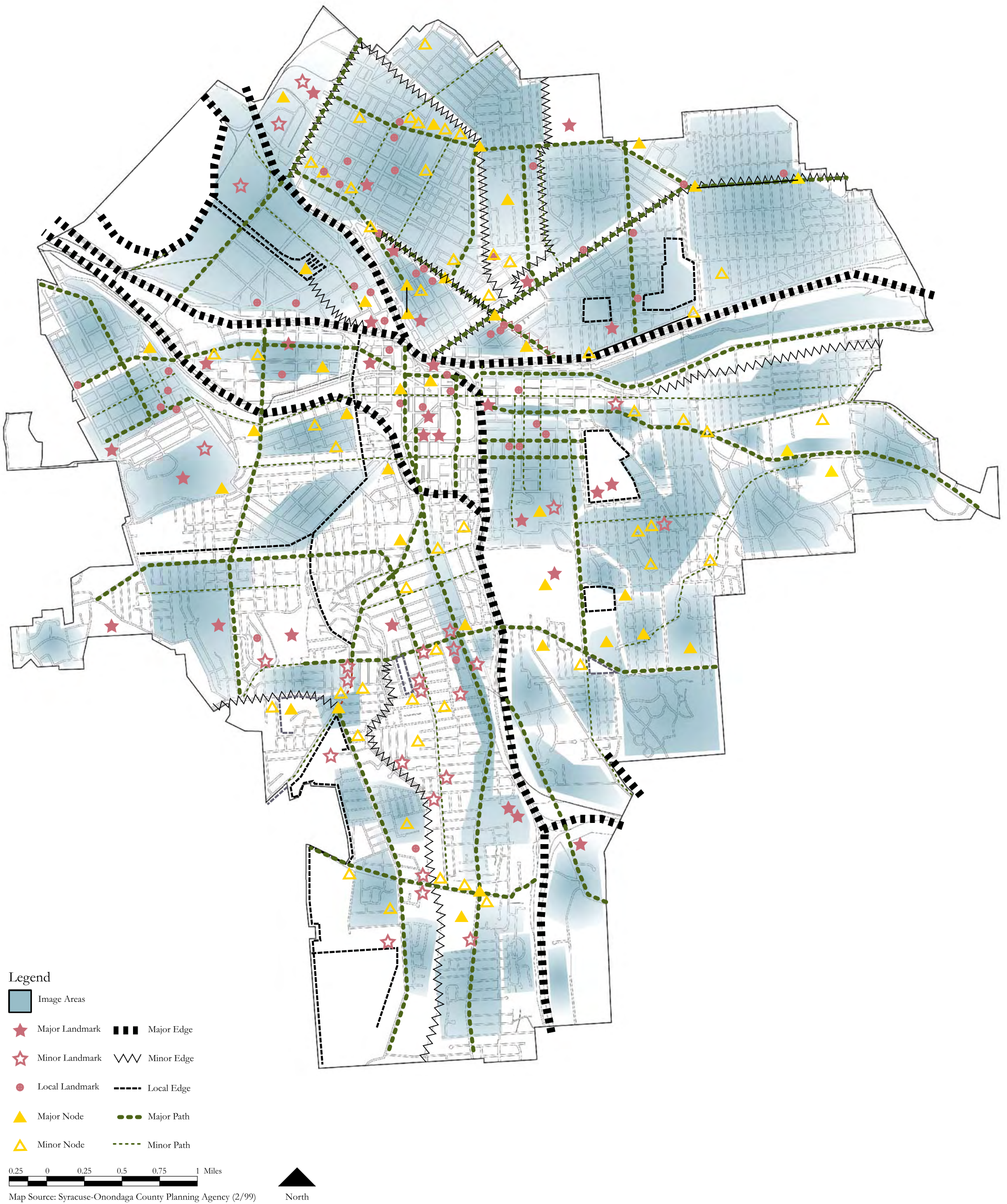
Paths are channels along which the observer customarily, occasionally or potentially moves, and may be streets, waterways or railroads. Major and minor paths were located in the study. Major paths included Erie Boulevard and minor paths included Meadowbrook Drive.

### Edges

Edges are linear elements not used or considered as paths by the observer. Edges may act as barriers and in some cases may be impenetrable. Edges serve to define spaces with their own set of characteristics that differ from adjacent spaces. Canals, walls and streets may be considered edges. Two types of edges were identified, major and minor edges. Major edges include Interstate 81 and Route 690. Minor edges include the changes in topography caused by the drumlins found throughout the city.







## Inventory and Analysis

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## INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

In order to understand the city of Syracuse, time was spent researching preservation issues, social and cultural factors, and the physical environment. Fieldwork was conducted throughout the city, pertinent literature was reviewed, public officials were interviewed, and steering committee meetings were held with local members of the preservation community.

Preservation mechanisms and actors, preservation economics, and zoning and land use were researched during the inventory of social and cultural factors and preservation issues. The study of the physical environment included an inventory of organizational patterns, built form, open space, and vacant land in the city of Syracuse.

From information obtained through inventory, an analysis of the study area was conducted. This analysis was formulated into problems, opportunities and constraints for preservation mechanisms and actors; preservation economics; zoning and land use; organizational patterns and built form; and open space and vacant land. Problems, opportunities and constraints are defined as follows:

**Problems:** Existing physical conditions, uses or programs that are inadequate, insufficient or inappropriate for current or future needs.

**Opportunities:** Physical features, uses or programs that may potentially be utilized to help satisfy current and future needs.

**Constraints:** Physical or program requirements that present potential hindrances to the effective satisfaction or current and future needs.

## Preservation Mechanisms and Actors

### Inventory

Mechanisms for undertaking preservation activities are those laws, regulations, rules and programs that allow individuals, organizations and public agencies to identify, officially recognize, subsequently protect and ultimately celebrate those properties of historic importance. Preservation actors are the individuals or organizations that engage these measures. Both preservation mechanisms and actors operate on the local, state and national level and through both the public and private sector.

This three-tiered, two-prong arrangement presents a variety of possible relationships for any preservation activity; and links between the different levels and sectors are vital to success. Accessing the existing tools for and incorporating the appropriate players in an undertaking requires knowing what resources are available and understanding the benefits and limitations of each. To identify current preservation programs and actors data was collected from primary and secondary sources, as well as through personal interviews.

For Syracuse, the primary local mechanism identified was the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance, which establishes a procedure for designating properties as local protected sites or preservation districts. Presently there are 32 local protected sites and 3 local preservation districts. The principal local actors included the Preservation Association of Central New York, Inc. (PACNY), the Onondaga Historical Association (OHA), and the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board (LPB).



The New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law was determined to be the most significant mechanism at the state level, with a secondary tool the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act. The former creates the New York State Register of Historic Places, the official list of properties determined significant in state and local history; the latter defines procedures for assessing the likely impacts of state and local government actions, including the possible effects on historic and cultural resources. The primary actor identified at the state level was the State Historic Preservation Office, a division of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, while the second most significant player was the Preservation League of New York State.

At the federal level, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) were found to be the major vehicles affecting historic and cultural resources. The NHPA establishes the National Register of Historic Places, the State Historic Preservation Offices, and the Certified Local Government Program. In Syracuse approximately 25 individual properties and 9 districts were listed in the State and National Registers, with approximately 417 properties determined eligible for listing; as new information is uncovered, additional properties are added to the eligible properties roster. The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Preservation Action were recognized as two of the most important actors at the federal level.

## Analysis

### Problems

#### **1. *Limited interest in the designation of properties.***

There is a general lack of public understanding about preservation and the designation processes. As a result,

the public is not well versed in the benefits of designation. Also, there are few people readily available to develop designation documentation.

#### **2. *Limited networking between all levels of government and local preservation advocacy groups.***

The leadership of the city administration lacks a strong preservation ethic. Furthermore, there are tenuous relationships with Federal, State and local preservation advocacy groups.

#### **3. *Lack of compliance with the Syracuse Preservation Ordinance.***

Property changes and demolition are occurring without the approval of the Landmark Preservation Board. In addition, some changes do not conform to proposals that are approved by the board.

#### **4. *Lack of full-time professional staff to support the Landmark Preservation Board.***

The current staffing for the Landmark Preservation Board is not adequate for maintaining an up-to-date database of registered and significant properties, the filing of Certificates of Appropriateness, and follow-ups to approved work in designated historic districts and, nor would there be sufficient staff to address the proposed conservation districts.

#### **5. *Disinterest within the real estate community to promote living in traditional or historic urban neighborhoods.***

Within the real estate community, there is limited support for promoting in-city living options. More often efforts encourage suburban housing options rather than older or historic properties.



**6. *Lack of enforcement for filing a Certificate of Appropriateness.***

Due to limited staffing, the Landmark Preservation Board does not have the resources to follow up on accepted and denied Certificates of Appropriateness. Public education about the Certificate of Appropriateness process has been limited or insufficient, which has resulted in poor public opinion of the C of A process.

**7. *Lack of consistent enforcement of the Preservation Ordinance by the municipal city government.***

There is often a lack of consistency between decisions made by the Landmark Preservation Board and those made by the City Planning Commission concerning the approval and denial of permits and Certificates of Appropriateness.

**8. *Lack of proper recognition of, and acknowledgement by the city preservation groups and individuals.***

Other municipalities recognize individuals and organizations that have made significant preservation contributions, but the City of Syracuse does not currently have such a program. Independent of municipal recognition, Preservation Association of Central New York holds an annual awards banquet to recognize outstanding leaders in preservation.

**9. *Failure to maximize resources within local institutions to further preservation activities.***

The potential contributions of local advocacy groups and academic institutions are underutilized with respect to research, documentation and protection of historic properties.

**10. *Insufficient number of professional planning and design staff for current***

***public agency and neighborhood collaborations.***

The city has not made it a priority to hire professional planning and design staff. This has resulted in a lack of experience and knowledge to guide planning and design efforts, and therefore an inability to positively effect older and historic properties.

**Opportunities**

**1. *Introduce non-traditional preservation groups to the preservation community.***

A proactive approach to involve advocacy groups such as neighborhood associations, church groups, professional groups, park associations, etc. in local preservation activities, should be developed. Associations that have different primary focuses but are concerned about quality of life issues are natural preservation partners.

**2. *Utilize up-to-date databases as an early warning system to save at-risk properties.***

Databases that are kept up-to-date, would be extremely useful in protecting significant properties. Current information would allow city staff optimum opportunity to protect a range of properties.

**3. *Implement the design review guidelines for the Sedgwick-Highland-James Local Historic Preservation District.***

Currently, the Sedgwick-Highland-James (SHJ) local preservation district guidelines for material changes have been completed, but not implemented. Implementing these guidelines would help residents preserve district character and integrity.



**4. Utilize the SHJ guidelines as a model for other designated districts.**

Upon implementing the SHJ design review guidelines and assessing their success, additional guidelines could be developed for other districts.

**5. Ensure development new development is sensitive to the preservation districts.**

Design guidelines must address new construction as well as existing buildings.

**6. Change public perception about historic value of traditional urban neighborhoods.**

There must be greater promotion of living in older neighborhoods. The public must be shown that these areas offer outstanding residential and business opportunities.

**7. Maximize use of current preservation programs.**

Relationships between the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Preservation League of NYS and the community's preservation advocacy groups should be improved. Links the national and state Freedom Trail and the Women's Rights Heritage programs can be enhanced.

**8. Increase community collaborations regarding preservation efforts.**

Area academic institutions offer a wide range of resources that would further preservation on multiple levels and in a variety of ways.

**9. Promote services to educate the public on the maintenance, rehabilitation, and financing of historic properties.**

Marketing strategies designed to educate the community about historic properties should be increased. Greater public

awareness will improve the quality and number of rehabilitation efforts.

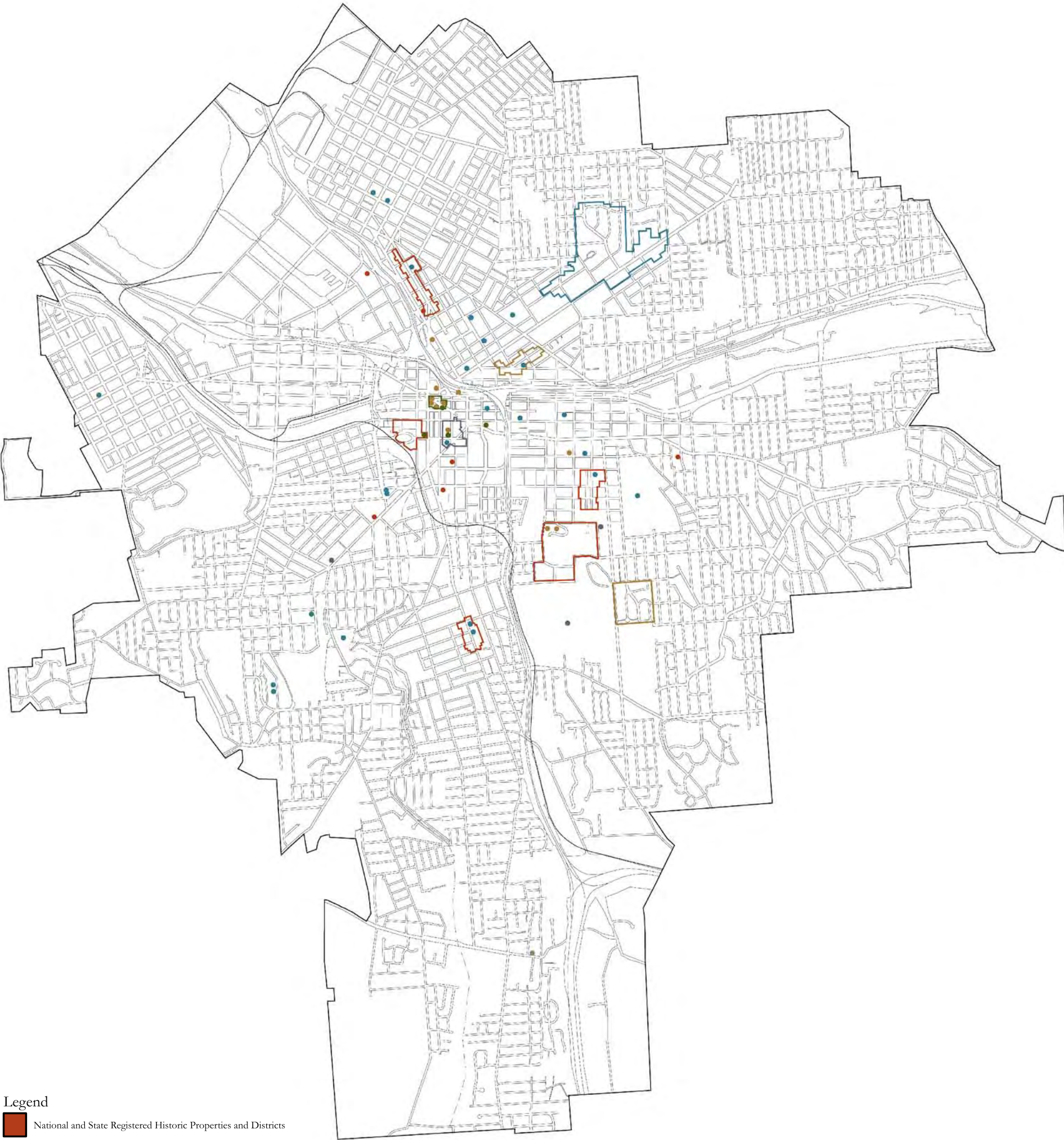
**Constraints**

**1. State and Federal preservation laws do not necessarily protect historic properties from change or demolition.**

Preservation laws do not address private actions that alter or demolish historic properties. They do address federal and state undertakings, and therefore have limited protective measures.







- Legend
- National and State Registered Historic Properties and Districts
  - Local Registered Historic Properties and Districts
  - National, State and Local Registered Historic Properties and Districts

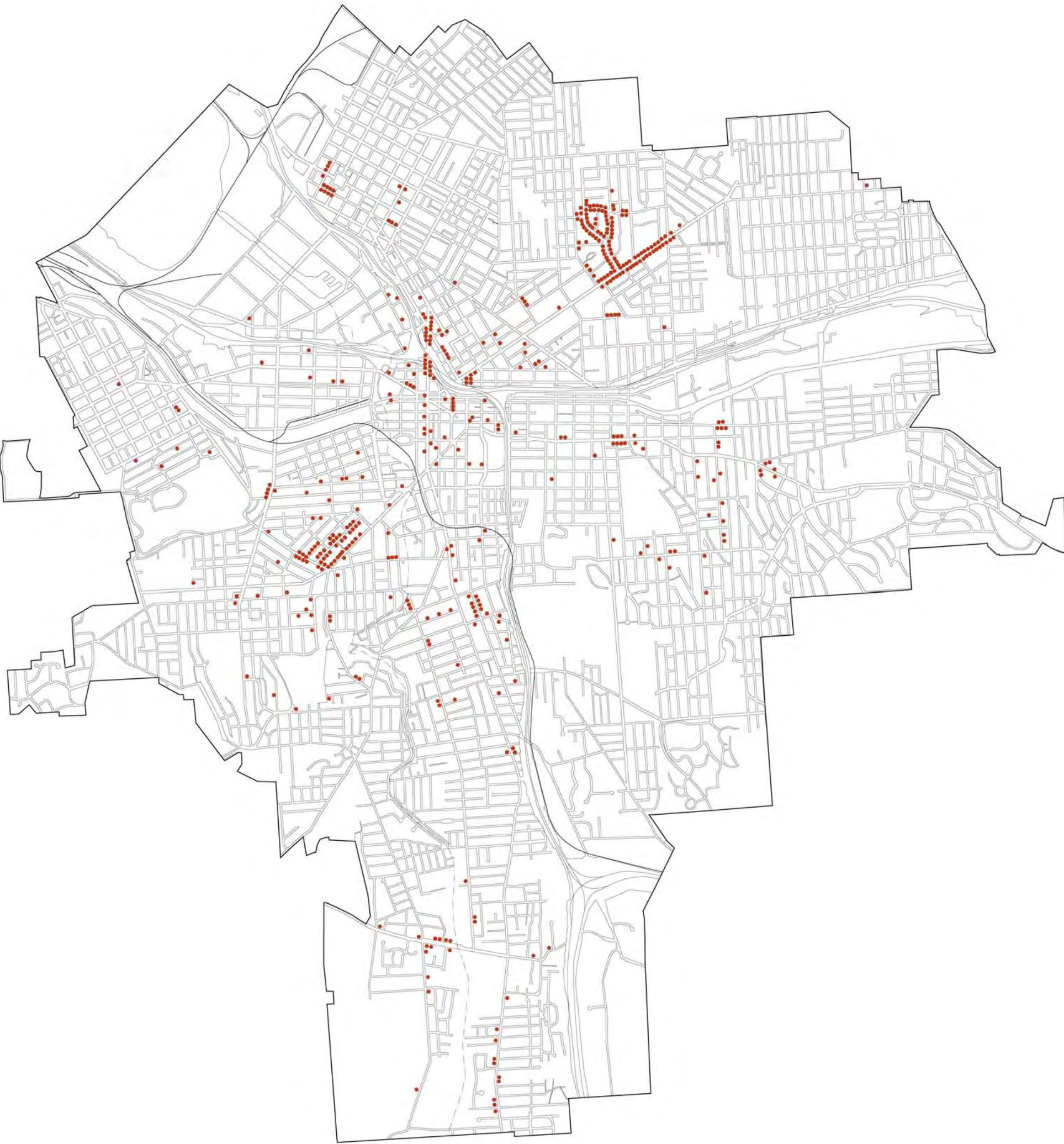
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Map Source: Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (2/99)

North

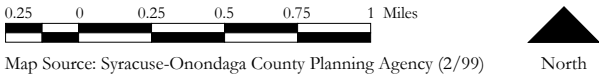






Legend

Eligible Properties for State/National Designation



Faculty of Landscape Architecture  
State University of New York  
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

# Eligible Properties

## City of Syracuse Preservation Plan

Urban Design Studio 2003



## Preservation Economics

### Inventory

Preservation economics is the relationship between preservation and the market. This relationship is characterized by efforts made on the federal, state, and local level to promote historic preservation by providing economic incentives. Such incentives include tax credits, abatements and special funds, which may be utilized to make preservation an economically viable undertaking, thus preserving the character and identity of the city.

Economic incentive programs may be a deciding factor in whether or not rehabilitation or reconstruction is viable, therefore making preservation economics an essential component of a preservation plan for the city of Syracuse. In an age when suburbanization is gaining ground over city living, people need incentives to purchase a home or invest in a commercial property within the city. By understanding the programs that are available to the citizens of Syracuse, recommendations will be made on how to best capitalize on opportunities for preservation in the city, and evaluate current programs in an effort to make recommendations on how to maximize their benefit. This may include specifying not one program in particular, but a combination of programs that will yield the maximum benefit.

Information collected included not only programs requiring official historic designation, but also programs not specifically designed for preservation. Data was collected through primary and secondary sources, as well as through interviews with city officials, and included:

- Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive Programs
- National Trust for Historic Preservation Programs

- City of Syracuse Economic Development Programs: Syracuse Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO), Syracuse Industrial Development Agency (SIDA), Federal Empowerment and State Empire Zones
- Section 444a of the Syracuse Real Property Tax Law

Information about the impact of preservation on real estate was also examined, as was the spin-off benefits of historic preservation, and heritage tourism. This information was obtained through primary and secondary sources, and included:

- The Economic Benefits of Preservation in Michigan: Technical Report, prepared by Clarion Associates, LLP, Chicago, IL.
- The (Economic) Value of National Register Listing by Donovan Rypkema
- The Economic Effect of National Register Listing by Donovan Rypkema
- *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice* by Norman Tyler
- *The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide* by Donovan Rypkema, published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation

In general, the inventory of preservation economics identified several existing and proposed incentive approaches to preservation activities. Although no specific examination of Syracuse data was available, national trends suggest that historic preservation impact a local economy positively. Donovan Rypkema, an economist and preservationist, states that historic preservation can have a significant effect on a community: it creates jobs, which circulates more money into the local economy, it creates a demand for local artisans with specialized skills, it generates capital through tourist dollars; and it



increases property values of Nationally Registered districts.

## Analysis

### Problems

**1. *Majority of real estate development is in the suburbs, and not the city.***

Both redevelopment of existing properties and new construction is concentrated in the suburbs, and not within the city.

**2. *Lack of incentives to rehabilitate non-income producing properties.***

Currently, tax incentives for historic preservation are limited to only income producing structures; therefore, private homeowners are not eligible to receive income tax credits for rehabilitating a historic home. For projects that do qualify, the existing incentives may not adequately entice property owners to undertake rehabilitation projects.

**3. *Limited understanding of available economic programs.***

The general public lacks a comprehensive understanding of available economic incentives that encourage historic preservation projects, or of general economic mechanisms that might apply to preservation activities.

**4. *Failure to maximize potential real estate tax abatement for historic properties.***

The full benefits of Section 444a of Real Property Tax Law are not incorporated into the Syracuse version. The city has not adopted the program at a full 100% exemption for the increase in income taxes for the first five years. Rather, the city offers a 50% exemption, with a proportional reduction in this percentage over a span of 10 years.

**5. *Lack of data documenting the impact of historic preservation on real estate values in Syracuse.***

Research documenting the impact of preservation on real estate values is not readily available. This lack of evidence undermines efforts to protect and preserve significant properties.

**6. *Budget cuts for public programs at federal, state, and local level.***

Many historic preservation programs are highly dependent on federal, state or local government funding. A budget crisis could cease critical funding for preservation programs.

**7. *High costs associated with hazardous material abatement and rehabilitation of older properties.***

The cost of removing hazardous material from an older or historic property can become prohibitive. At times, this cost can be a deciding factor in undertaking a rehabilitation project.

**8. *Municipal infrastructure at or near the end of its life.***

Typical of older cities, infrastructure such as water and sewer service may need to be replaced or upgraded in the near future. This will present an enormous financial strain on municipal resources.

**9. *Failure to retain graduates of local universities and colleges as permanent residents.***

The job market is failing to attract local university graduates. The loss of graduates means the loss of potential homeowners, taxpayers, and educated citizens supportive of older urban neighborhoods and business areas.



**10. *Difficulty marketing economically stressed areas to potential investors.***

Due to the condition of older economically stressed areas, potential investors concentrate their search for properties in areas that are more stable and desirable, therefore perpetuating these conditions.

**11. *Focus of federal housing programs largely on income qualified participants.***

People interested in older properties who do not qualify for federal assistance due to income requirements may not invest without an additional incentive.

**12. *Perception that city programs focus on large businesses.***

Small-scale projects are deterred from seeking economic incentives due to the misperception that only large-scale projects and businesses are eligible for and funded with such programs.

**Opportunities**

**1. *National and state registration of historic park properties would create access to new funding opportunities.***

By designating a park to the National Register of Historic Properties, a project would become eligible for historic preservation tax credits and other financial assistance.

**2. *Increase public education regarding economic programs through marketing.***

By making the public more knowledgeable about economic incentives, they would be more likely to seek out and take advantage of them to improve older properties.

**3. *Improve municipal links to state and federal programs.***

Many people seek out opportunities locally, and creating a link to federal

programs at the local level would raise public awareness about federal economic incentives and opportunities.

**4. *Coordinate heritage tourism efforts with individual historic sites.***

Heritage tourism would be used as a potential economic venture to be undertaken by the city, and would be coordinated with the different historic sites in the city.

**5. *Promote historic homeownership through available and proposed economic development tools.***

Promoting historic home ownership and associated economic programs would introduce alternatives to new construction in the home-buying market.

**6. *Maximize all available funding programs.***

Rehabilitation would make better economic sense than demolition if people knew about and used all possible sources of funding for historic preservation.

**7. *Adopt programs from other cities as a model for local historic preservation programs.***

Other cities around the country have created effective programs for promoting their city's unique resources. The city of Syracuse should adopt programs created by other cities as a way of marketing local resources to area residents.

**8. *Revise local version of Section 444a.***

The original draft of Section 444a of the Real Property Tax Law states that a 100% exemption on the increase in property taxes will be placed on a rehabilitated property for the first 5 years after reconstruction. By adopting the law under its original guidelines, a



greater opportunity for a homeowner to rehabilitate their historic property exists.

**9. *Maximize use of PILOT agreements to support historic preservation.***

Currently PILOT's, although not created specifically for historic preservation, may be used as an economic incentive for a project.

**10. *Earmark percent of existing program funds for historic properties***

Current economic programs have the potential to set aside a portion of capital to fund historic preservation projects. By doing so, the city may allocate more funds to further historic preservation.

**11. *Coordinate community and economic development programs to include neighborhood business areas.***

The preservation of neighborhood business areas are important not only to the fabric of the city, but to the economic base as well, and should be preserved to the fullest extent possible. Such efforts should be undertaken in conjunction with actions in residential areas.

**12. *Promote education in traditional building trades.***

By training individuals, at all levels of education, in traditional building trades there will be an increase in the number of individuals who are capable of working successfully on historic properties.

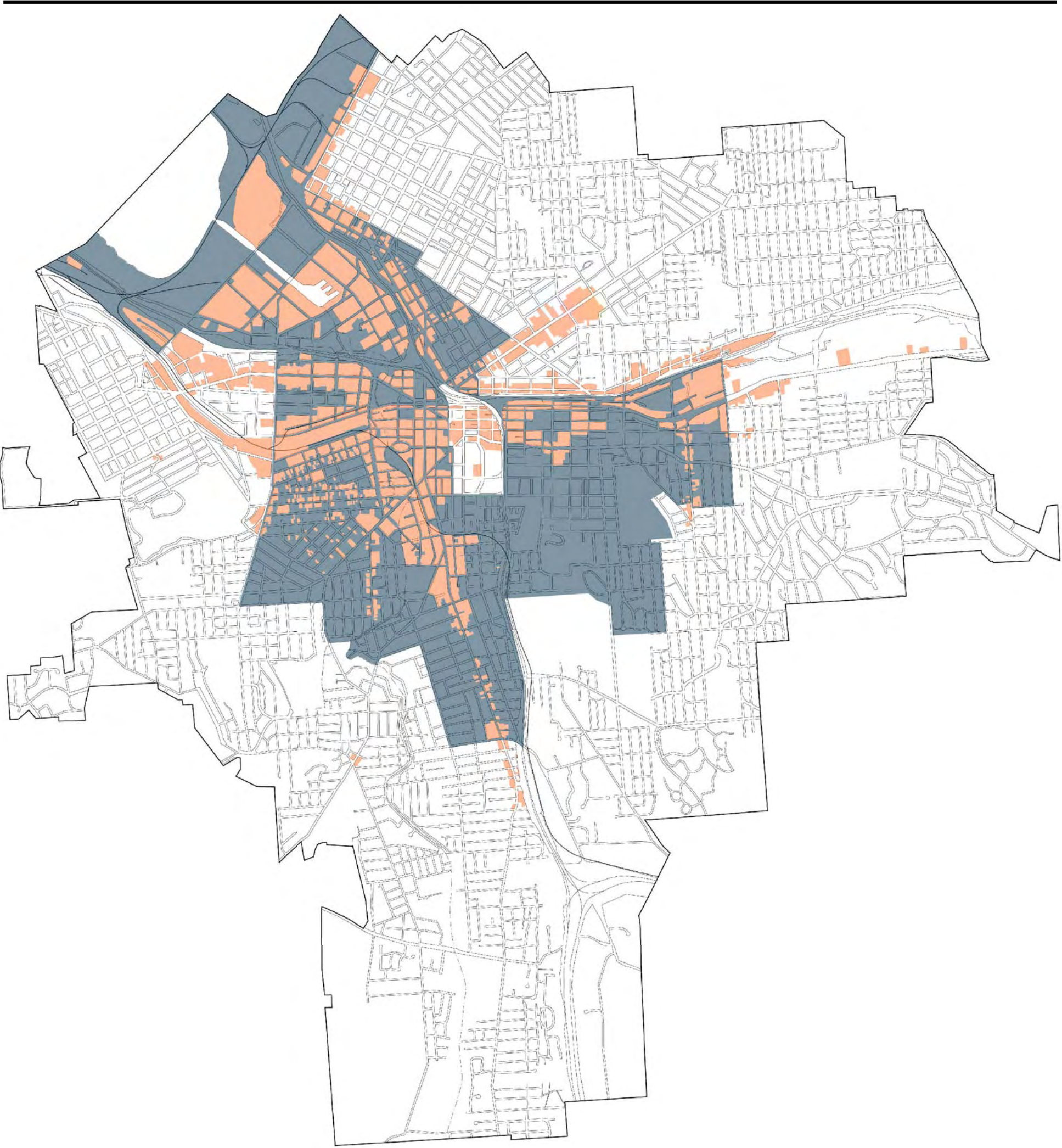
**Constraints**



**1. *Economic market forces influence viability of the real estate market.***

The local real estate market depends on the overall economic picture formed by the vitality of the national economy.







 Federal Empowerment Zone  
 State Empire Zone

0.25 0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

Map Source: Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (2/99)



Faculty of Landscape Architecture

State University of New York  
College of Environmental Science and Forestry

# Preservation Economics

## City of Syracuse Preservation Plan

Urban Design Studio 2003



## Zoning and Land Use

### Inventory

Zoning is the implementation of comprehensive planning, and a guide for land use. The City of Syracuse maintains zoning rules and regulations in order to promote orderly and manageable growth of the urban environment, and to protect the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the city. This occurs through the designation of zoning districts, which contain rules, regulations, restrictions and prohibitions that encourage or discourage certain types of land use for each property in the city.

Zoning is intended to be uniform within each district, with properties treated equally. The zoning rules and regulations describe the physical characteristics required for each district, which include setbacks, density, height and bulk of structures, and parking.

Zoning has had a significant impact on the way that the city has evolved to its current physical form. Syracuse first adopted a zoning ordinance in 1922 and, since that time, the articles have been amended to accommodate urban growth and changing ideas about city development, but have never been entirely revised. For this study, the City of Syracuse Zoning Rules and Regulations of 2002 was referenced, along with information collected from interviews with various city and county officials. Twenty-seven different zoning districts and four overlay districts were found within the City of Syracuse.

### *Zoning Districts*

- RA-1 Residential District, Class A-1
- RA-2 Residential District, Class A-2
- RA Residential District, Class A
- RAA Residential District, Class AA
- RB-1 Residential District, Class B-1

- RB-1T Residential District, Class B-1 Transitional
- RB Residential District, Class B
- RB-T Residential District, Class B Transitional
- RC Residential District, Class C
- OA Office District, Class A
- OB Office District, Class B
- RS Residential Service District
- BA Local Business District, Class A
- PSD Planned Shopping District
- CBD-R Central Business District, Retail District
- CBD-OS Central Business District, Office and Service District
- CBD-OSR Central Business District, Office and Service District (Restricted)
- CBD-GS Central Business District, General Service District
- CBD-LB Central Business District, Local Business District
- CBD-HDR Central Business District, High-Density Residential District
- CBD-MDR Central Business District, Medium-Density Residential District
- CBD-GSA Central Business District, General Service A District
- CA Commercial District, Class A
- CB Commercial District, Class B
- IA Industrial District, Class A
- IB Industrial District, Class B
- PID Planned Institutional District

### *Overlay Zoning Districts*

- Preservation District
- Special Neighborhood District
- Eastwood–James Street District

The majority of the city is zoned for residential use, the most restrictive type of development; however, large swaths are zoned for industrial development, which allows greater variation in land use and



physical form. In between the residential and industrial areas are smaller corridors zoned for business and commercial use. At the heart of the city is Downtown with 8 types of central business district zoning. There also are a few large segments zoned for planned institutional development, where the universities and hospitals are located. Used for the least amount of land, zoning for office development is found in a few small areas of the city.

## **Analysis**

### **Problems**

**1. *The current Zoning Rules and Regulations for the City of Syracuse were originally written in 1922, and have not been entirely overhauled since the 1950's.***

Outdated Zoning Rules and Regulations have not kept pace with contemporary needs. The Zoning Rules and Regulations need to be re-evaluated in order to strengthen the historic fabric of the city while accommodating changing needs.

**2. *Lack of a design review mechanism within existing zoning rules.***

Current zoning regulations only address bulk, mass and setback considerations for buildings. A more thorough evaluation of architectural style, building character, and site layout would be an improved approach to zoning decisions.

**3. *Lack of professional qualifications for those appointed to Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals.***

Lack of design and planning experience decreases the efficiency and effectiveness of both entities. The Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals would both be strengthened by adding relevant

expertise in design and planning as a requirement for an appointment.

**4. *Difficult to enforce the zoning rules and regulations due to staff limitations.***

The city has a small number of people that work in the Zoning department and only a few code enforcers per city ward. Many violations go unnoticed, typically only the ones that are reported are enforced. This means that property changes are made without a permit or a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and after the fact approvals for un-zoned activity is a problem.

**5. *Lack of guidelines to assess the appropriateness of variance requests.***

It is difficult for city residents and for the Board of Zoning Appeals to determine what is an appropriate request for a variance. Inappropriate variances are granted, and residents are poorly informed about what is a reasonable request.

**6. *Limited guidelines to insure Planned Institutional Districts (PIDs) connect to the surrounding context.***

The structures and site layout in PIDs are typically at a different scale than the surrounding area, with different uses that may conflict with surrounding uses. The guidelines listed in the zoning rules and regulations do not address the issue of context.

**7. *No connection between zoning rules and regulations and comprehensive plan.***

The City of Syracuse does not currently have a comprehensive plan that guides the zoning rules and regulations, which decreases their efficiency as a planning tool.





**8. *Inadequate information is provided to neighborhoods via the notification process.***

City residents do not receive sufficient information regarding permits and certificates of appropriateness (CofAs) that will permit changes to neighborhood properties. The notification distance is too narrow to adequately alert interested citizens.

**Opportunities**

**1. *Use Zoning as a more effective planning mechanism.***

Currently, the Zoning Rules and Regulations serve as a basic means of controlling how a property can be used and how a structure occupies the property, but it is not reflective of contemporary needs nor does it recognize much of the desirable historic urban city fabric. Zoning could become the practical legislative tool for planning.

**2. *Use overlay districts to deal with aesthetics.***

Creating more overlay districts to maintain the character of specific areas throughout the city, as well as actively enforcing the guidelines which the pertain to each overlay district, would be an effective way to address aesthetics. In addition, people in the city should be better informed about what the overlay district entails and what process they need to go through to undertake changes to their property.

**3. *Increase the number and type of transitional zoning districts to create a greater mix of uses.***

Transitional zoning districts aim to create a smooth transition between areas that are zoned as residential and those that are local business or commercial, and encourage a mix of uses. The city currently uses this type of zoning in a

very limited number of places. By increasing both the types of transitional zoning and increasing the number of them in place in the city, there would be benefits economically and in enhancing a sense of community.

**4. *Complete and adopt a comprehensive plan.***

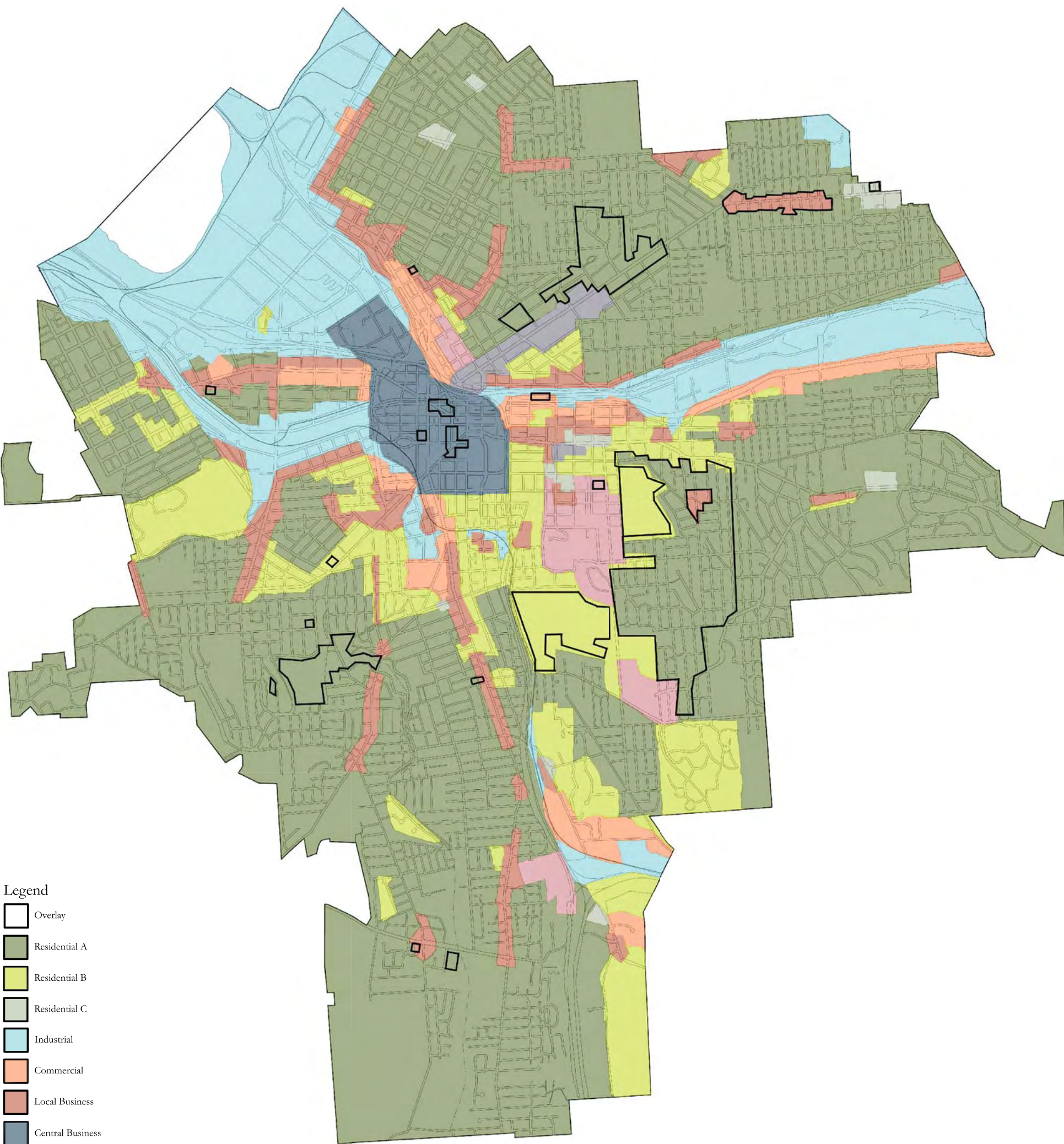
In other urban areas, zoning has served as a more effective tool because it is a part of a comprehensive plan. With a comprehensive plan in place, the city can begin to revise the Zoning Rules and Regulations in a more effective manner, and bridge the gap between zoning and planning that has traditionally existed in the city.

**Constraints**

**1. *Existing non-traditional properties would be retained and grandfathered even if Zoning was revised.***

Any revisions to the Zoning Rules and Regulations would pertain to primarily new development and would not be applied to most existing structures. This would hamper the effects of rezoning the city with the intent of conserving the original urban fabric.





- Legend
- Overlay
  - Residential A
  - Residential B
  - Residential C
  - Industrial
  - Commercial
  - Local Business
  - Central Business
  - Planned Institutional
  - Office

0.25 0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

Map Source: Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (2/99)

North



## Organizational Patterns & Built Form

### Inventory

The alignment of streets and the size and shape of blocks established the patterns within which buildings, structures, objects and sites were subsequently developed within the city. Some of these patterns may have been based on settlement practices familiar to the Europeans and European-Americans that first came to the area. Other physical relationships may be the result of political influences or legal requirements; or they may correspond to historic events, societal needs or cultural preferences. Some of these patterns stem from the initial incorporation of the city, with the merger of the villages of Salina and Syracuse. As land was annexed to the city beginning in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and continuing to 1962, these patterns gradually were combined with the layout of other early villages, rural routes and associated farmland, and residential development ventures. Regardless of their origin, the various arrangements of streets, blocks and lots are what give the city its fundamental order.

These organizational patterns are, in large part, comprised of built form, which considers:

- The Building, with specific attention paid to the form, height, architectural details and general texture of constructed elements;
- The Lot, with consideration to size, shape, frontage and building density; and
- The Street, with a focus on street and sidewalk alignment and width, planting strips, vegetation, signage, lighting and other furnishings.

Because organizational patterns and built form define the essence of city fabric, it was critical to understand the underlying framework upon which Syracuse developed. It also was important to be aware that these characteristics are the tangible evidence of the city's physical evolution as well as the primary factors defining the city's sense of place.

In order to fully understand Syracuse's organizational patterns and built form, data was gathered through primary and secondary sources, site visits, and interviews with local officials. The collected information addressed:

***Residential areas:*** Two primary patterns emerged. The first was the grid, identified as those areas where the predominant street-block pattern is based on a rectilinear layout and the buildings are forced into a distinct arrangement, regardless of topography. The second example was organic, in which streets and blocks are laid out in a more curvilinear form, with the streets, blocks and lots organized in a less rigid pattern. Within each pattern, lot characteristics varied greatly, from extremely narrow frontages with generous depths to fairly expansive widths with comparable depths. Buildings were equally diverse, although most were two- or three-stories tall, having some degree of architectural detail and exhibiting a fair amount of textural variation.

***Business areas:*** Two primary patterns were identified. The first was where the built form responds to the surrounding context, producing an area that is in concert with pattern of the contiguous residential fabric. The second situation was where business areas, most often developed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, that are visually and/or physically separate and more distinct from the surrounding context. Within the first pattern, lot size and shape were similar to





the surrounding area, and density high; and buildings were consistent in general form, size, styling and detailing. Within the latter, lots were easily distinguished from those of the abutting area, primarily because of their larger size and lower density; buildings within this pattern also were decidedly distinctive because of their contrasting size, form, style and lack of detailing.

**Industrial areas:** Three primary patterns were identified. The first arrangement was where single industrial buildings or complexes occupy a single block size and have a consistent street setback, architectural dominance and abundance of off-street parking. The second pattern was for areas where the lot and block sizes were extremely large and setbacks were virtually non-existent. In these situations on-street parking, on-site off-street parking and loading facilities were contiguous, resulting in large open lots and paved areas. Clusters with uniform setbacks and similar, modest-scale parking and loading areas characterized the third pattern. Each of these forms of organization also distinguished further by the age of buildings, with 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings typically having a comparatively small footprint and multiple stories and mid- to late 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings being one-story with a larger floor plan.

**Downtown:** Two distinct patterns, with sub-patterns, were evident. The first was characterized by densely packed, small to medium size blocks where buildings fill lots from front to back and side to side. Within this pattern, sub-sets were recognized distinguished from one another primarily by predominant building height. Buildings were similar, although not identical, in form, size, style and details. The second pattern was identified by low density, large blocks containing box-like buildings that do not entirely fill lots and are interspersed with a high percentage of surface parking lots.

Buildings within this pattern, while similar in general form and sometimes sizes, did not share stylistic characteristics or details.

## Organizational Pattern Analysis

### Problems

#### 1. *Lack of identifiable organizational patterns in some neighborhoods of the city.*

Various organizational patterns exist within the neighborhoods, however, in some areas they are not clearly distinguishable patterns. These areas often have been disrupted by contemporary infill development.

#### 2. *Altered traditional patterns within the same block or corridor.*

Some areas throughout the city have had their traditional patterns disrupted by contemporary development within the same block or along the same street.

#### 3. *Contrasting contemporary commercial development typologies.*

Infill of new development often contrast with existing fabric of the older and historical districts. Large-scale contemporary commercial development in particular has resulted in a lack of continuity with the surrounding context.

#### 4. *Inconsistent maintenance of the city streetscape.*

The lack of consistent streetscape maintenance throughout the city has caused the organizational patterns of the past to be masked. At the present, a comprehensive streetscape design and maintenance standards do not exist.

#### 5. *Reduced circulation and delivery of public services on narrow streets.*

Some areas of the city possess organizational patterns where the street and intersection dimensions impede vehicular circulation. The resulting





delays often are translated into a negative image.

**6. *Lack of adequate lot space to permit off-street parking.***

Some typologies consist of narrow streets with small lots and in such cases developing property to accommodate off-street parking is not feasible.

**7. *Incompatibility of contemporary requirements of industrial operations and historic industrial buildings.***

Contemporary industrial operations are not the same as traditional industrial practices. The vertical organization of older industrial buildings does not accommodate current horizontal industrial processes.

**8. *Inconsistent visual quality and sense of connection throughout various areas.***

Within each city district, rehabilitation and infill development efforts have been inconsistent. This has disrupted the physical connections and visual quality of the city's image.

### **Opportunities**

**1. *Emphasize narrow streets to enhance identifiable character.***

Narrow streets, small lots and tight spaces identify certain areas within the city. These organizational patterns create a strong sense of identity and character, should be preserved to maintain a sense of character and identity.

**2. *Utilize traditional patterns to guide in-fill development.***

In order to guide sensitive new construction, design guidelines need to be established that respect traditional neighborhood block-lot patterns. These guidelines should preserve and enhance the older and historic qualities of the

past while accommodating contemporary needs.

**3. *Respect traditional patterns when redeveloping vacant land.***

Traditional patterns need to be taken into consideration when redeveloping vacant land throughout the city. The organization of the street and block sizes evolved over time and should be preserved to maintain the quality of the areas in which the infill development will commence.

**4. *Identify contemporary commercial corridors and nodes where earlier patterns can be re-inserted, or re-established.***

To improve infill development and re-establish earlier organizational patterns, prior examples should be used as a guide to overall layout and density of new development.

**5. *Consider adaptive re-use of select commercial and industrial groupings and corridors for new uses.***

Explore new, non-industrial uses as an alternative for commercial and industrial clusters of buildings. Creative re-use of these older and historic properties would revitalize these structures and the immediate surrounding area.

**6. *Identify existing industrial locations for new industry.***

Throughout the city there are various vacant industrial sites that would be useful and appropriate for new industry. Introducing new industry in existing industrial sites will reinforce long established and still viable land use patterns.

### **Constraints**

**1. *Street-block pattern is established.***

Organizational patterns already exist and have evolved throughout the city's



growth. New development will need to consider the existing land use patterns and organizational patterns such as streets, blocks and structures.

**2. *Major disruptions in patterns are difficult or impossible to change.***

The overpowering presence of both Interstates 81 and 690 create a disruption in the organizational pattern of the city. Neighborhoods and districts have been split as a result of their construction. The highways are unlikely to move or change in the near future.

## **Built Form Analysis**

### **Problems**

**1. *Inappropriate or inadequate rehabilitation of existing buildings.***

Syracuse lacks a collective commitment to drive appropriate rehabilitation of existing older buildings. In some cases, business interests outweigh the need for quality development; in others individual property owners do not understand the value of sensitive redevelopment designs.

**2. *Reliance on demolition as major part of neighborhood revitalization.***

Instead of rehabilitating and adapting existing structures for other uses, many existing structures are demolished to create space for new construction. Adding to this problem are pressures from many national chain businesses to clear sites for their standardized suburban-style facilities.

**3. *Potential prohibitive costs associated with rehabilitation of older buildings.***

Costs of rehabilitation to meet codes, including abatement of hazardous materials, may influence owners to raze a building to create space for new

construction, rather than for building revitalization.

**4. *Perception that older building stock cannot meet contemporary needs.***

There is a lack of public knowledge regarding ways that old buildings can be retrofitted to accommodate contemporary needs. In addition, there is the misconception that historic properties cannot be altered due to regulations.

**5. *New infill development does not relate to surrounding context.***

The character of streetscape changes when new development is substantially different in setback, form, and architectural details. This problem is illustrated when standardized building plans based on suburban models are used in older suburban areas.

**6. *Misconception that traditional building skills are not available.***

Traditional building skills are available, but the market to support these skills is not necessarily present. Many individuals and businesses fail to understand what services or skills to demand.

**7. *Limited availability of educational programs for new property owners.***

New property owners often lack the necessary skills and knowledge needed to care for older properties. Advice specific to the financing, maintenance and repair of older buildings is particularly lacking.

**8. *Limited understanding of how changes in built form impact neighborhood characteristics and patterns.***

The general individual owners need to understand that their actions affect not only the appearance of their own



properties, but the character of the entire neighborhood as well.

**9. *Lack of emphasis on the importance of maintaining physical urban form.***

Neighborhood residents need to be educated about the importance of maintaining traditional urban forms. The diverse city living opportunities offered by mixed-use structures and other city features are not fully realized.

**Opportunities**

**1. *Recognize and celebrate non-designated evidence of the past.***

Citizens must recognize that many existing properties, although not eligible historic resources, are nonetheless important to the community's image. A greater appreciation for more common buildings, neighborhood blocks and business areas will result in stronger community identity.

**2. *Promote properties that are designated historic resources.***

Programs that recognize and market the historic resources that make Syracuse a unique place would foster increased community pride. This in turn will improve the city image.

**3. *Capitalize on the diverse housing stock throughout the city.***

Utilize the existing architectural types found in the city to develop a stronger sense of place and identity within the neighborhoods will attract new residents. By marketing the different types of housing available to the prospective urban homeowner, the city also would attract a wider range of residents.

**4. *Promote compatible adaptive reuse of larger older buildings.***

New investors can be encouraged to reuse existing older building stock by

providing them with examples of successfully adapted structures. Many older buildings are currently vacant, but have the potential to be exciting new features in the city.

**5. *Utilize existing built form to guide future infill development.***

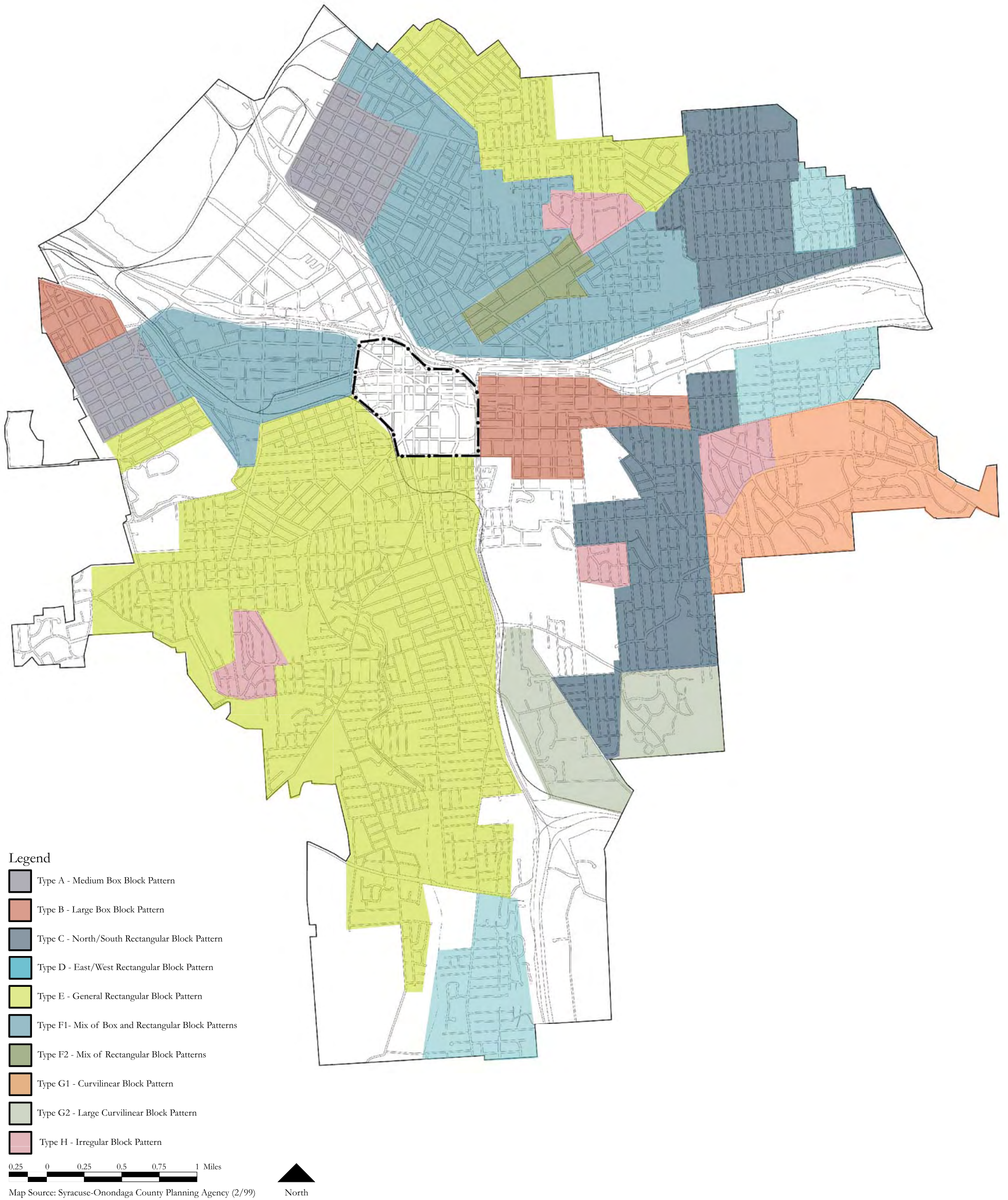
When vacant sites are considered for infill development, identifying successful characteristics of the location's context should be used to help guide this new construction. This approach will ensure the infill will blend well with the existing fabric.

**6. *Involve local corporations and institutions in promoting city living.***

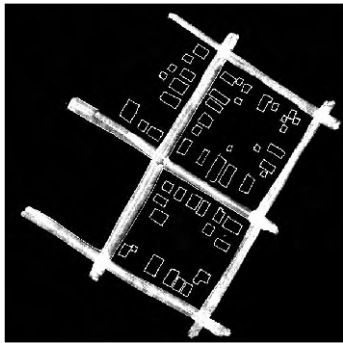
Capitalize on the influence local corporations and institutions have on home buying decisions. These entities could assist the city in attracting and retaining local residents by encouraging their employees to consider in-city housing options.





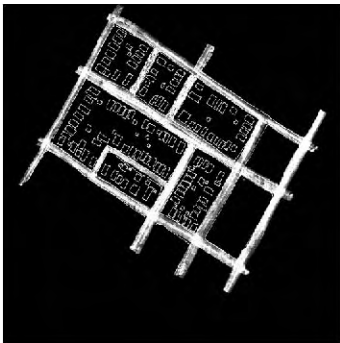






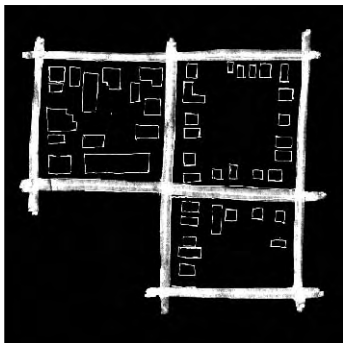
**Type - A**  
**Medium Box Block Pattern:**

This organizational pattern has blocks that are square and medium in size. The lot size is long and narrow with large back yards. The buildings are usually one to two stories with a setback from the road allowing for sidewalks. The Salina area in north Syracuse and Tipperary Hill on the west side of the city are examples of this organizational pattern type.



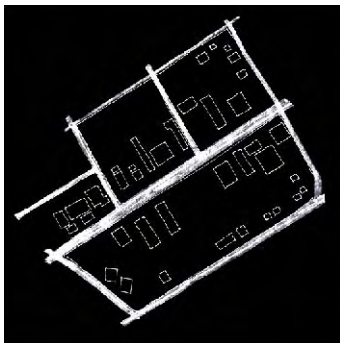
**Type - F-1**  
**Mix of Box and Rectangular Block Patterns:**

This organizational pattern has blocks that are generally small in size with a variety of slopes. The lots are generally rectangular and narrow. The buildings are close together and close to the street. This pattern tends to be a mix of land use. The north side of the city is an example of this organizational pattern type.



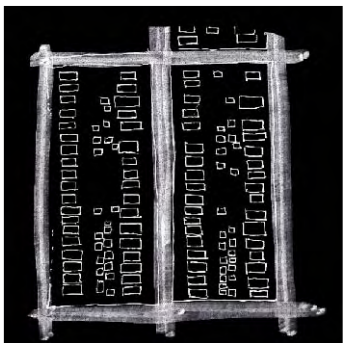
**Type - B**  
**Large Box Block Pattern:**

This organizational pattern has block sizes that are square and fairly large. The lot size is long and narrow. The buildings tend to be large one and two story and are close together. The buildings are set back from road about 20' to 30', allowing sidewalks. The west end of the city and East Genesee Street area are examples of this organizational pattern type.



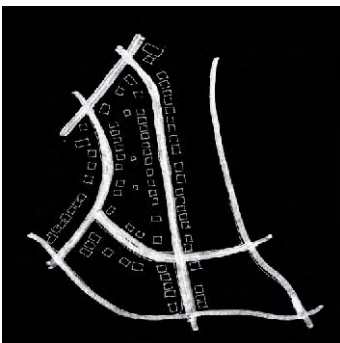
**Type - F-2**  
**Mix of Rectangular Block Patterns:**

This organizational pattern has blocks that are rectangular and large in size. The lot size is large, less dense, and the buildings tend to be larger with a larger setback from the road allowing for sidewalks. The James Street corridor is an example of this organizational pattern type.



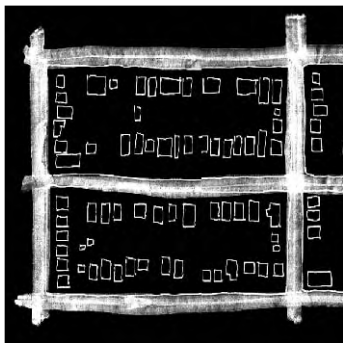
**Type - C**  
**North/South Rectangular Block Pattern:**

This organizational pattern has block sizes that are rectangular, large, and oriented north-south. The lot size is medium, about 60' to 180' with medium size buildings, usually one to two stories tall. The buildings are set back from the road 20' to 40'. This pattern tends to be of medium density compared to the rest of the city's urban fabric. The setback allows for sidewalks. The Eastwood area and the University area examples of this organizational pattern type.



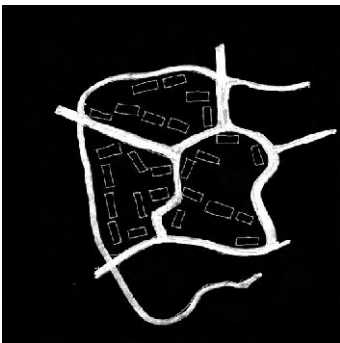
**Type - G-1**  
**Curvilinear Block Pattern:**

This organizational pattern has blocks that are irregular and large in size. The lot size is around 50'x150'. The buildings are one to two stories and usually set back from the road 40' to 60', allowing for sidewalks. The Meadowbrook area is an example of organizational pattern type.



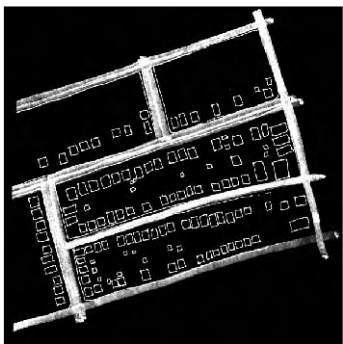
**Type - D**  
**East/West Rectangular Block Pattern:**

This organizational pattern has block sizes that are rectangular, fairly large, and strongly influenced by the city's topography. A drumlin is typically the reason for this pattern to change from north/south to east/west orientation. The lot size is medium, about 50'x150' with medium size buildings, usually one to two stories tall. The buildings are set back from the road 20' to 40', allowing for sidewalks. The Seely Road area is an example of this organizational pattern.



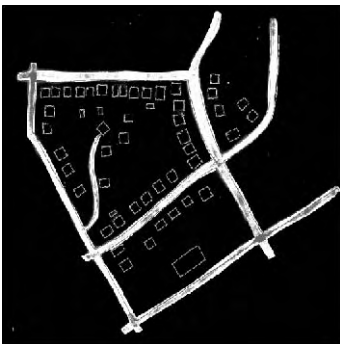
**Type - G-2**  
**Large Curvilinear Block Pattern:**

This organizational pattern has blocks that are irregular/organic and vary in size. The lot sizes also vary. This area tends to have large buildings set within grass and parking areas. The buildings are typically 2 to 4 stories tall. Syracuse University South Campus and the Thurber Street apartments are examples of this organizational pattern type.



**Type - E**  
**General Rectangular Block Pattern:**

This organizational pattern has block sizes that are rectangular, long, and narrow. The buildings are close together and very close to the street, creating a high density. The buildings are usually one to two stories. The Southside and the Southeast side of the city are examples of this organizational pattern.



**Type - H**  
**Irregular Block Pattern:**

This organizational pattern has blocks that are varied in shape and medium to large in size. The lot sizes are medium, about 50' to 150'. The buildings are large, one to two stories and usually set back from the road allowing for sidewalks. The Sedgwick and Strathmore areas are examples of this organizational pattern type.



## Open Space

### Inventory

Open space helps define the character of a city by providing contrast to, and sometimes relief from, contiguous built form. While many urban centers contain a limited amount of natural areas, these open spaces are highly valued as places for passive recreation. Formal open spaces, such as municipal parks, cemeteries and playgrounds, offer options for relaxation and active recreation, and they also are illustrative of landscape design trends popularized over time. Open space can unify areas of a community that otherwise are visually disconnected, thereby bringing a sense of identity to neighborhoods, business areas and other districts within the city. Syracuse's open space is a valuable component of the city's fabric. Individual properties represent or are the result of significant historic and cultural events that are vital to the city's identity. The extensive amount of open space that exists was amassed throughout the city's development, and represents a range of physical and social trends regarding recreation, commemoration and conservation, as well as the physical expansion of the community.

Information about city open space was obtained through primary and secondary source material, interviews with city agency staff, and site visits. In 2002 the City of Syracuse contained 32% of the overall Onondaga County population and 61% of the available public parkland within the county. These numbers show how comparatively rich the city is in open space. Syracuse has 179 municipally owned and maintained parks that are categorized as: community parks, neighborhood parks and centers, play lots, fields and courts, downtown parks, open space areas and cemeteries, natural areas, and traffic medians and islands.

Park Type	Number	Acreage
Community Parks	9	450
Neighborhood Parks	25	140
Play lots, Fields, Courts	23	40
Downtown Parks	16	7
Open Space & Cemeteries	10	83
Natural Areas	6	170
Traffic Medians and Islands	90	55
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>945</b>

Community parks range from 15-75 acres in size and are used by residents beyond the adjacent neighborhoods. These parks usually contain a major facility complex and a significant amount of green space, such as Burnet Park, Kirk Park and Thornden Park.

Neighborhood parks and centers are usually 2-14 acres in size and have their use limited to the surrounding neighborhoods. These parks may contain recreational facilities and small green spaces. Frazer Park, Skiddy Park and Barry Park are examples of neighborhood parks.

Play lots, fields and courts vary in size and contain play equipment and different athletic fields for active recreation. Clark Fields, Nottingham Courts and Seymour Playground are examples.

Downtown Parks also vary in size and generally serve the business district within downtown. These areas contain passive recreational, civic, cultural and historic elements, for example Armory Square Park, Clinton Square and Fayette Firefighter's Memorial Park.

Open space areas and cemeteries are mostly used for passive recreation and to improve the overall character of the surrounding neighborhoods. Lodi Cemetery, Onondaga Creek Boulevard and Rose Hill Cemetery are some examples.

Natural areas are undeveloped and contain natural forested or green space and are





intended for passive recreational use, such as Westminster Park and Meachem Parkway.

Medians and traffic islands are usually less than one acre in size and are in highly developed areas that have visual, civic, cultural and historical importance. The City currently maintains over 90 medians and traffic islands.

## Analysis

### Problems

**1. *Lack of public awareness regarding the historic significance of parks.***

In many cases the historical significance of open space is not clearly understood by the residents of the city. The marketing and promotional strategies generally do not emphasize park history.

**2. *Limited funding for the maintenance of city parks and open spaces.***

The funding available for the maintenance and upkeep of many parks and open spaces makes up a small amount of the city's annual budget. The ratio of open space to city population is high, suggesting the demand for high quality parks is not matched in budget dollars.

**3. *Focus on active recreational programs, rather than facilities and grounds.***

City government and organizations allocate funds and manpower for active recreational programs, and fewer resources are set aside for the maintenance and care of the facilities and grounds located within and adjacent to these problems.

**4. *Lack of comprehensive streetscape design and maintenance programs.***

There are no comprehensive streetscape design standards or seasonal or cyclical

maintenance guidelines or schedule for street trees or planting strips located within the public right-of-way.

**5. *Lack of coordination between city and power corporations regarding street trees.***

Many trees are inappropriately pruned to accommodate overhead utility lines and common standards are not in place for the maintenance of the urban forest. Damage through pruning is widespread.

**6. *Limited awareness of the Syracuse Urban Forest Master Plan.***

The city has not produced a marketing strategy, nor made public, the research and development of the Syracuse Urban Forest Master Plan, regarding street trees. And any future strategies regarding material selection, form, texture or maintenance have not been officially adopted or pursued.

### Opportunities

**1. *Capitalize on the public familiarity and the accessibility to parks.***

Syracuse has a number of parks located throughout the city, which residents easily access. The intent is to expand on this familiarity in terms of generating advocacy for protecting historic features.

**2. *Facilitate community activities and social interaction in open space.***

Efforts should be made to encourage cooperation between community, leaders, professionals and the public to further integrate preservation of parks through good design, high quality maintenance and diverse programming.

**3. *Promote wide range of park types.***

The scale and scope of the parks and their programs is much greater, per resident, than many American cities of a similar size. This relationship should be promoted and residents encouraged to



engage the full scope of the park types and recreation opportunities available.

**3. *Promote open-space as a major contributor to the quality of life and neighborhood identity.***

Significant relationships between the availability of parks and recreation opportunities and their direct impact on the quality of life should be a priority in the city. The strength of neighborhood identity often is directly related to the oldest municipal open spaces in the city.

**Constraints**

**1. *No way to expand most current parks beyond land locked parcels.***

Currently the land allotted for the parks is contained on all sides by residential, commercial or business patterns. This situation presents a constraint should the city population increase or the Park's Department decide to increase the park system in land mass.

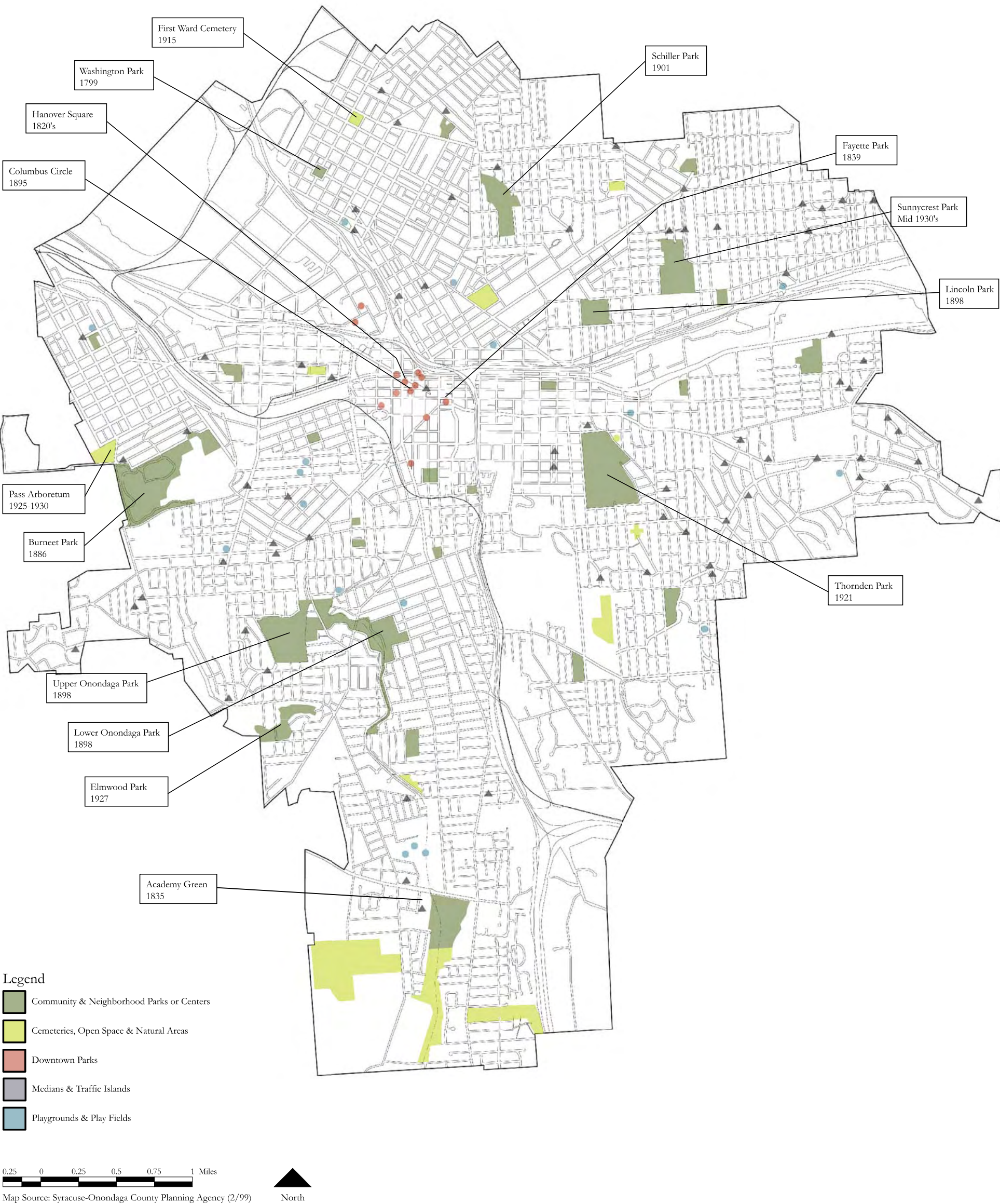
**1. *Extreme topographic conditions.***

The topographical composition of the land on which some open space exists do not allow for redevelopment of options or re-establishment of damaged or destroyed historic features.

**2. *Current infrastructure and utility locations.***

While utilities are a basic need of contemporary living, a large majority of these utilities are placed above ground, mounted on pole units and thus frame a number of constraints to streetscape maintenance or redevelopment including street tree selection, streetscape material selection, and visual quality.





## Goals, Objectives and Recommended Actions

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## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Based on the data collected during the inventory and the subsequent evaluation of that information, three preservation goals were developed, each with supportive objectives and each of those with recommended actions. Goals are defined as the general results toward which all efforts will be directed. Objectives are the specific attainable results pursuant to each goal; and recommended actions are the policies, programs and physical projects that are the real means to reaching each goal. Recognizing that not all recommendations can be accomplished at once, the plan calls for a three phased approach to implementation: 1--immediate action (completed with one year of adoption); 2—future action (completed within 2-3 years of adoption); and 3—long range (completed within 4-5 years of adoption).

The Preservation Component of the Syracuse Comprehensive Plan has three goals:

1. To make preservation a priority in the community,
2. To celebrate the diverse physical form and fabric of the city, and
3. To seize the economic opportunities and benefits of preservation.

### **Goal 1: Make preservation a priority in Syracuse.**

Individuals, businesses, not-for-profit corporations, academic institutions, and local government officials can use the principles of preservation to strengthen the physical and social fabric of the city's neighborhoods, business and commercial areas, University Hill and Downtown. For sound preservation is based on the

recognition of and appreciation for the tangible evidence of the community's past. "Good" preservation calls for the retention of older buildings, structures, objects and sites, as well as demands their continued use in ways that sustain contemporary needs. It also generates an interest in and greater appreciation for the city's collective heritage, which in turn can enlighten citizens, inspire civic pride, and generate both individual and shared loyalty to the community. Elected officials, supported by effective legislation and administrative tools, can be the principal advocates promoting these ideals. A population that sees the cultural value in preserving the tangible evidence of its past and the history it represents is the social capital that will continue to make Syracuse a community where people want to live and work.

### **Objective 1: Create a strong preservation ethic among the citizenry.**

Citizens need to be more aware that Syracuse has a rich history, and that its heritage is evident in the existing fabric of the city. Senior citizens, elementary school children, transient populations, life-long residents—virtually all members of the community must be more cognizant of the meaning behind city form. Individual properties, contiguous blocks and entire neighborhoods can place the local community within the larger context of state and national historic happenings; they can tell the story of events and people significant to the city's growth and development; and they can bring meaning to the every-day places of Syracusans. Understanding that both commonplace and unique components of the city fabric deserve recognition and protection will aid in maintaining a sense of place and high quality of life.

### ***Action 1: Promote a broad, comprehensive definition for and***





***awareness of preservation. (Time frame: 1)***

- Encourage that all historic evidence, not just outstanding architecture, be embraced as important.
- Document prototypes illustrating the successful range of preservation activities, including research and documentation, interpretation, education, long-term continued use, adaptive re-use, etc.

***Action 2: Promote comprehensive public education and public relations programs for local preservation. (Time frame: 2)***

- Maximize existing local, state, and federal educational and marketing mechanisms.
- Support creation of academic curricula for all levels, which introduce principles of preservation.
- Assist in targeting preservation promotional efforts to local granting agencies and corporate funding entities.
- Maximize funding mechanisms to support expanded and/or new education or public relations programs.
- Support increased activities of preservation advocacy organizations.
- Encourage the formation of new preservation-based advocacy organizations.

***Action 3: Provide connections between local community and state and national preservation groups. (Time frame: 1)***

- Work in concert with local advocacy organizations to obtain educational materials and programs.
- Develop active association with preservation professionals.

***Action 4: Engage local universities and colleges in preservation activities. (Time frame: 2)***

- Encourage public service, research and partnerships addressing local preservation efforts.
- Assist institutions in being good stewards of their historic properties.
- Assist institutions in being sensitive to historic properties and conservation districts adjacent to their campuses.

***Action 5: Include non-traditional preservation groups in preservation efforts. (Time frame: 2)***

- Encourage neighborhood associations, park groups, and religious institutions to become involved in preservation activities.
- Encourage cooperation between conservation-based organizations and preservation advocacy groups.

***Objective 2: Emphasize the importance of community history to community identity and civic pride.***

Community identity is based to some degree on a city's history and the citizens' informed and intuitive awareness of that history. The former is achieved through established, organized measures that impart accurate historical facts, including those that document unpopular events or trends. The latter is acquired, in part, through daily and life-long interaction with the physical environment. The greater value may lie in this second method, as regardless of education, income level, ethnicity or race, each citizen develops his/her own personal relationship with the city through home, work, worship and play. It is this familiarity with an individual property, street or neighborhood that personalizes history, gives meaning to the Syracuse, and can lead to civic pride.

***Action 1: Promote a stronger relationship between history and physical fabric of the city. (Time frame: 3)***



- Support enhancement of academic history curricula to include place-based learning, for example, at historic properties, through walking tours, etc.
- Support increased emphasis on local historical events and people in curricula.
- Support strong programmatic and physical connections between place and history, including but not limited to an interpretive signage system.

***Action 2: Recognize the cultural value of historic resources in addition to their economic worth. (Time frame: 2)***

- Acknowledge the inherent value associated with pride in one's birthplace and home.
- Develop methods for measuring the cultural value of historic resources.
- Assess cultural value in concert with economic worth for municipal sponsored or supported ventures.

***Action 3: Celebrate community history through civic events. (Time frame: 1)***

- Institute local history month, including annual as well as one-time events.
- Support expansion of history-based events to include broader range of local history.
- Facilitate the use of neighborhood venues for heritage-based events, such as cultural festivals associated with traditional ethnic sectors of the city.

**Objective 3: Integrate preservation more fully into the administration of the city.**

In order to achieve a strong preservation ethic within the community, preservation must be instilled in the city administration. Elected officials, appointed individuals and hired staff should consider the preservation of city form a central component of their responsibilities and well-within their respective levels of authority. Plans, laws, regulations and rules are the most effective

way to insure comprehensive integration of preservation principles and values into city management, planning and living. When official decision-making by the Mayor, Common Council and various boards and commissions routinely respects the importance of preserving noteworthy physical fabric, municipal actions will result in sustainable neighborhoods, business and commercial areas, the University Hill and Downtown.

***Action 1: Encourage elected and appointed officials to be supportive of preservation in their decision-making. (Time frame: 1)***

- Develop and implement educational materials for new officials.
- Hire professional staff with qualifications in the planning, design and preservation professions.
- Routinely seek outside professional advice regarding preservation matters.
- Reference preservation in related city documents, such as facility management plans, departmental capital budgets, Community Development Consolidated Plan, etc.

***Action 2: Encourage cooperation between the city administration and preservation advocates. (Time frame: 2)***

- Recognize successful preservation efforts of local advocacy organizations through official awards, mayoral proclamations and/or council resolutions.
- Promote joint public-private preservation ventures, including research, physical development, etc.

***Action 3: Establish interdepartmental review process for municipal projects affecting historic resources. (Time frame: 1)***

- Establish an executive/mayoral mandate for insuring coordination of efforts.



- Require planning, design and preservation expertise of key staff.
- Build support for preservation principles and values among all staff.

***Action 4: Improve enforcement of codes, laws and regulations. (Time frame: 2)***

- Revise codes, laws and/or regulations to more effectively support preservation of city fabric.
- Insure consistent and comprehensive enforcement of all such legal mechanisms.
- Develop a system to target code enforcement in historic districts and conservation districts.
- Develop and implement a preservation-training program for building inspectors.

***Action 5: Manage municipal historic properties as community assets. (Time frame: 1)***

- Protect, enhance and use city-owned historic properties.
- Promote partnerships with advocacy organizations and corporate entities to preserve public historic resources.
- Encourage use of public historic properties for educational and civic purposes.

**Goal 2: Celebrate the diverse physical form and fabric of the city.**

Cities are complex and dynamic places. They are dense concentrations of heterogeneous populations sustained by intricate combinations of functions, ideas and values; and their physical form is derived from these multifaceted interconnections. They are further distinguished by their density, that sense of intimacy that comes from concentrations of buildings in close proximity to one another, judiciously located communal open spaces, and streets of seemingly random and

conflicting patterns. These are places that have evolved over long periods of time, with each generation usually adding a layer to the city fabric, rather than irreversibly removing one piece to accommodate another. Within these layers cities contain buildings, structures and spaces that are meaningful to the citizenry. Some are incomparable, the exception rather than the rule, and deserve special recognition and protection. Others are less illustrious, more ordinary, but equally deserving of attention and preservation. Syracuse must celebrate both the exceptional and familiar, for these are the places that mark the city's identity and distinguish it from the surrounding towns, villages and hamlets. They are the places that set the city apart from its surroundings and the places that allow Syracuse to be a vibrant community.

**Objective 1: Preserve significant historic resources.**

Notable historic resources can be identified, officially recognized and subsequently protected through programs established at all levels of government. These programs provide specific criteria to assess a property's significance relative to local, state and national historical trends, events and persons. To meet such established standards, these places must possess intrinsic historical associations, visual characteristics and/or physical features that distinguish them from similar older community fabric. Syracuse is fortunate to already have honored many of its most important resources through local designation and nomination to the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places—and hundreds of other properties also have been identified for the same status. Listing these additional eligible properties under each program will increase public awareness of and appreciation for the city's historic places.



***Action 1: Make local, state and national designation of eligible properties a priority. (Time frame: 1)***

- Utilize and maintain citywide survey of historic properties.
- Encourage official designation of properties through promotional materials.
- Promote local designation for all State and National Register listed properties.
- Join in partnership with advocacy organizations to publicize new designations.

***Action 2: Encourage new programs that promote designated properties. (Time frame: 2)***

- Support creation of historic property owners associations.
- Join in partnership with advocacy organizations to provide tours highlighting designated properties.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive interpretive signage system, which in part calls attention to designated properties.

**Objective 2: Conserve noteworthy traditional urban fabric.**

The prosperity of post World War II often is viewed as the most recent “beginning of the end” for many urban centers. The great rush of city dwellers to flee to the suburbs was aided by the nation’s aggressive highway building, widespread urban renewal demolitions, and attractive federal home mortgage assistance programs. In the wake of this exodus, urban planners and theorists cried out for restraint. They championed the human scale and social vibrancy of cities derived from the closeness of scores of modest buildings, the vast networks of sidewalks and attendant pedestrian interaction, the proximity of school, park and home, and the abundance of local gathering places. The slow erosion of this intricate and complex physical and social

texture was erasing the very essence of cities. Today, although the instigating factors may be different, Syracuse continues to face the same prospect. However, insightful planning will safeguard the city’s noteworthy traditional urban fabric and insure its incorporation in community revitalization.

***Action 1: Identify various organizational patterns, built form and open space that define sense of place as conservation districts. (Time frame: 1)***

- Identify the characteristics of each, including block-lot-street relationships, setbacks, building form, scale, features and materials, etc.
- Evaluate urban fabric based on these characteristics.
- Identify conservation districts, as well as the extent of transitional zones as context for each.

***Action 2: Develop mechanisms to ensure protection and enhancement of conservation districts. (Time frame: 2)***

- Create and adopt new and additional overlay districts within zoning rules and regulations.
- Develop and implement design guidelines for conservation districts.
- Expand type and use of transitional zoning districts.

***Action 3: Promote appropriate physical repair and maintenance with conservation districts. (Time frame: 2)***

- Expand existing training programs for property owners, contractors and tradespeople.
- Link experienced contractors with historic property owners.
- Assist in marketing available properties to capable homeowners, investors and developers supportive of conservation district principles.





- Identify commercial outlets for appropriate repair materials, such as salvage businesses and vendors of historic materials.
- Encourage alternative, preservation-sensitive approaches to hazardous materials abatement.
- Create public educational materials, such as websites, hotlines, etc.

***Action 4: Enhance historic parks and open space. (Time frame: 2)***

- Increase public awareness of the parks' historic significance.
- Increase investment in buildings and grounds located in historic parks and open space areas.
- Develop and implement comprehensive maintenance plans for each historic facility.
- Support existing and encourage the formation of new park advocacy organizations.

***Action 5: Explore alternative parking strategies. (Time frame: 2)***

Develop physical and programmatic criteria for cooperative neighborhood and business area lots.

Develop prototype for residential parking permit program.

Enhance CENTRO amenities for park-n-ride system.

***Action 6: Create a comprehensive approach for the redevelopment of vacant land. (Time frame: 2)***

- Create and continually update citywide inventory.
- Establish and enforce maintenance guidelines.
- Establish guidelines for new construction.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing strategy.

**Objective 3: Utilize strategies to maximize desirable physical forms.**

The way a building, structure or site is repaired or substantially adapted for a new use has an obvious physical impact on the subject property, but also indirectly influences the image of adjacent properties. Similarly, modifications made over time—or made to several properties in close proximity to one another—have a cumulative impact, and affect the visual and physical quality of an entire neighborhood or business area and ultimately a whole city. While it is important to support individual property owner responsibilities and rights, it is equally critical to recognize that independent decisions can affect the collective physical form of Syracuse. Repairs and extensive redevelopment that maintain the greatest degree of original fabric and employ traditional methods and materials will ensure the retention of those characteristics that make historic and conservation districts such appreciated components of the community. In addition, new construction that complements historic or noteworthy traditional properties will reinforce the importance of these familiar and valued resources.

***Action 1: Develop and implement design guidelines for properties in and adjacent to historic districts and conservation districts. (Time frame: 2)***

- Create guidelines for both appropriate modest repairs and more extensive work, and for a range of property types and ages.
- Create guidelines for appropriate new, in-fill construction.
- Develop and distribute public education materials regarding all design guidelines.

***Action 2: Develop and implement comprehensive streetscape design and maintenance plan. (Time frame 1)***



- Implement the citywide urban forestry plan.
- Identify the characteristics of noteworthy traditional streetscapes, including planting strips, street trees, lighting, sidewalks, etc.
- Evaluate urban fabric based on these characteristics, and define streetscapes to be retained and enhanced.
- Create design standards for improvements.
- Identify and enforce use of appropriate maintenance practices and materials.

#### **Objective 4: Revise Zoning Rules and Regulations**

The current Syracuse Zoning Rules and Regulations originally were written in 1922, and have not been completely revised since the 1950s. Changes made at that time reflect the popular mid-twentieth century focus of promoting more suburban, and therefore less dense, physical city fabric. Limited revisions made sporadically since then do not relate to an overarching approach to long-range community planning, but rather to single issues raised by various constituencies. The result is that the current text provides little direction as to preferred land use patterns, physical characteristics or visual quality, and addresses primarily use and building bulk, mass and setbacks. A comprehensive revision of the zoning ordinance that incorporates greater sensitivity to historic properties and noteworthy traditional urban fabric will result in a legal mechanism supportive of smart growth and economic reinvestment.

***Action 1: Provide direct correlation to proposed city comprehensive plan. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 2: Reinforce existing, desirable land use patterns in terms of allowable and special uses. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 3: Respect density in identified historic and conservation districts as related to lot coverage, setbacks, and building bulk and form. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 4: Expand requirements for planned institutional district, including provisions that address issues of aesthetics and physical context. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 5: Expand and enforce the requirements for surface parking lots and screening. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 6: Expand and enforce provisions of the sign ordinance, particularly as related to temporary signs. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 7: Incorporate additional overlay districts, specifically to address conservation districts. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 8: Incorporate design review mechanisms and design guidelines. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 9: Develop guidelines for reviewing and approving variance, subdivision and special permit requests. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 10: Increase public notification time, area and degree of information disseminated. (Time frame: 1)***

***Action 11: Incorporate professional qualifications for City Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals members. (Time frame: 1)***

**Objective 5: Strengthen landmark preservation ordinance and operation of the Landmark Preservation Board.**

Although the Board devotes time to the designation process, the bulk of its efforts are directed towards requests for



Certificates of Appropriateness. In considering proposed changes to designated properties, the Board references established technical standards used nationally for over 30 years in similar reviews by federal, state and municipal agencies and boards. Its decisions, therefore, are based on the appropriate physical treatment of older properties and not the personal preferences of individual board members—yet community perception often is that decisions are highly subjective and often arbitrary. Efforts must be undertaken to reverse this view, and instead demonstrate the benefits of accessing the Board’s expertise. In addition, the Board must have the latitude to insure that alternatives to demolition and inappropriate new construction are given fair and objective consideration. By consistently applying proven standards in its reviews, communicating more often and more directly with the community at-large, and becoming integral to decisions about growth and development, the Board will ensure that locally designated properties will not be adversely affected by inappropriate, out-of-scale, out-of-character changes. This assurance in turn will generate a high degree of investor confidence in local preservation districts and conservation districts.

***Action 1: Expand and clarify which types properties can be locally designated. (Time frame: 1)***

- Revise definitions of eligible properties to include and clearly distinguish between buildings, structures and landscapes.
- Include provisions to designate archeological resources.

***Action 2: Expand responsibilities of the Board to include conservation districts. (Time frame: 1)***

- Include review of conservation district designation applications within Board responsibilities.
- Include review of physical changes to conservation district properties within Board responsibilities.

***Action 3: Expand provisions of demolition articles. (Time frame: 1)***

- Define and implement parameters for documenting imminent threats to health and safety.
- Develop hierarchy of alternatives to demolition that must be investigated, including short- and long-term stabilization, redevelopment marketing strategies, etc.
- Develop and enforce mitigation measures when demolition cannot be avoided, including but not limited to documentation.
- Apply provisions to proposed demolitions within conservation areas.

***Action 4: Revise Planning Commission appellate review of Board decisions. (Time frame: 1)***

- Require consideration of all criteria used by the Board.
- Develop and enforce documentation criteria for economic hardship.
- Develop and enforce documentation of appellate decisions.

***Action 5: Revise operating rules and procedures. (Time frame: 1)***

- Increase communications with owners of locally designated properties.
- Improve accessibility to certificate of appropriateness procedures and forms.
- Develop and distribute informational materials regarding procedures, meeting schedules, etc.



***Action 6: Develop repair and design guidelines for locally designated properties. (Time frame: 1)***

- Complete and implement the draft Sedgwick-Highland-James District design guidelines.
- Use the Sedgwick-Highland-James District Guidelines as a model for additional district guidelines.
- Provide periodic public education/training programs regarding the guidelines.

***Action 7: Institute formal educational training for new board members (Time frame: 1)***

- Expand orientation for new board members.
- Revise and update board member manual.
- Provide annual education/training programs.

***Action 8: Provide full-time professional staff. (Time frame: 1)***

**Goal 3: Seize the economic opportunities and benefits of preservation.**

Cities that have high quality physical environments have an invaluable resource with which to attract high-wage employers, who in turn attract high-skilled workers. Such business leaders and employees seek the same high standard for their living environments as they do for their careers. They want a home community with a strong identity, one comprised of distinctive and memorable places that evoke shared values and economic viability through their physical fabric. These are people too who invest in the local built environment, and not just their personal piece of it. This kind of investment often is labor-intensive, making preservation an important job-creating component of a local economy:

studies show that preservation activities create more jobs dollar-for-dollar than new construction, as well as other basic industries. In an era when a diversified labor pool is integral to economic stability, no city can ignore the value of preservation in providing job opportunities for its citizens. Nor can a community disregard the importance of preservation in perpetuating urban re-investment. When government, business and civic leaders recognize and actively promote the unique physical attributes of their cities, they exhibit a loyalty to and confidence in the ability of their communities to grow. This assurance can and will attract new investment, and work to counter urban abandonment and sprawl. And the dollars that go into the retention and continued use of city fabric generate additional dollars in the form of tourism. For the same special places that make neighborhoods, business areas and downtown desirable to Syracusans also will attract tourists; making heritage tourism yet one more benefit of preserving historic properties and noteworthy traditional urban form.

**Objective 1: Emphasize the economic benefits of preservation.**

Once viewed as a luxury that a community could rarely afford, preservation is now more commonly recognized as central to a strong and growing economy. In its raw form, preservation of existing urban fabric might be seen as a large-scale recycling program, whereby older and historic properties—much like paper and plastic goods—are retained and reshaped for new uses. Just as manufacturers have realized the cost-effectiveness of maximizing the life and after-life of their products, cities must understand the positive economic value derived from the continued reuse of the built environment. The economic challenges Syracuse faces as the 21st century begins will be successfully met when there is an appreciation for and accounting of the





cumulative financial investment inherent in existing municipal infrastructure, public lands and private property; and there is a commitment to make the most of this capital rather than ignore or destroy it.

***Action 1: Collect data documenting the local economics of preservation. (Time frame: 1)***

- Calculate the number of jobs created by past preservation projects, including construction, tourism and education activities, and track the same in the future.
- Calculate changes in real estate value of historic properties after designation/nomination and in comparison to similar but non-designated properties, and track the same in the future.
- Calculate changes in real property taxes collected as a result of past preservation activities, and track the same in the future.
- Calculate and track changes in real estate value of conservation district properties after approval of district designation.
- Calculate and track retail sales and sales tax revenues associated with preservation projects, including construction and tourism activities.

***Action 2: Educate the real estate and financial communities about the economic and cultural value of historic properties. (Time frame: 2)***

- Join in partnership with advocacy organizations to develop training programs addressing local history, architectural styles, etc.
- Join in partnership with the Greater Syracuse Board of Realtors and local lending institutions to collect and disseminate data documenting local preservation economics.

- Encourage permanent seasonal or cyclical joint ventures between the Preservation Association of CNY, Inc. and Greater Syracuse Board of Realtors, such as continuing education courses, neighborhood tours, etc.

***Action 3: Promote redevelopment of historic properties over demolition and new construction. (Time frame: 1)***

- Calculate and compare costs associated with redevelopment vs. new construction, in general and for specific proposals.
- Expand institutional and corporate programs that favor retention of properties in historic districts and conservation districts, such as mortgage assistance for owner-occupant residents, revolving loan funds, etc.
- Join in partnership with advocacy organizations to market historic properties available for redevelopment or threatened by demolition.

**Objective 2: Maximize current public and private economic programs to support preservation activities.**

Both government and private sector entities offer a large number of tools for assisting economic development ventures. Some programs, such as the federal investment tax credits for the certified rehabilitation of properties listed in the National Register, are specific to preservation activities. Others, however, such as the federal low income housing tax credits or community development block grants, are not exclusive to preservation undertakings and, in fact, often are not readily considered for such activities. No matter what the state of the national, New York State or Syracuse economy at any given time, all available economic development programs must be considered viable options for furthering preservation of the city's fabric.



***Action 1: Develop and distribute information about available programs through a multi-media marketing campaign. (Time frame: 1)***

- Improve communication and administrative links to current programs, including through websites, participation in seminars, etc.
- Enhance and continually update existing brochures.
- Hold periodic public information sessions regarding current programs.
- Publicize successful projects that incorporated current programs.

***Action 2: Enhance existing local economic programs. (Time frame: 2)***

- Revise Section 444a of the local Real Property Tax Law to provide maximum exemptions to eligible applicants.
- Establish a preservation fund through a set-aside from existing revenue streams, such as a percentage of community development funds or PILOT payments.
- Target a percentage of existing programs to projects in close physical proximity to one another, for concentrated and highly visible impacts.

**Objective 3: Develop new economic mechanisms to support preservation activities.**

All economic development is based on encouraging private investors to undertake projects that generate community benefits, as well as the obvious requisite personal financial return. Often times, however, incentives are provided to guarantee specific desired outcomes. The costs of preservation incentives surpass private sector investment in that preservation has substantial economic impacts beyond the initial undertaking. Because of this greater net public benefit, preservation is more generally accepted as a viable component of

a city's economic plan. It is critical, therefore, that the community be creative in developing and offering additional incentives that will support increased preservation in Syracuse's neighborhoods, business areas and downtown.

***Action 1: Support passage of federal and state legislation to establish tax credit programs for owners of historic homes. (Time frame: 1)***

- Inform state and federal elected representatives that the city administration backs the legislation.
- Solicit support from local organizations, such as the Greater Syracuse Board of Realtors, not-for-profit preservation, neighborhood and housing organizations, etc.

***Action 2: Establish new local programs based on successful national models. (Time frame: 2)***

- Create programs that assist owner-occupants of market-rate housing, such as Live-in-a-Landmark, Parade of Historic Homes, etc.
- Create programs that assist neighborhood/business development corporations in preventing unnecessary demolition or encouraging rehabilitation, for example a revolving fund.
- Create programs that assist at-risk property owners (e.g., the elderly) with necessary seasonal or cyclical repairs, such as Christmas in April.

***Action 3: Investigate potential funding assistance mechanisms for hazardous materials abatement. (Time frame: 3)***

- Identify range of appropriate treatments, from encapsulation to removal, and possible likely costs of each.



- Identify existing sources of funding for environmental clean-ups and reclamation.
- Explore possible methods for minimizing costs.

***Action 4: Utilize preservation construction activities as a job creation catalyst. (Time frame: 2)***

- Join in partnership with Syracuse School District, BOCES and local labor union chapters to create training programs in the traditional trades, with a focus on the methods and materials specific to older properties.
- Join in partnership with local public agencies and private organizations to increase opportunities for small contractors and tradespeople, such as creating a clearinghouse for information on rehabilitation methods and materials.
- Join in partnership with not-for-profit preservation, neighborhood and housing organizations to establish regularly scheduled seminars regarding home repairs and contractor selection.

**Objective 4: Enhance the economic value of heritage tourism.**

Tourism, of any form, is based on a desire to travel and experience a place—to have the first-hand opportunity to see for oneself natural and cultural elements different from those that are most familiar, those that constitute one's home environment. It is this interest in learning that sets heritage tourism apart from the larger concept, for historic properties can impart countless stories of events and persons, of cultural trends and movements, of societal transgressions and successes in a way that draw visitors into a place. Authentic fabric affords the visitor to literally see, feel, hear, even smell history; it makes the past real—at times joyful and exciting, at others serious and thought-provoking. No matter the individual response, if the physical evidence

is preserved and made accessible Americans will flock to experience it. And when they do, they stimulate the local and regional economy. The direct beneficiaries might often be historic properties; but heritage tourism results in increased retail and service sales, including added traffic for restaurants, novelty stores, gas stations, hotels and many other businesses. Many of Syracuse's most significant historic properties, a concentration of which is located downtown, already draw tourists; but many more parts of the city tell equally interesting and fascinating stories. When the community develops a comprehensive approach to heritage tourism, that story will be more compelling; and the economic impact will be more complete.

***Action 1: Improve communication and administrative links to current federal and state heritage tourism programs. (Time frame: 2)***

- Become an official participant in all pertinent programs, such as federal and state Freedom Trail and Women's Rights heritage tourism programs.
- Join in partnership with public agencies and private organizations to promote properties and events, including joint fundraising, combined advertising, and shared exhibits.

***Action 2: Encourage cooperative promotional efforts between the city administration, Chamber of Commerce, Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Metropolitan Development Agency. (Time frame: 1)***

- Establish heritage tourism as a community asset and priority, and persuade the other entities to do so as well.
- Join in partnership to market the city as a primary heritage tourism destination.



***Action 3: Encourage maximum coordination of events. (Time frame: 1)***

- Join in partnership with local museums, the arts community, and other organizations to schedule, advertise and manage heritage-based events.
- Encourage local participation in national or state based initiatives, such as National Preservation Week.

neighborhoods, business areas and downtown. The objectives presented further codify these ideals; and implementation of the recommended actions will make them a reality.

***Action 4: Encourage a link between heritage tourism and heritage education. (Time frame: 3)***

- Market Syracuse to school districts outside the city as a venue for place-based learning.
- Assist local organizations in accommodating a range of heritage tourism “students”, including school groups and elder hostiles.

***Action 5: Promote downtown Syracuse as the community’s primary cultural district. (Time frame: 2)***

- Make retention of downtown older and historic properties a priority.
- Encourage redevelopment of vacant or underutilized older and historic properties.
- Encourage additional heritage, cultural and arts organizations to locate downtown.
- Utilize unique character of downtown as a primary component of heritage tourism programming and marketing.

The three goals of the Preservation Component of the Comprehensive Plan clearly define the importance of establishing a preservation ethic among elected officials, business and civic leaders, and the general population; fostering an appreciation for the city fabric that represents the community’s collective history; and pursuing the maximum economic value of protecting and promoting Syracuse’s historic





# Goal One: Make preservation a priority in Syracuse.

Objective 1: Create a strong preservation ethic among the citizenry.



The Wiehbeck Building, opened in 1850, now serves as the Erie Canal Museum.



Gothic Cottage at 1631 South Salina Street.



The Gordon Nordman House, formerly on Seneca Turnpike.

Action 1: Promote a broad, comprehensive definition for and awareness of preservation.



The Onondaga Historical Association on Montgomery Street.

Action 2: Promote comprehensive public education and public relations programs for local preservation.

Action 3: Provide connections between local community and state and national preservation groups.



SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry's Urban Design Studio and steering committee.

Action 4: Engage local universities and colleges in preservation activities.



The Westcott Community Center on Euclid Avenue and Westcott Street.



The Eastside Neighborhood Arts, Culture and Technology Center.

Action 5: Include non-traditional preservation groups in preservation activities.

Objective 2: Emphasize the importance of community history to community identity and civic pride.



The Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument at Clinton Square.

Action 1: Promote a stronger relationship between history and physical fabric of the city.



Dr. George E. Gridley House, South Salina Street.

Action 2: Recognize the cultural value of historic resources in addition to their economic worth.



The Syracuse Nationals and the H. H. Franklin Celebration, Downtown Syracuse.



The First Syracuse Arts and Crafts Festival at Plymouth Congregational Church.

Action 3: Celebrate community history through civic events.

Objective 3: Integrate preservation more fully into the administration of the city.



Hiawatha Lake in Onondaga Park.

Action 1: Encourage elected and appointed officials to be supportive of preservation in their decision-making.

Action 2: Encourage cooperation between the city administration and preservation advocates.



Construction of Interstate 690 in Downtown Syracuse.

Action 3: Establish interdepartmental review process for municipal projects affecting historic resources.



Demolition of 227 Konners Avenue.

Action 4: Improve enforcement of codes, laws, and regulations.



Branchburg Branch, Onondaga County Library.



Onondaga County Courthouse on Columbus Circle.

Action 5: Manage municipal historic properties as community assets.





# Goal Two: Celebrate the diverse physical form and fabric of the city.

## Objective 1: Preserve significant historic resources.



The Harriet May Mill House, located at 1074 West Genesee Street.

Action 1: Make local, state and national designation of eligible properties a priority.

Action 2: Encourage new programs that promote designated properties.

## Objective 2: Conserve noteworthy traditional urban fabric.

Action 1: Identify various organizational patterns, built form and open space that define sense of place as conservation districts.

Action 2: Develop mechanisms to ensure protection and enhancement of conservation districts.



A home repair in one of the city's northside neighborhoods.

Action 3: Promote appropriate physical repair and maintenance with conservation districts.



Upper Onondaga Park.

Action 4: Enhance historic parks and open space.

Action 5: Explore alternative parking strategies.



An example of a vacant property in a residential neighborhood.

Action 6: Create a comprehensive approach for the redevelopment of vacant land.

## Objective 3: Utilize strategies to maximize desirable physical forms.

Action 1: Develop and implement design guidelines for properties in and adjacent to historic districts and conservation districts.



Streetscape along Batterman Street.

Action 2: Develop and implement comprehensive streetscape design and maintenance plan.

## Objective 4: Revise Zoning Rules and Regulations.

Action 1: Provide direct correlation to proposed city comprehensive plan.

Action 2: Reinforce existing, desirable land use patterns in terms of allowable and special uses.



A home in Sedgwick Farm, a registered historic district.

Action 3: Respect density in identified historic and conservation districts as related to lot coverage, setbacks, and building bulk and form.

Action 4: Expand requirements for planned institutional district, including provisions that address issues of aesthetics and physical context.



An example of surface parking treatment in the city.

Action 5: Expand and enforce the requirements for surface parking lots and screening.

Action 6: Expand and enforce provisions of the sign ordinance, particularly as related to temporary signs.

Action 7: Incorporate additional overlay districts, specifically to address conservation districts.



Contemporary commercial design adjacent to a historic structure.

Action 8: Incorporate design review mechanisms and design guidelines.

Action 9: Develop guidelines for reviewing and approving variance, subdivision and special permit requests.

Action 10: Increase public notification time, area and degree of information disseminated.

Action 11: Incorporate professional qualifications for City Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals members.

## Objective 5: Strengthen Landmark Preservation Ordinance and operation of the Landmark Preservation Board.

Action 1: Expand and clarify which types properties can be locally designated.



The Eastwood section of Syracuse, a potential conservation district.

Action 2: Expand responsibilities of the Board to include conservation districts.

Action 3: Expand provisions of demolition articles.

Action 4: Revise Planning Commission appellate review of Board decisions.

Action 5: Revise operating rules and procedures.



A historic home under repair on McBride Street.



Examples of design review guidelines.

Action 6: Develop repair and design guidelines for locally designated properties.

Action 7: Institute formal educational training for new board members.

Action 8: Provide full-time professional staff.





# Goal Three: Seize the economic opportunities and benefits of preservation.

Objective 1: Emphasize the economic benefits of preservation.



Recently completed market-rate housing projects in Hanover Square.

Action 1: Collect data documenting the local economics of preservation.



A Ward Wellington Ward house on Salt Springs Road.

Action 2: Educate the real estate and financial communities about the economic and cultural value of historic properties.



Historic house available on South Sabina Street.



Adaptive re-use of a property in the Hawley-Green Street Historic District.

Action 3: Promote redevelopment of historic properties over demolition and new construction.

Objective 2: Maximize current public and private economic programs to support preservation activities.



Owners of income-producing historic properties are eligible for income-tax credits if they meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation.

Action 1: Develop and distribute information about available programs through a multi-media marketing campaign.



Rehabilitation work under way on Green Street.

Action 2: Enhance existing local economic programs.

Objective 3: Develop new economic mechanisms to support preservation activities.



Private home in the university neighborhood.

Action 1: Support passage of federal and state legislation to establish tax credit programs for owners of historic homes.



Preservation programs available on the world wide web.

Action 2: Establish new local programs based on successful national models.

Action 3: Investigate potential funding assistance mechanisms for hazardous materials abatement.



Construction work in the North Sabina Street historic district.

Action 4: Utilize preservation construction activities as a job creation catalyst.

Objective 4: Enhance the economic value of heritage tourism.

Action 1: Improve communication and administrative links to current federal and state heritage tourism programs.



The Landmark Theatre in Downtown Syracuse.

Action 2: Encourage cooperative promotional efforts between the city administration, Chamber of Commerce, Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Metropolitan Development Agency.



The Scottish Festival in City Hall Commons.

Action 3: Encourage maximum coordination of events.



Edward Smith Elementary School.

Action 4: Encourage a link between heritage tourism and heritage education.



A downtown celebration in Clinton Square.



The Empire State Ballet perform in Army Square.

Action 5: Promote downtown Syracuse as the community's primary cultural district.





## Detailed Recommendations

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## GOAL ONE RECOMMENDATIONS

Given all the potential programs that might be developed to support preservation activities, three specific project types were developed. The project types are:

1. Creating a comprehensive historic marker program that addresses both historic registered sites and potential/eligible sites for the National Register of Historic Places;
2. Instating an annual historic tour program within neighborhoods containing important cultural heritage pertaining to Syracuse's history and development;
3. Establishing a public art program that encourages the public to consider historic sites and structures as valuable resources in their communities.

Following extensive research into existing programs that are in use nationwide, these three types of programs seemed most appropriate for Syracuse. The following programs are recommended because they are easy to start up and have been successful in other places with similar problems, opportunities and constraints.

### Marking Time: The Syracuse Historic Marker Program

Historic marker programs have proven to be an effective way to draw attention to the many events, people and places that have contributed richness and vitality to a community's history. Markers not only obviously identify evidence of that history, but also offer an opportunity to enlighten residents and visitors through both narrative and graphic materials. They help make history tangible and aid in fostering people's ability to make connections between the extant environment and the past. They provide a physical connection between place

and history by both literally and figuratively giving added meaning to historically important buildings, structures, objects or spaces.

#### Purpose

A comprehensive historic marker program for the City of Syracuse will respond to an already strong interest in local history, but more importantly also will encourage a broader awareness and appreciation of the community's shared heritage among residents. As familiar components of the city landscape, the markers will become readily associated with properties deserving of recognition and protection. Owners of properties having markers will realize an increased sense of pride in being responsible for a piece of community history, while entire neighborhoods or business districts will experience an expanded civic consciousness.

The program also will serve as a way-finding system for visitors and tourists, marking not just single properties but an entire system of sites linked by historic events or persons. The markers will help non-residents simultaneously move through the city's contemporary and historic environments, enhancing the visitor and tourist experience immeasurably.

#### Administration

The Syracuse Marker Program will be a joint venture between the City of Syracuse and the Onondaga Historical Association (OHA), with the OHA taking primary responsibility for the application process, development of marker narrative and graphic content, and management of a program data base. The City will install and maintain all public property markers through the Department of Public Works, pursue funding sources that support such municipal ventures through the Bureau of Research, and provide relevant historical information through the Landmark



Preservation Board. Together, the OHA and City will develop and implement marketing materials for the program. Program costs will be supported by public and corporate grant funds, and modest participant fees (i.e., no more than 50% of the total marker fabrication cost).

### Criteria

Properties eligible for the marker program will meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Listing in the New York State or National Registers of Historic Places as an individual property or as an historic district.
- Inclusion in a district listed in the New York State or National Registers of Historic Places.
- Designation under the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance as a protected site or a preservation district.
- Inclusion in a district designated under Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance.
- Site of demolished building, structure or object previously included in the New York State or National Registers of Historic Places, or designated under Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance related to events, people or places.
- Publicly owned properties not listed in the National Registers of Historic Places or designated under Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance.

Because all eligible properties will be nominated or designated historic resources, each will have some association with events, persons or cultural influences that have been determined significant in national, state and/or local history. Within this broad context, more specific themes will be identified for the Syracuse Marker Program, including but not limited to agriculture, industry, archeology, architecture, landscape

architecture, engineering, education, recreation, entertainment, religious institutions, civic concerns and social movements, cemeteries and burials, and military and defense. Information (e.g., dates) and educational narrative (e.g., description of an event) included on each marker will relate to one or more of these themes. OHA will be responsible for insuring the accuracy of each marker's text.

### Program Components

The marker program will consist of four typologies of signage, with multiple marker types per each level; specifically:

- **Type 1:** Privately owned properties listed in the New York State or National Registers of Historic Places or designated under the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance
- **Type 2:** Historic districts listed in New York State or National Registers of Historic Places or designated under the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance
- **Type 3:** Publicly owned properties
- **Type 4:** Sites of events, people, places, buildings, structures or objects that are no longer extant

To ensure that the markers will be easily recognized, all types will be of the same material, colors and finish, text will be executed in the same size and style; and each will contain the historic city seal, as well as identify the OHA. Specifically:

### Materials and Color

All markers will be architectural bronze and medium red brown in color. The background will be a satin finish; the lettering will be etched and filled ebony black. The City seal will be polished, distinguishing it from other components of the sign. All edges of the sign will be sandblasted.



## Lettering

The lettering will be in Helvetica with text left justified. Primary text, such as the property name, designer, or original owner and date of construction will be in bold and capitalized. Additional text will be in normal weight and in lower case. Lettering will be 1" for the primary text and ½" for all other text. Type 3 markers will have 3" lettering for primary text and 1 ½" for all other text. Type 3 and 4 markers will not exceed 16 words or 4 lines, (or take more than 3-4 seconds for the motorist to read and react).

## Dimensions

### *Type 1 markers will include:*

- 1'H x 1'W plaques fixed to the front elevation of buildings 5-7' from grade
- 2'H x 2'W hanging signs from a wrought iron hanger with bronze metal plated chains

### *Type 2 markers will include:*

- 2'H x 2'W double sided signs mounted on a .125 extruded aluminum black pole
- 9'H x 1'-6"W signs attached to the top of existing street signs with aluminum brackets

### *Type 3 markers will include:*

- 2'H x 2'W plaques fixed to the front elevation of buildings 5'-7' from grade
- 3'H x 3'W double sided signs mounted on .125 extruded aluminum black poles
- Sign faces will accommodate text in Braille and will be 6"H x 3'W with a minimum of 2'-6" from grade and meet ADA standards

### *Type 4 markers will include:*

- 2'H x 2'W plaques fixed to the front elevation of buildings 5'-7' from grade
- 1'H x 1'W plaques fixed to the front elevation of private buildings 5-7' from grade

- 3'H x 3'W double sided signs mounted on .125 extruded aluminum black poles
- Sign faces will accommodate text in Braille and will be 6"H x 3'W with a minimum of 2'-6" from grade and meet ADA standards

Markers will not be attached to trees, fences, utility poles, or any other means not addressed in the Marker Program.

Installation locations will be similar, if not identical, at all properties and allow maximum public visibility without requiring physical access to private properties; that is:

- Freestanding signage setbacks in commercial/ industrial districts shall be a minimum of 10' from the face of the curb, 100-200 ft. from intersections, 6' in front of shrubbery or other landscaping elements and be placed at a right angle to oncoming traffic
- Freestanding signage setback in residential districts shall be a minimum of 20' from the face of the curb, 100-200ft. from intersections and placed at a right angle to oncoming traffic
- Wall-mounted markers on commercial buildings will be located on the first floor level, within 10 ft of primary entrances and easily viewed by pedestrians
- Wall-mounted markers on residential buildings will be on the first floor level, on the front elevation and within 5 ft. of the primary entrance
- Hanging signs will be on the first floor level, a minimum of 10ft from grade and 10ft of the primary entrance

## Process

The Syracuse Marker Program will be implemented through two primary vehicles:

- For public properties, the OHA will identify eligible sites and work with the City to install the appropriate markers at





a pre-determined number of locations annually; and

- For private properties, individual owners or a third party designated by an owner (e.g., neighborhood association) will submit a request during an annual marker program application period.

Materials describing the comprehensive program, eligibility criteria and application process will be developed and distributed jointly by the OHA and City.

The number of markers awarded per year will depend on available program funding, as well as annual priorities, although in the first year an emphasis on public properties will demonstrate the city administration's commitment to the program. In subsequent years, program priorities may relate to specific themes (e.g., properties significant because of their association with women's rights) or particular geographic areas in the city (e.g., the Northside).

Successful applicants will be acknowledged during annual National Preservation Week, and some may be asked to participate in a ceremony celebrating the significance of the subject property and unveiling the marker.

### **Traveling Through Time: Syracuse History Tours Program**

Communities that embrace their heritage often share an understanding of the events, people and places that bear some degree of importance in illustrating that history. Citizens know where the memorable activities occurred, where significant individuals lived, worked or played, and where key social issues and cultural trends left their mark on the city. In Syracuse many of these notable properties are concentrated within Downtown, and are recognized by most residents as important evidence of the community's history.

What most residents often overlook, however, are the less obvious but equally important reminders of the past—the places that may be too familiar because of the current uses and associations that overshadow their relationship to history. Yet it is these most common places that provide a complete history of a place. Helping community residents see the city fabric in a renewed, “historic” light will ensure a greater appreciation for the city's history and the properties that embody it.

### **Purpose**

*Traveling Through Time* will promote and encourage Syracusans to value their homes, residential neighborhoods and business areas as important reminders of the past, as well as engender a desire to preserve these places for the community at-large. In addition, the program will provide residents with direct links to specific historic events, people or trends important in shaping the city as it stands today. Lastly, the tours will offer local citizens an entertaining way to introduce their home community to visitors and tourists.

### **Administration**

*Traveling Through Time* will be a joint venture between the City of Syracuse, the Preservation Association of Central New York, Inc. (PANCY) and the Onondaga Historical Association (OHA), with PACNY taking primary responsibility for administration and management. The City will pursue funding sources that support such municipal ventures through the Bureau of Research and provide relevant historical information through the Landmark Preservation Board. Together, PACNY and the City will develop and implement marketing materials for the program. Program costs will be supported by public and corporate grant funds, partial underwriting by local sponsors (e.g., neighborhood associations) and modest fees.



During the inaugural year of the program, a minimum of 3 of tours will be developed, with at least 1 given as a narrated tour. In subsequent years, a minimum of 2 new tours will be created, with at least one developed as a narrated tour. Each year at least 2 narrated tours will be scheduled.

### **Program Components**

The program will consist of walking and driving tours throughout most, if not all, Syracuse residential and commercial areas, as well as some industrial sectors. Walking tours will require a maximum of 2 hours, while driving tours may last somewhat longer. Driving tours will be used for extremely large tour areas, those designed to highlight themes related to the winter season, or to accommodate special needs.

Each tour will be documented in a brochure, which at a minimum will contain a tour map with delineated route, and designated stops and information related to each. Most tours will be developed as self-guided, although many will be offered in an expanded, narrated version. Different audiences may desire different stories within a given theme and, therefore, the narrated tours will provide the greatest flexibility to accommodate specific tour participants, such as elementary school groups or senior citizen organizations.

Each tour will have some association with events, persons or cultural influences that have been determined important in Syracuse history. These associations may be expressed through specific themes and bring attention to issues that are generally overlooked as historically significant to an urban area such as agriculture, archeology or recreation. They may address themes, such as the abolition movement and African American culture, that until recently were not well documented in Syracuse history. Or they may incorporate familiar themes in new

ways, such as a tour of “hidden” architectural styles—showcasing older buildings obscured by contemporary additions or materials.

The tours also may emphasize properties typically not viewed by contemporary society as historically important; for example, abandoned railroad sidings, garages and other outbuildings, or municipal reservoirs. In addition, many of the tours will include human-interest components that personalize the city’s history and, therefore, lend greater meaning to particular places: an entire tour may trace where and how one family lived, worked, worshiped and played in Syracuse. Particular historic themes or specific geographic areas may be identified as annual priorities.

Tours will be developed to operate independent of one another, although many may be linked by common themes. Similarly, the tours will not necessarily be developed to correspond to elements of the proposed Art of History Program or the Syracuse Marker Program; however, tour brochures will identify pertinent locations along or adjacent to a tour route.

### **Tour Examples**

Potential tours of *Traveling Through Time* would address the Underground Railroad and the city’s agricultural past.

#### ***Freedom Trail: Northside Neighborhood Tour***

This tour would introduce the efforts of the thousands of individuals that escaped slavery in the American South before the end of the Civil War. In New York State, Syracuse and the Central New York area played a leading role to abolish slavery. The historic events, places, and people of the Freedom Trail had a profound impact in Syracuse.



This driving tour would remain predominately in the Northside, with a few stops being just outside the neighborhood boundaries. The tour would begin at Rose Hill Cemetery, moving southeast along Highland Street, and then northeast onto Highland Avenue. Then Highland Avenue to Oak Street, and southeast on Oak Street to James Street. On James Street southwest to Lodi Street then southeast on Lodi Street to Erie Boulevard. East on Erie Boulevard to Pine Street, then Pine Street south to Ashworth Place. Ashworth Street west to University Avenue, and then north to East Fayette Street. Travel East Fayette to Almond Street. North on Almond Street, which turns into Catherine Street. North to James Street. Southwest on James to North Salina Street, and then north to Catawba Street. East on Catawba to Lodi Street south to Ash Street. Ash Street west to North State Street south, east on Hickory Street returning to Rose Hill Cemetery.

This tour would include at least ten stops, including but not limited to:

- Rose Hill Cemetery
- Mary Robinson Houses
- George and Rebecca Barnes Residence
- Allen/Schneider House
- Richard Wandell House
- Site of William R. and Mary L. Edwards House
- Charles P. Alguire Residence
- Moses Burnet Residence
- William Thompson Residence
- Issac Wales Jr. House

At each tour stop, participants would learn about the property's relationship to the Underground Railroad. For example, at Rose Hill Cemetery visitors would be told how the cemetery was the burial place of almost all African Americans who lived and died in Syracuse before the Civil War. It was established in 1848 as Syracuse's first

cemetery and it remained the city's burial grounds until the 1860s.

At 930 James Street (Presently the Corinthian Club), participants would be told of the importance of George and Rebecca Barnes. Members of the Barnes family were committed abolitionist organizers and Underground Railroad supporters. They used their resources to exert public pressure and to raise money for the cause. George, a lawyer, served as a member of a thirteen-person Vigilance Committee appointed for Syracuse in 1850. He frequently held anti-slavery meetings in his home library and generously contributed bail money to many fugitives that were indicted. In 1853, the Barnes' built their first home on James Street hill.

Another stop would emphasize the importance of Richard Wandell, whose home was at 412 Ash Street. Wandell, a cartman, was a long-time leader of AME Zion Church, serving as a trustee for many years. He was one of five stewards who endorsed Reverend Jermain Loguen as the duly appointed leader of this church. Richard Wandell, as well as his family, represents local African Americans who worked steady, service-sector jobs, and were community leaders and Underground Railroad activists.

A final stop on the tour would be the site of Mary Robinson's properties at 204 and 206 Catherine Street. Robinson was a laundress, as well as a considerably wealthy landowner. She owned two homes and a vacant lot on Catherine Street, renting some of these properties during her lifetime. Her contemporaries were barbers, laborers, waiters, and workers in the transportation industries. After her death, her family continued to live in these houses. Robinson's homes are the only houses owned by an African American in Syracuse





prior to the Civil War that presently still retain their general historic appearance. Mary Robinson, and her houses that still stand in their original locations, represents the stable African American community in the old village of Salina.

### ***Steps into History: A Syracuse Eastside Neighborhood***

This walking tour of the Beech Street area would tell the story of how the farmland of Syracuse's eastside evolved into the residential community of today. Through a guided walk historic evidence would be revealed to residents of the area, as well as visitors and tourists.

The route would include an introduction to the neighborhood at the northeast section of Thornden Park and move north on Beech Street. Right onto Madison Street and then two blocks to Bassett Street, turning left. Then north to Genesee Street, east on Genesee Street to Columbus Street. South on Columbus to Hawthorne Street. East on Hawthorne to Bassett Street and returning to Beech Street. South on Beech to Judson, and from there north on Greenwood Place. The tour would culminate at Thornden Park.

The tour would include a variety of stops, including, but not limited to:

- Lodi Cemetery
- Lexington Park
- The Gustav Stickley House
- Calvary Church
- Thornden Park
- 700 Block of Beech Street
- 1200 Block of Madison Street
- 100-200 Blocks of Greenwood Place.

The tour would describe changing times associated with canal and railroads eras, as built up portions of Syracuse expanded to the surrounding undeveloped areas. During

the mid-1800s, land on the city's east side that once produced crops was slowly being divided into smaller lots to be sold for housing development. By the 1930s the Beech Street area was no longer used for agriculture as it had become mostly residential and residents commuted to the city center for work.

Gradually the lifestyle of the residents of the Beech Street area shifted from that of farmers to people working in the trades and service industries. Carpentry became an important trade, since wood was used as a primary building material and residential expansion was rapid. Manufacturing concentrated work in the machine shops and, with more opportunities available, many women changed roles from housewives to textile mills employees. With the expansion of the city street network and a greater reliance on automobiles and trucks came a market for commercial drivers or "teamsters". Many of these hard working individuals and their families called this east side neighborhood home.

Tour participants would be told about Lodi Cemetery, the second oldest cemetery in Syracuse. This burial ground was established in 1834 and was once part of the Village of Lodi. As the village of Syracuse expanded, including the annexation of the Village of Lodi, the area surrounding the burials slowly became more residential, and the burials were exhumed and moved to Rose Hill Cemetery. A marker on the property is the only visible link to this early community burial site.

Another stop would be at 438 Columbus Avenue, the home of Gustav Stickley, a leader in the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States. Well known for his philosophy regarding aesthetics, Stickley was a designer, manufacturer, writer and editor. Stickley altered this house, which was the home of his daughter and her family, when



he came to live with them just after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although the exterior does not bear any evidence of his design, the first floor interior is an outstanding example of the beauty and craftsmanship Gustav Stickley was so influential in promulgating throughout the country.

The tour also would include a stop at the Calvary Baptist Church. The congregation was first established in 1906 and located in a property on East Genesee Street. After only nine years, a fire destroyed the church. In 1916 a new site was selected for the church at the corner of Judson and Beech Streets, across from a former farmer house and amid the new houses being built on the surrounding blocks. The new edifice was designed to accommodate community events and activities, such as space for the men's club and the Boy Scouts, bowling alley, combination dining room and gymnasium, kitchen, and serving room with modern equipment. Its interior features, finishes and materials reflect the design characteristics of the Arts and Crafts movement, while the building exterior is stylistically more eclectic.

### **The Art of History**

Art has the power to both provoke introspection and generate public debate, in general to stimulate new thinking. Coupling public art with history then has the potential to make citizens think differently about their shared heritage. Individual pieces, and certainly more comprehensive collections, can extend the meaning of a place by representing long lost memories or by offering a different view of familiar historical anecdotes. Art can be used to convey the continuum of time associated with a particular piece of property, a complete neighborhood, or the entire city. Marking historic places with art can add to the urban fabric a richness that is subtle or

bold, serious or fanciful, permanent or temporary.

### **Purpose**

Using public art to mark places that have a connection to the city's history will bring added meaning to those properties already recognized as significant historic resources. More importantly, art will be used to identify places that are less often associated with noteworthy past events or persons. In both cases, art will act as a time corridor that connects today's citizens with those of the past. These additions to the existing urban fabric will add a new layer of cultural meaning to the city landscape, with the potential for the art works to become historically significant in the future. The combination of both permanent and temporary pieces will provide the opportunity to showcase a wide range of creative artistic expression, and indirectly reflect both the enduring and ephemeral nature of history.

### **Administration**

*The Art of History* will be a joint venture between the City of Syracuse and the Cultural Resources Council of Syracuse and Onondaga County (CRC), with the CRC taking primary responsibility for the administration and management, including establishment of a program review panel. The panel will consist of local artists, historians, representatives of cultural institutions, and arts educators from the city school district and area universities and colleges, among others.

The City will assist the CRC and involved artists with installations on selected public property, pursue funding sources that support such municipal arts ventures through the Bureau of Research, and provide relevant historical information through the Landmark Preservation Board. Together, the CRC and City will develop and implement marketing materials for the



program. Program costs will be supported by public and corporate grant funds, and partial underwriting by local sponsors (e.g., neighborhood associations).

A minimum of 3 art works will be designed and installed annually, with at least 1 located in Downtown.

### **Program Components**

The program will consist of both permanent and temporary art, with at least one of three annual pieces being permanent, and involving traditional media such as sculpture or painting. Temporary, or installation art, will include pieces that incorporate space and time by using ephemeral media such as light, sound and motion. The nature of such art results in vibrant memories and, in turn, will bring added meaning to places of historic importance. Although these pieces will be short-lived, the commission of new installation art annually will establish an appreciation for and expectation of new offerings.

The focus of the program will be on pieces illustrative of historic events, people and places. However, pieces that lead or draw individuals to places of historic importance also will be encouraged.

The CRC program review panel will identify historic themes, as well as potential installation sites, for both permanent and temporary pieces. The three annual pieces will be chosen via competition and/or by direct commission. In the case of the former, the program review panel will invite 1-2 individuals associated with the installation site to participate in the selection process, such as representatives of neighborhood organizations or current or former property owners. In the latter, a call for submissions will be distributed to local and regional artists.

Potential pieces in the *Art of History* would be installed in a wide variety of places, such as at the former homes of noted Syracusans, in well-known commercial areas, or within Downtown.

### ***“Harriet May Mills: Social Reformer”***

A life-size sculpture of Harriet May Mills at the site of her former home on West Genesee Street would enhance the public understanding of this important prominent suffragette, as well as re-establish a sense of personal association to this residential property at the edge of a busy commercial corridor.

### ***“Post Cards from Syracuse”***

Using turn-of-the-twentieth century postcards as a guide, large scale traditional wall art of historic scenes or specific properties would be located in juxtaposition to their contemporary counterparts. The emphasis would vary from “before” and “now” views, to images of nearby streets or properties, to notable past events.

### ***“Flashbacks”***

Historic images of Syracuse would be projected on the many blank walls or billboards located throughout the community, providing individuals with the opportunity to share “memories” simultaneously. Still images would be of both distant and more recent past events, persons and places and would not necessarily relate to the installation location. Video images would address the same spectrum, but also may include films created to highlight social or cultural issues that spanned a long period of time.

### ***Municipal Publications and Correspondence***

City agencies would incorporate historic images of public properties and events in contemporary forms, brochures, letterhead and similar forms of communication, reinforcing the connection between past

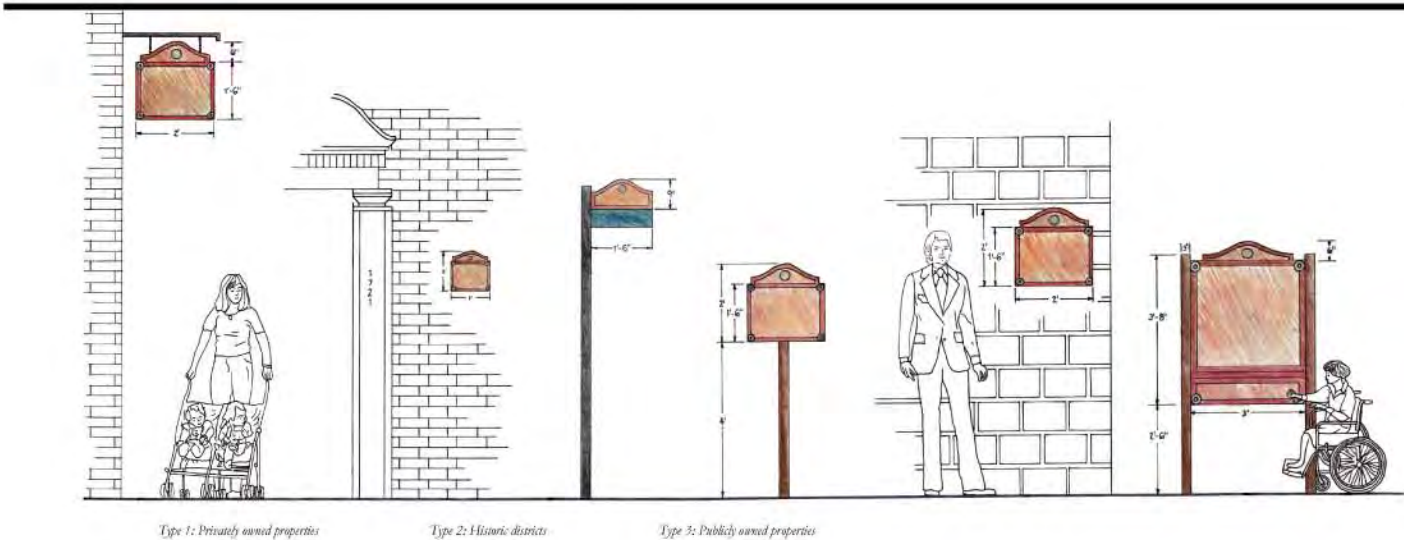




and present functions of city government. For example, imprinting photographs of the historic municipal water system on city water bills would provide a subtle link between the origins of this important public service and today's contemporary needs.







SYRACUSE HISTORIC MARKER SIGNAGE SYSTEM



Historic district markers attached to existing street signs in Sedgwick Historic District



A combination of hanging signs and plaques mark significant private property in Armory Square



Freestanding signage for the EM Mills Memorial Rose Garden in Thorndike Park



Private property plaques on a James Street Residence



Freestanding signage in Hanover Square



A fixed plaque marking the historic significance of this privately owned building in Armory Square

Historic marker programs have proven to be an effective way to draw attention to the many events, people and places that have contributed richness and vitality to a community's history. Markers not only obviously identify evidence of that history, but also offer an opportunity to enlighten residents and visitors through both narrative and graphic materials. They provide a physical connection between place and history by both literally and figuratively giving added meaning to historically important buildings, structures, objects or spaces.

A comprehensive marker program for the City of Syracuse will respond to an already strong interest in local history, but more importantly also will encourage a broader awareness and appreciation of the community's shared heritage among residents. As familiar components of the city landscape, the markers will become readily associated with properties deserving of recognition and protection. Owners of properties having markers will realize an increased sense of pride in being responsible for a piece of community history, while entire neighborhoods or business districts will experience an expanded civic consciousness. The program will also serve as a way-finding system for visitors and tourists, marking not just single properties but an entire system of sites linked by historic events or persons.

The Syracuse Marker Program will be a joint venture between the City of Syracuse and the Onondaga Historical Association (OHA), with the OHA taking primary responsibility for the application process, development of marker narrative and graphic content, and management of a program data base. The City will install and maintain all public property markers through the Department of Public Works, pursue funding sources that support such municipal ventures through the Bureau of Research, and provide relevant historical information through the Landmark Preservation Board.

Properties eligible for the marker program will meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Listing in the New York State or National Registers of Historic Places as an individual property or as an historic district
2. Inclusion in a district listed in the New York State or National Registers of Historic Places
3. Designation under the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance as a protected site or a preservation district
4. Inclusion in a district designated under the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance
5. Site of demolished building, structure or object previously included in the New York State or National Registers of Historic Places, or designated under Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance related to events, people or places
6. Publicly owned properties not listed in the National Registers of Historic Places or designated under Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance

Because all eligible properties will be nominated or designated historic resources, each will have some association with events, persons or cultural influences that have been determined significant in National, State, or local history. Within this broad context, more specific themes will be identified for the Syracuse Marker Program, including but not limited to agriculture, industry, archeology, architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, education, recreation, entertainment, religious institutions, civic concerns and social movements, cemeteries and burials, and military and defense.

The Marker Program will consist of four typologies of signage, with multiple marker types per each level; specifically:

- Type 1: Privately owned properties listed in the New York State or National Registers of Historic Places or designated under the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance
- Type 2: Historic districts listed in New York State or National Registers of Historic Places or designated under the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Ordinance
- Type 3: Publicly owned properties i.e. Frasier School
- Type 4: Sites of events, people, place, buildings, structures or objects that are no longer extant

The Syracuse Marker Program will be implemented through two primary vehicles:

1. For public properties, the OHA will identify eligible sites and work with the City to install the appropriate markers at a pre-determined number of locations annually
2. For private properties, individual owners or a third party designated by an owner will submit a request during an annual marker program application period

The number of markers awarded per year will depend on available program funding, as well as annual priorities, although in the first year an emphasis on public properties will demonstrate the city administration's commitment to the program. In subsequent years, program priorities may relate to specific themes or particular geographic areas in the city. Successful applicants will be acknowledged during annual National Preservation Week, and some may be asked to participate in a ceremony celebrating the significance of the subject property and unveiling the marker.





Communities that embrace their heritage often share an understanding of the events, people and places that bear some degree of importance in illustrating that history. Helping community residents see the city fabric in a renewed, "historic" light will ensure a greater appreciation for the city's history and the properties that embody it.

*Traveling Through Time* will promote and encourage Syracusans to value their homes, residential neighborhoods and business areas as important reminders of the past, as well as engender a desire to preserve these places for the community at-large. In addition, the program will provide residents with direct links to specific historic events, people or trends important in shaping the city as it stands today. Lastly, the tours will offer local citizens an entertaining way to introduce their home community to visitors and tourists.

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The program will consist of walking and driving tours throughout most, if not all, Syracuse residential and commercial areas, as well as some industrial sectors. Each tour will be documented in a brochure, which at a minimum will contain a tour map with delineated route, and designated stops and information related to each. Most tours will be developed as self-guided, although many will be offered in an expanded, narrated version. Different audiences may desire different stories within a given theme and, therefore, the narrated tours will provide the greatest flexibility to accommodate specific tour participants, such as elementary school groups or senior citizen organizations.

Each tour will have some association with events, persons or cultural influences that have been determined important in Syracuse history. These associations may be expressed through specific themes and bring attention to issues that are generally overlooked as historically significant to an urban area such as agriculture, archeology or recreation.



Rose Hill Cemetery Syracuse, New York.

1. At each tour stop, participants would learn about the property's relationship to the Underground Railroad. For example, at Rose Hill Cemetery visitors would be told how the cemetery was the burial place of almost all African Americans who lived and died in Syracuse before the Civil War. It was established in 1848 as Syracuse's first cemetery and it remained the city's burial grounds until the 1860s.



George and Rebecca Barnes Residence 930 James Street, Syracuse, New York.

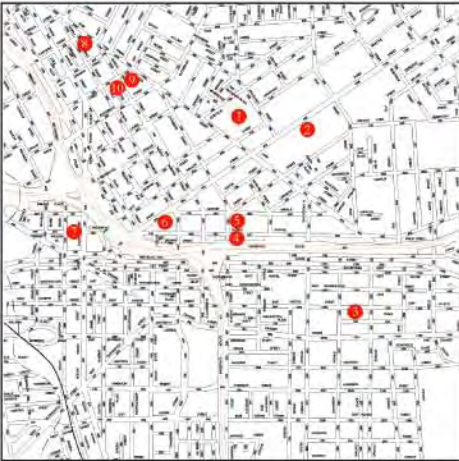
2. At 930 James Street (Presently Corinthian Club), participants would be told of the importance of George and Rebecca Barnes. The Barnes family was committed abolitionist organizers and Underground Railroad supporters. They used their resources to exert public pressure and to raise money for the cause. George, a lawyer, served as a member of a thirteen-person Vigilance Committee appointed for Syracuse in 1850. He frequently held anti-slavery meetings in his home library and generously contributed bail money to many fugitives that were indicted. In 1853, the Barnes' built the first home on James Street hill.

## The Freedom Trail: Northside Neighborhood Tour

This tour would introduce the efforts of the thousands of individuals that escaped slavery in the American South before the end of the Civil War. New York State, Syracuse and the Central New York area played a leading role to abolish slavery. The historic events, places, and people of the Freedom Trail had a profound impact in Syracuse.

This tour would include at least ten stops, including but not limited to:

1. Rose Hill Cemetery
2. George and Rebecca Barnes Residence
3. Site of William R. and Mary L. Edwards House
4. Mary Robinson Houses
5. Charles P. Alquire Residence
6. Moses Burnet Residence
7. William Thompson Residence
8. Allen/Schneider House
9. Richard Wandell House
10. Issac Wales Jr. House



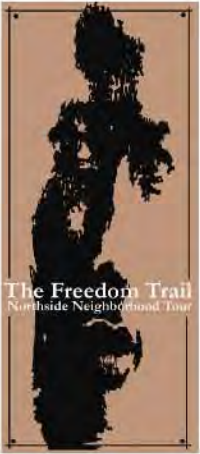
Mary Robinson Houses at 204 and 206 Catherine Street, Syracuse, New York.

4. Another stop on the tour would be the site of Mary Robinson's properties at 204 and 206 Catherine Street. Robinson was a laundress, as well as a considerably wealthy landowner. She owned two homes and a vacant lot on Catherine Street, renting some of these properties during her lifetime. After her death, her family continued to live in these houses. Mary Robinson, and her houses that still stand in their original locations, represents the stable African American community in the old village of Salina. Some were barbers, laborers, waiters and workers in the transportation industries. Robinson homes are the only houses owned by an African American in Syracuse prior to the Civil War that presently still retain their historic appearance.



Richard Wandell home at 412 Ash Street, Syracuse, New York.

9. Another stop would emphasize the importance of Richard Wandell, whose home was at 412 Ash Street. Wandell, a cartman, was a long-time leader of AME Zion Church, serving as a trustee for many years. He was one of five stewards who endorsed Reverend Jermain Loguen as the duly appointed leader of this church. Richard Wandell, as well as his family, represents local African Americans who worked steady, service-sector jobs, and were community leaders and Underground Railroad activists.



Thornden Park Syracuse, New York.

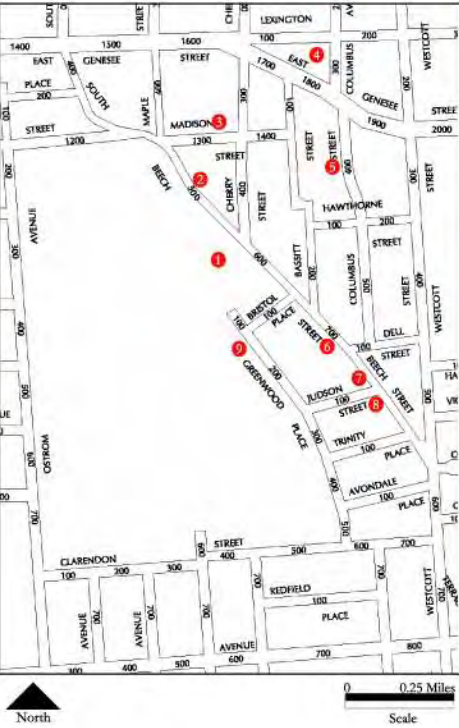
1. The tour would begin at Thornden Park, adjacent to Beech Street, once known as the Jamesville-Pompey Road and leading from the fertile farm fields of this area to the outlying agricultural communities to the south. Once belonging to the Ostrom and Haskin families, the land was long used for orchards and vineyards. Its rolling topography and outstanding views to the central city and Onondaga Lake made it a prime location for a rural gentleman's retreat which is what Major Alexander Davis developed when he acquired the property in the late 19th century. His estate included all the features typical of a private pleasure ground, including a deer park, trout pond and greenhouses. The 1920s bathhouse and contemporary swimming pool now occupy the site of the swimming hole.

## Steps Into History: Eastside Neighborhood Tour

This walking tour of the Beech Street area would tell the story of how the farmland of Syracuse's eastside evolved into the residential community of today. Through a guided walk historic evidence would be revealed to residents of the area, as well as visitors and tourists.

The tour would include a variety of stops, including, but not limited to:

1. Thornden Park
2. Lodi Cemetery
3. Houses on the 1300 block of Madison Street
4. Lexington Park
5. The Gustav Stickley House
6. House on the 700 block of Beech Street
7. Calvary Baptist Church
8. House on the 800 Beech Street block
9. House on the 200 block of Greenwood Place



Gustav Stickley home 438 Columbus Avenue, Syracuse, New York.

5. Another stop would be at 438 Columbus Avenue, the home of Gustav Stickley, a leader in the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States. Well known for his philosophy regarding aesthetics, Stickley was a designer, manufacturer, writer and editor. Stickley altered this house, which was the home of his daughter and her family, when he came to live with them just after the turn of the 20th century. Although the exterior does not bear any evidence of his design, the first floor interior is an outstanding example of the beauty and craftsmanship Gustav Stickley was so influential in promulgating throughout the country.



Calvary Baptist Church Syracuse, New York.

7. The tour also would include a stop at the Calvary Baptist Church. The congregation was first established in 1906 and located in a property on East Genesee Street. After only nine years, a fire destroyed the church. In 1916 a new site was selected for the church at the corner of Judson and Beech Streets, across from a former farmer house and amid the new houses being built on the surrounding blocks. The new edifice was designed to accommodate community events and activities, such as space for the men's club and the Boy Scouts, bowling alley, combination dining room and gymnasium, kitchen, and serving room with modern equipment. Its interior features, finishes and materials reflect the design characteristics of the Arts and Crafts movement, while the building exterior is stylistically more eclectic.



Lodi Cemetery, Syracuse, New York.

2. Tour participants would be told about Lodi Cemetery, the second oldest cemetery in Syracuse. This burial ground was established in 1834 and was once part of the Village of Lodi. As the village of Syracuse expanded, including the annexation of the Village of Lodi, the area surrounding the burials slowly became more residential, and the burials were exhumed and moved to Rose Hill Cemetery. A marker on the property is the only visible link to this early community burial site.





Art has the power to both provoke introspection and generate public debate, in general to stimulate new thinking. Coupling public art with history then has the potential to make citizens think differently about their shared heritage. Individual pieces, and certainly more comprehensive collections, can extend the meaning of a place by representing long lost memories or by offering a different view of familiar historical anecdotes. Art can be used to convey the continuum of time associated with a particular piece of property, a complete neighborhood, or the entire city. Marking historic places with art can add to the urban fabric a richness that is subtle or bold, serious or fanciful, permanent or temporary.

Using public art to mark places that have a connection to the city's history will bring added meaning to those properties already recognized as significant historic resources. More importantly, art will be used to identify places that are less often associated with noteworthy past events or persons. In both cases, art will act as a time corridor that connects today's citizens with those of the past. These additions to the existing urban fabric will add a new layer of cultural meaning to the city landscape, with the potential for the art works to become historically significant in the future. The combination of both permanent and temporary pieces will provide the opportunity to showcase a wide range of creative artistic expression, and indirectly reflect both the enduring and ephemeral nature of history.

The Art of History will be a joint venture between the City of Syracuse and the Cultural Resources Council of Syracuse and Onondaga County (CRC), with the CRC taking primary responsibility for the administration and management, including establishment of a program review panel. The panel will consist of local artists, historians, representatives of cultural institutions, and arts educators from the city school district and area universities and colleges, among others.

The City will assist the CRC and involved artists with installations on selected public property, pursue funding sources that support such municipal arts ventures through the Bureau of Research, and provide relevant historical information through the Landmark Preservation Board. Together, the CRC and City will develop and implement marketing materials for the program. Program costs will be supported by public and corporate grant funds, and partial underwriting by local sponsors.

The program will consist of both permanent and temporary art, with at least one of three annual pieces being permanent, and involving traditional media such as sculpture or painting. Temporary, or installation art, will include pieces that incorporate space and time by using ephemeral media such as light, sound and motion. The nature of such art results in vibrant memories and, in turn, will bring added meaning to places of historic importance. Although these pieces will be short-lived, the commission of new installation art annually will establish an appreciation for and expectation of new offerings.

Permanent Art



Harriet May Mills sculpture sits in front of her house, after.



Harriet May Mills house, before.

**"Harriet May Mills: Social Reformer"**-A life-size sculpture of Harriet May Mills at the site of her former home on West Genesee Street would enhance the public understanding of this important prominent suffragette, as well as re-establish a sense of personal association to this residential property at the edge of a busy commercial corridor.



"Post Cards from Syracuse"-Historic downtown in today's downtown East Fayette Street, after.



East Fayette Street, before.



Historic city views in today's downtown, before.



"Post Cards from Syracuse"-Historic Erie Canal image on today's Erie Boulevard.



"Post Cards from Syracuse"-Historic city views in today's downtown, after.

**"Post Cards from Syracuse"**-Using turn-of-the-twentieth century postcards as a guide, large scale traditional wall art of historic scenes or specific properties would be located in juxtaposition to their contemporary counterparts. The emphasis would vary from "before" and "now" views, to images of nearby streets or properties, to notable past events.

Temporary Art



Blank wall on South Salina Street, before.



"Flashbacks"- Historic images projected on blank wall on South Salina Street, after.

**"Flashbacks"**-Historic images of Syracuse would be projected on the many blank walls or billboards located throughout the community, providing individuals with the opportunity to share "memories" simultaneously. Still images would be of both distant and more recent past events, persons and places and would not necessarily relate to the installation location. Video images would address the same spectrum, but also may include films created to highlight social or cultural issues that spanned a long period of time.



Billboards along Erie Boulevard west tell the stories of the Erie Canal.



**"Advertising History"** - Billboards along Erie Boulevard would be used for temporary art installations. The images and words would serve as reminders about the changing uses of this significant Syracuse corridor. Historic photographs would be used to illustrate how the corridor has changed over time from a canal to a boulevard. A sequence of images would tell a story as people travel through the corridor.





## GOAL TWO RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations in this goal deal with physical actions rather than policy or programs. The intention of Goal Two is to create conservation districts and create design guidelines for new infill development. The purpose of creating conservation districts in the city of Syracuse is to identify model areas of the city that exhibit elements that contribute to the character of the area. By creating design guidelines for new infill development, the city will better be able to control growth within the city. In this section, these recommendations are reviewed and actions are described to assist in implementing the recommendations.

### Conservation Districts

Conservation districts are areas of the city having distinctive character, as embodied in the street patterns, building density, size, form, features and materials, and site topography, features and materials that make them integral parts of the city's identity. The purpose of establishing such districts is to identify, retain and enhance community character in those areas that have a definite cohesiveness, but may not merit consideration as historic districts because they do not meet established criteria. Nonetheless, these districts are worth conserving due to their distinctive character and warrant special land use planning and physical design consideration.

These designations can cover large portions of the city and may include one or more historic districts or individual historic properties within them. In some cases, conservation districts may surround or be substantially contiguous to designated historic districts. In these cases, there may be a consistency between the historic district and the adjacent area in terms of

overall street-block pattern, topography, vegetation, and building style and age. Conservation districts also may occur in close proximity to one another, with the area separating them sharing some, but an insufficient number of, character attributes to be included in either district boundary. Lastly, all conservation districts are boarded by such transitional zones, which over time may be modified sufficiently to justify re-evaluation of the conservation district boundary to incorporate all or a portion of these areas.

Areas of the city will qualify as conservation districts if they do not meet the criteria for historic designation and the majority of properties represent established and familiar physical and visual features of a neighborhood or business area; convey a sense of cohesiveness through their design, setting, materials or association; and/or reflect significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth. Conservation districts will be defined through establishment of an overlay zoning classification, which will not alter an area's land use zoning designation, but rather provide a measure of protection from inappropriate development within the district while still allowing for community growth and change. While reviews in historic districts focus equally on the retention of historic fabric and overall character, reviews in conservation districts will be principally concerned with the latter. For example, redevelopment of a commercial building within a historic district would include the retention of historic first floor storefront windows, while a similar project in a conservation district may allow for replacement of the historic display windows with contemporary units that convey the original physical features and overall visual appearance.



The Landmark Preservation Board will be responsible for reviewing proposed conservation district designations and making recommendations to the City Planning Commission and also will be responsible for reviewing proposed physical changes within the established districts. Conservation areas would be proposed by any resident or group of residents from a potential conservation area, an authorized agent of a resident or group of residents, the Landmark Preservation Board, City Planning Commission, or Common Council. Each proposal will be evaluated based on the criteria listed below; and, given the criteria, Downtown Syracuse will be recognized as the largest and most significant conservation district in the city. Design guidelines addressing repairs, substantial redevelopment and new construction will be developed for conservation districts and used by the Board when reviewing proposed activities.

### Designation Criteria

Conservation districts will possess physical features and visual qualities derived from combinations of space, views and vistas, topography, vegetation and built features, such as buildings, structures and objects, or be places of historic, social or cultural importance. They will evoke an image of stability, comfort, local identity and livable atmosphere. They will retain an adequate amount of their historic character and original urban form, although some alterations may have occurred. For an area to be designated a conservation district it will meet a specified number of criteria related to community history, physical composition, and cultural significance.

### Community History

While these areas do not meet the established criteria for designation as official historic properties defined by federal, state or local government, conservation districts

must still demonstrate a level of historic importance worth maintaining. Therefore, each conservation district will meet at least one (1) of the following criteria:

1. **Persons:** a district that includes spaces, buildings, structures or objects somewhat associated with the lives or works of persons of general significance in the history of the city, the state, or the nation; or associated with persons of moderate importance in the history of the city.
2. **Events:** a district that includes spaces, buildings, structures or objects somewhat associated with the events, activities or trends of general significance in the history of the city, the state, or the nation; or associated with events, activities or trends of moderate importance in the history of the city.
3. **Cultural Influences:** a district that includes spaces, buildings, structures or objects associated with cultural patterns or social, economic or ethnic groups of moderate importance in the history of the city.

### Physical Composition

A conservation district must retain substantial evidence of its fundamental organizational pattern, spatial relationships, built features and general visual quality. Therefore, each conservation district will meet at least three (3) of the following criteria in addition to one (1) criteria from group I:

1. **Block and Street Pattern:** a district in which the overall configuration of city form remains largely unaltered, including consideration of street and block sizes and layout (grid vs. organic).
2. **Density and Massing:** a district where the distribution pattern of buildings, structures and spaces is largely unaltered, including consideration of how the features relate to one another,



either functionally or aesthetically, and in terms of lot size and shape, building orientation, setbacks, bulk and height, open space, and vacant land (including parking areas).

3. **Architectural Style:** a district that includes a collection of buildings of the same or similar architectural style, or a district that includes a cohesive collection of various architectural styles; and for which original materials, methods of construction and general craftsmanship are common to the majority of properties and remain largely unaltered.
4. **Streetscape:** a district that includes streetscape elements that are functionally or aesthetically related, including consideration of road and sidewalk dimensions and materials, vegetation, street furnishings, etc.
5. **Edges:** a district that is defined by human-made or natural boundaries that are readily recognized.

### Cultural Significance

In addition to having a connection to community history and exhibiting identifiable physical characteristics, a conservation district must also reflect some aspect of community culture, which may be readily discernable through physical or visual features or through an intuitive response to a place. Therefore, each conservation district will meet at least one (1) of the following criteria and at least one (1) criteria from group I and at least three (3) criteria from group II above:

1. **Identity:** a district that is a physical or cultural focal point within the city, due to common use of a place name; presence of specific buildings, structures, objects or spaces; or association with historic or traditional events.
2. **Cultural Character:** a district where social or cultural factors have played a

role in defining the physical environment, including the impacts of ethnicity, race, religion, age or gender.

3. **History in Culture:** a district that conveys a sense of time, whether a discrete short period or an extended continuum, and which requires little effort to experience or interpret.
4. **Consistency:** a district that has few buildings, structures, objects or spaces that detract from the area's sense of time and place.

### Conservation District Evaluations

The conservation district criteria were applied to two potential conservation districts, using an evaluation matrix. The first study area, located within the far north side of the city, includes the original village of Salina, which was incorporated in 1824 it later was designated as the First Ward of the newly formed City of Syracuse in 1848. A second evaluation was undertaken for the Bradford Hills and Scotholm Terrace area, located in the city's Meadowbrook district. This area is comprised primarily of residential housing units constructed from the 1920s through the mid 20th century, with the latter representing the more contemporary housing development patterns of that time.

Evaluating each study area based on the district criteria would yield the following results:

### The Far Northside

#### Community History

**Persons:** The area contains the homes of many salt barons responsible for the early economic successes of the original village and later the city. It also retains properties that were home to common workers in the salt industry, many clustered together on contiguous blocks.

**Events:** N/A





**Cultural Influences:** The original village grid organization of streets and blocks reflects the development patterns of the New England and European communities from which many of the Salina settlers came. The central green, Washington Park, represents the desire and need for a common public open space typical of both old world and colonial American communities. The result is a unique, distinctive form that is readily evident to the casual observer.

### **Physical Composition**

**Block and Street Pattern:** The grid street pattern is largely unaltered from that of the former village of Salina.

**Density and Massing:** Lot sizes, set backs and buildings are fairly consistent throughout the area, with minimal interruption from vacant lots. . Lots average 60' by 120' with average setbacks of 25-30' from the street; building masses are consistently two to three stories.

**Architectural Style:** Building design styles are similar or complimentary, with overall characteristics strongly evident in roof form, fenestration and features, such as front porches; and generally reflecting the Greek Revival, Italianate and Queen Anne. Original materials generally are retained, although some have been partially obscured by contemporary additions.

**Streetscape:** Elements are consistent throughout the area, including uniform street width, sidewalks, street trees and lighting.

**Edges:** Discernible changes in density, street pattern and architectural style at Grant Boulevard, Kirkpatrick Street, Lodi Street and Hiawatha Boulevard form distinct edges.

### **Cultural Significance**

**Identity:** The area is generally recognized as an older component of the Northside neighborhoods, with Washington Park, serving as one of many significant icons.

Highly visible buildings, such as St. John the Baptist and Westminster Presbyterian Churches, also contribute to the area's identity.

**History in Culture:** N/A

**Cultural Character:** Home to the earliest local population of common laborers, the area still emanates a strong sense of community based on similar life styles and common values.

**Consistency:** Although some properties exhibit some degree of change or modification, overall there is a consistency of character that embodies give the area a sense of time and place.

Based on this analysis, the former Village of Salina area would qualify as a conservation district.

## **Scotholm Terrace and Bradford Hills Area**

### **Community History**

**Persons:** Both areas contain properties designed by local architects known for their residential commissions in the early 1900s, including Ward Wellington Ward and Gordon Wright. In addition, Scotholm Terrace was laid out and developed by Clarence Congdon, the same individual responsible for the earlier successful Berkeley Park and later Strathmore by the Park. Bradford Hills also is associated with noteworthy persons, including the Skeele Construction Company, known for its high quality residential construction during the 1940s and 1950s.

**Events:** N/A

**Cultural Influences:** The development of planned residential subdivisions in America was a direct product of the suburban movement, which began in the early 19th Century. Country living outside the city center presented an attractive alternative to the increasingly less attractive urban situation since it was cleaner, healthier and met the image of prosperity. Scotholm



Terrace, platted in 1916, and Bradford Hills, laid out in 1928, reflect this trend in Syracuse during the early 20th century. Scotholm, which was fully developed within a few decades, is more illustrative of this cultural influence than Bradford Hills, as it continued to be built out into the 1980s.

### **Physical Composition**

**Block and Street Pattern:** Both areas have an organic alignment of streets and blocks, which responds to the underlying topography rather than ignoring it and remains unaltered. .

**Density and massing:** Lot sizes, set backs and buildings are fairly consistent throughout each of the individual areas, with virtually no interruption from vacant lots. Lots in Scotholm Terrace average 55-70' wide and 100' deep with +/-35' setbacks from the street; those in Bradford Hills are 65-85' wide and 100' deep with front setbacks of 35-50'. Building masses in Scotholm are generally taller and bulkier than those in Bradford Hills, the former 2-3 stories in height and the later 1-2 stores.

**Architectural Style:** Building designs are strongly complimentary in Scotholm Terrace, with individual properties executed in the many Revival period styles popularized at the beginning of the 20th century. Although the mix contains a wide variety, there is consistent use of materials, such as brick, stucco and wood shingles and features such as bays, dormers and half-timbering. The architectural styles found in Bradford Hills are less cohesive due in large part to the disparate ages of buildings. Older buildings incorporate a modest degree of detail and ornamentation, while those of more construction lack both.

**Streetscape:** Elements are consistent throughout each area, including uniform street width, sidewalks, street trees and lighting.

**Edges:** Discernible changes in topography, density, street pattern and architectural style

at East Genesee Street, Euclid Avenue, Meadowbrook Street and Hillside Street.

### **Cultural Significance**

**Identity:** While not as old as other residential areas of the city, Scotholm Terrace and Bradford Hills are known by name and thus have a distinct identity as residential districts of Syracuse. Specific features, such as the entry gates to Scotholm and the central planting strip on Scotholm Boulevard, and the Meadowbrook watercourse and topography of Bradford Hills, lend added recognition to each area's identity.

**Cultural Character:** Both areas are indicative of suburbanization, and developed largely due to the mobility of the city's middle class in pursuing housing and neighborhood preferences in the early 20th century.

**History in Culture:** As a location of distinctive residential buildings all constructed within a relatively short period and surrounded by readily discernible boundaries, Scotholm Terrace conveys a strong sense of time and history.

**Consistency:** Each area exhibits a consistency of organizational patterns, built form, and general aesthetics. In Scotholm Terrace these attributes occur in a denser and more coherent fashion, while in Bradford Hills more recent construction provides minor breaks in the otherwise strong pattern.

Based on this evaluation, Scotholm Terrace appears to meet the criteria for designation as a local preservation district and appears eligible for listing in the NY State and National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, although this area also meets the conservation district criteria, recognition as an official historic property would be pursued. Bradford Hills clearly meets the standards for conservation districts and would designated as such.



## Conservation District Design Guidelines

Design standards provide the overarching framework for guiding physical development within a city. Standards memorialize basic philosophy regarding the enhancement of a community's existing physical character through repair, rehabilitation and new development. Design guidelines are more detailed and offer extensive advice regarding modifications. They often are specific to particular geographic areas or types of properties. Official adoption and consistent implementation of design standards and more explicit design guidelines will provide a basis for responsible project planning, which in turn will result in successful economic development and community revitalization.

Design guidelines will be developed for both historic districts and conservation districts. Those for historic districts will have a necessary emphasis on retention of historic fabric, including individual property features, materials and finishes. The guidelines for conservation districts, although structured to encourage the same approach, will focus on retention of overall physical and visual relationships and more readily consider replacement of original fabric. Conservation district guidelines initially will be developed for two categories—residential neighborhoods and business/commercial areas. In time, sub-sets may be created that would address specific districts.

At a minimum, all conservation district design guidelines will address the following categories: Exterior Building Walls, Roofs, Windows & Doors, Porches & Entries, Outbuildings, and Site Features. Detailed advice would be based on the stated importance of each; for example:

**Exterior Building Walls:** Exterior wall surfaces are among the most obvious features of a building, and often the signature component in defining a building's architectural style. Alterations to the original cladding can have a substantial impact on overall appearance. In general, original exterior wall materials should be retained and repaired. However, replacement of damaged materials with those that match the original would be appropriate. The use of contemporary materials may also be acceptable if the finished work does not alter or obscure original features, decorative elements, or the relationship of the wall surface to window or door trim.

**Roofs:** A building's roof form, features and materials are highly visible and distinguishing components. Overall shape and slope, as well as elements such as dormers, parapets, chimneys, ridge cresting and gutters, can be determined by a combination of architectural styles, climate conditions and local material sources. Changes to roof form or original features, or adding new elements such as skylights, penthouses or large-scale dormers, can significantly alter a property's character. Therefore, the roof form, slope and features should be remain largely intact; and new additions should be kept to a minimum in number and size, and located in a manner that reduces their visibility from within the conservation district. Replacing original roofing materials with contemporary products may be appropriate if the finished work reflects the property's previous appearance.

**Windows & Doors:** The fenestration pattern of a building, and the windows and doors that comprise that pattern, are central to a property's overall character. The size, details and materials of window units—individually and in aggregate—add to a building's attractiveness. Doors, particularly at main entries, likewise provide a degree of





interest and can serve as focal ornamentation. Changing established fenestration patterns by removing or adding new window or door openings, or altering opening sizes, should be avoided. When units have been severely damaged or are missing, contemporary replacements should match their original counterparts in overall physical and visual characteristics.

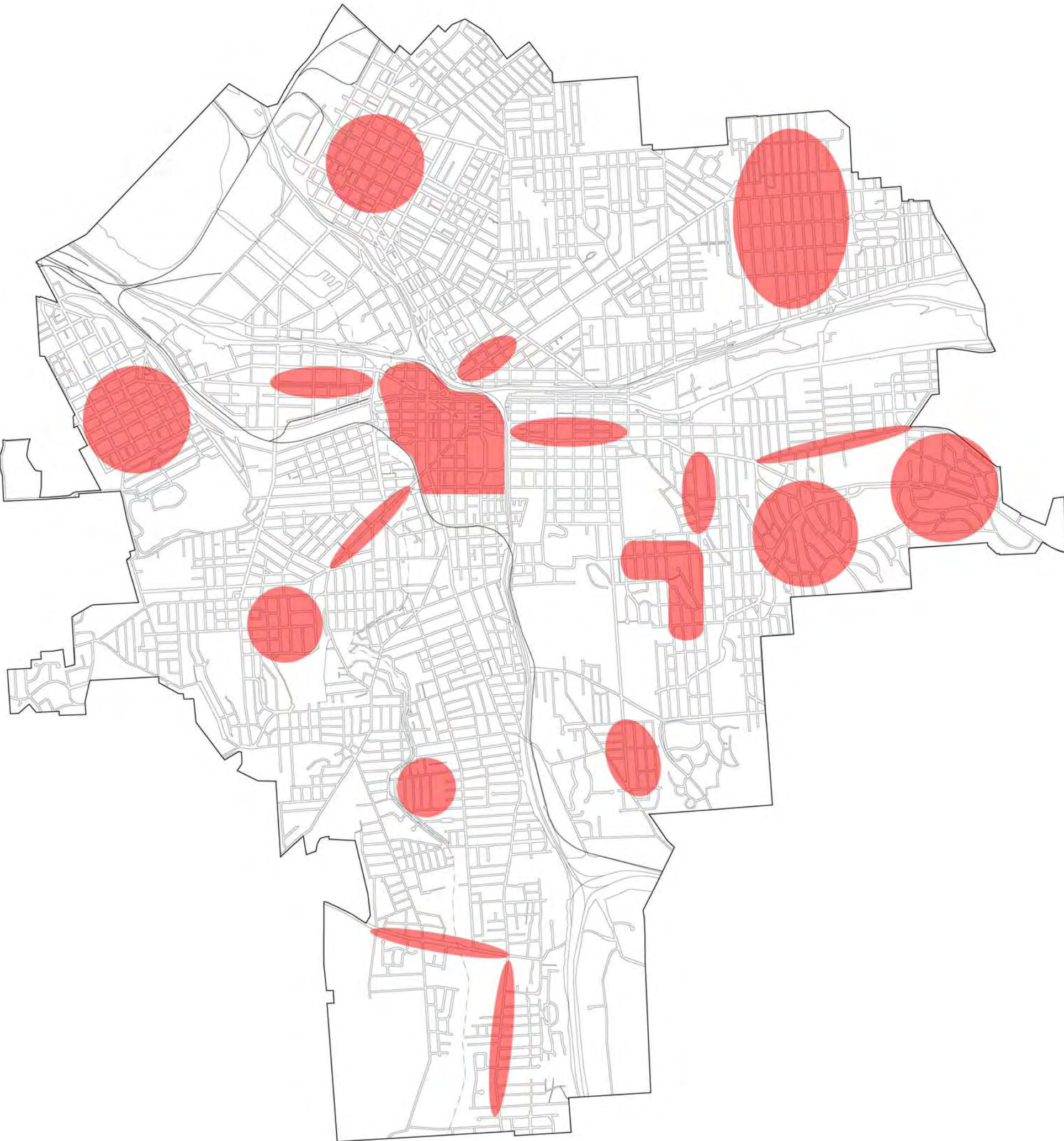
**Porches & Entries:** Porches, primarily found on residential buildings, and discernible entries, found on buildings of all types, are features that distinguish older properties from more recent construction and therefore are important to retain. Porches, whether open air or enclosed and regardless of placement on front, side or rear elevations, provide a transition from interior to exterior space. They afford the user the opportunity to engage the larger community, yet retain a sense of privacy. And they are features where design details often are most exuberantly displayed. Similarly building entries are physical and visual focal points within the overall architectural composition. Changes to either porches or entries should not diminish any of these physical or visual qualities.

**Outbuildings:** Many older properties include separate freestanding outbuildings, such as carriage barns, storage buildings, garages or garden structures. These features contribute to a conservation district's overall character and density. Actions that permanently alter or remove outbuildings should be avoided, and attention should be focused on retaining these important features and adapting them to meet contemporary needs. Treatment of their exterior walls, roofs, windows and doors, and entries should meet the advice provided in the guidelines of these categories.

**Site Features:** The topography, vegetation, paved areas, walls and fences of a property

are important in defining its general appearance and character. Severe grading of a site or addition of substantial fill, removal of mature vegetation, enlargement of hard surfaces, removal or modification of original walls or fences—or the addition of contemporary counterparts—can detract from a property's original character and impart an image that is highly contrasting to the rest of a conservation district. Care should be taken to ensure that changes to site features are respectful of a property's established image.





Legend

 Potential Conservation District

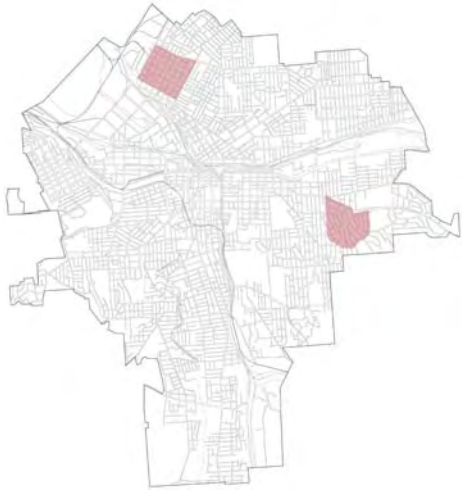
0.25 0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

Map Source: Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency (2/99)





## Conservation District Test Cases



### Conservation District Evaluations

The conservation district criteria were applied to two potential districts. The first study area included the original village of Salina. The second area was Scotholm Terrace and Bradford Hills, both early 20th century developments. Based on this analysis, the former Village of Salina and Bradford Hills would qualify as conservation districts. Scotholm Terrace also meets the criteria, but is an eligible historic district and would be designated as such.



### The Former Village of Salina

#### Community History

**Persons:** The area contains the homes of many salt barons responsible for the early economic successes of the original village and later the city. It also retains properties that were home to common workers in the salt industry, many clustered together on contiguous blocks.

**Cultural Influences:** The original village grid organization of streets and blocks reflects the development patterns of the New England and European communities from which many of the Salina settlers came. The central green, Washington Park, represents the desire and need for a common public open space.

#### Physical Composition

**Block and Street Pattern:** The grid street pattern is largely unaltered from that of the former village of Salina.

**Density and Massing:** Lots average 60' by 120' with average setbacks of 25-30' from the street; building masses are consistently two to three stories.

**Architectural Style:** Building design styles are similar or complimentary, with overall characteristics strongly evident in roof form, fenestration and features. Original materials generally are retained, although some have been partially obscured by contemporary additions.

**Streetscape:** Elements are consistent throughout the area, including uniform street width, sidewalks, street trees and lighting.

**Edges:** Discernible changes in density, street pattern and architectural style at East Boulevard, Kirkpatrick Street, Lodi Street and Hiawatha Boulevard form distinct edges.

#### Cultural Significance

**Identity:** The area is generally recognized as an older component of the Northside neighborhoods, with Washington Park, serving as one of many significant icons.

**Cultural Character:** Home to the earliest local population of common laborers, the area still emanates a strong sense of community.

**Consistency:** Although some properties exhibit some degree of change or modification, overall there is a consistency of character that gives the area a sense of time and place.



### Scotholm Terrace and Bradford Hills

#### Community History

**Persons:** Both areas contain properties designed by local architects known for their residential commissions in the early 1900s, including Ward Wellington Ward and Gordon Wright.

**Cultural Influences:** The development of planned residential subdivisions in America was a direct product of the suburban movement; Scotholm Terrace, platted in 1916, and Bradford Hills, laid out in 1928, reflect this trend in Syracuse.

#### Physical Composition

**Block and Street Pattern:** Both areas have an organic alignment of streets and blocks, which responds to the underlying topography rather than ignoring it, and remains unaltered.

**Density and massing:** Lots in Scotholm Terrace average 55-70' wide and 100' deep with +/-35' setbacks from the street; those in Bradford Hills are 65-85' wide and 100' deep with front setbacks of 35-50'.

**Architectural Style:** Buildings in Scotholm have a consistent use of materials, such as brick, stucco and wood shingles and features such as bays, dormers and half-timbering. Those in Bradford Hills are less cohesive.

**Streetscape:** Elements are consistent throughout each area, including uniform street width, sidewalks, street trees and lighting.

**Edges:** Discernible changes in topography, density, street pattern and architectural style at East Genesee Street, Euclid Avenue, Meadowbrook Street and Hillside Street.

#### Cultural Significance

**Identity:** Features, such as the entry gates to Scotholm and the central planting strip on Scotholm Boulevard, and the Meadowbrook watercourse and topography.

**Cultural Character:** Both areas are indicative of suburbanization, and developed largely due to the mobility of the city's middle class in pursuing housing and neighborhood preferences in the early 20th century.

**History in Culture:** Scotholm Terrace is a location of distinctive residential buildings constructed within a relatively short period while Bradford Hills is not.

**Consistency:** Each area exhibits a consistency of organizational patterns, built form and general aesthetics.

## Design Guidelines For Historic and Conservation Districts

Design standards provide the overarching framework for guiding physical development within a city. Design guidelines are more detailed and offer extensive advice regarding modifications. They often are specific to particular geographic areas or types of properties. Official adoption and consistent implementation of design standards and more explicit design guidelines will provide a basis for responsible project planning, which in turn will result in successful economic development and community revitalization.

Design guidelines will be developed for both historic districts and conservation districts. Those for historic districts will have a necessary emphasis on retention of historic fabric, including individual property features, materials and finishes. The guidelines for conservation districts, although structured to encourage the same approach, will focus on retention of overall physical and visual relationships and more readily consider replacement of original fabric. Conservation district guidelines initially will be developed for two categories-residential neighborhoods and business/commercial areas. In time, sub-sets may be created that would address specific districts.

At a minimum, all conservation district design guidelines will address the following categories: Exterior Building Walls, Roofs, Windows & Doors, Porches & Entries, Outbuildings, and Site Features. Detailed advice would be based on the stated importance of each; for example:

**Exterior Building Walls:** Exterior wall surfaces are among the most obvious features of a building, and often the signature component in defining a building's architectural style. In general, original exterior wall materials should be retained and repaired. However, replacement of damaged materials with those that match the original would be appropriate. The use of contemporary materials may also be acceptable if the finished work does not alter or obscure original features, decorative elements, or the relationship of the wall surface to window or door trim.

**Roofs:** A building's roof form, features and materials are highly visible and distinguishing components. Overall shape and slope, as well as elements such as dormers, parapets, chimneys, ridge cresting and gutters, can be determined by a combination of architectural styles, climate conditions and local material sources. Changes to roof form or original features, or adding new elements such as skylights, penthouses or large-scale dormers, can significantly alter a property's character. Therefore, the roof form, slope and features should be remain largely intact; and new additions should be kept to a minimum in number and size, and located in a manner that reduces their visibility from within the conservation district. Replacing original roofing materials with contemporary products may be appropriate if the finished work reflects the property's previous appearance.

**Windows & Doors:** The fenestration pattern of a building, and the windows and doors that comprise that pattern, are central to a property's overall character. The size, details and materials of window units-individually and in aggregate-add to a building's attractiveness. Doors, particularly at main entries, likewise provide a degree of interest and can serve as focal ornamentation. Changing established fenestration patterns by removing or adding new window or door openings, or altering opening sizes, should be avoided. When units have been severely damaged or are missing, contemporary replacements should match their original counterparts in overall physical and visual characteristics.

**Porches & Entries:** Porches, are features that distinguish older properties from more recent construction and therefore are important to retain. Porches, whether open air or enclosed and regardless of placement on front, side or rear elevations, provide a transition from interior to exterior space. Building entries are physical and visual focal points within the overall architectural composition. Changes to either porches or entries should not diminish any of these physical or visual qualities.

**Outbuildings:** Many older properties include separate freestanding outbuildings, such as carriage barns, storage buildings, garages or garden structures. Actions that permanently alter or remove outbuildings should be avoided, and attention should be focused on retaining these important features and adapting them to meet contemporary needs. Treatment of their exterior walls, roofs, windows and doors, and entries should meet the advice provided in the guidelines of these categories.

**Site Features:** The topography, vegetation, paved areas, walls and fences of a property are important in defining its general appearance and character. Severe grading of a site or addition of substantial fill, removal of mature vegetation, enlargement of hard surfaces, removal or modification of original walls or fences-or the addition of contemporary counterparts-can detract from a property's original character and impart an image that is highly contrasting to the rest of a conservation district. Care should be taken to ensure that changes to site features are respective of a property's established image.



Examples of homes on the Scotholm Terrace.



Examples of vinyl and wood exterior wall treatments.



A typical street in the Salina Conservation District, displaying a variety of roof lines.



A home in the Bradford Conservation District with window treatments typical of the style and era in which it was built.



Examples of appropriate and inappropriate porch treatments.



Inappropriate wall, window, door, and porch modifications.



Examples of site features that characterize an area.





## GOAL THREE RECOMMENDATIONS

Given all the potential programs that might be developed to support preservation activities, three specific project types were considered and economic programs specific to each were developed. The project types are:

1. training prospective homeowners in the acquisition and redevelopment of historic and older residential properties;
2. acquisition and significant rehabilitation of historic and older residential properties;
3. routine maintenance of historic and older residential properties, specifically for low-income, elderly and disabled residents.

Following extensive research into existing programs that are in use nationwide, these three types of programs seemed most appropriate for Syracuse. The following programs are recommended because they are easy to start up and have been successful in other places with similar problems, opportunities and constraints.

### **Live in a Landmark**

Live in a Landmark is a program through which the community can market city living to prospective homeowners. It is based on a two-part approach. The first element of Live in a Landmark is a basic introduction to different city neighborhoods through a guided tour. The tour gives people an idea of what to expect from each city neighborhood and the neighbors who live there. The second element is the Live in a Landmark workshop, designed to give people the information necessary to undertake a home acquisition and rehabilitation project. Together, these two program components will help people more clearly understand the opportunities that

exist for purchasing and living in one of Syracuse's historic or older homes.

### **Live in a Landmark Tour**

#### **Purpose**

To promote city living, homeownership, and rehabilitation of historic and older homes. By marketing city living and historic and older buildings as attractive options, more people will become interested in purchasing and residing in such properties. Rehabilitated historic and older houses will expand the city tax base, encourage other homeowners to make property improvements, and increase the economic vitality and livability of the surrounding area.

#### **Administration**

Preservation Association of Central New York (PACNY), working with neighborhood associations and the Greater Syracuse Association of Realtors.

#### **Target audience**

Prospective homeowners, empty nesters, and first-time homeowners. No qualifications are necessary to participate—the program is open to anyone who is interested and willing to pay fee.

#### **Program Structure**

The Live in a Landmark tours would occur periodically and have the following structure:

- Each tour focuses on one neighborhood.
- PACNY representative or neighborhood representative gives a short 15-20 minute background presentation about the neighborhood prior to the tour.
- PACNY representative or others lead participants on tour of the



neighborhood, either by walking or by vehicle.

- Designated historic properties and other noteworthy locations are highlighted.
- Available vacant houses are identified.
- Houses with rehabilitation in progress or completed are highlighted.
- Participants meet property owners, neighbors or neighborhood association representatives, and refreshments are provided at one or more house/location.
- Tour sponsors provide information about opportunities and funding for purchasing an older or historic home.

### **Program Funding**

The Live in a Landmark tours would be fairly inexpensive to implement, but potential funding and assistance could come from the following sources:

- PACNY- program costs will be supported by public and corporate grant funds to coordinate tours
- Individual real estate agents or Greater Syracuse Association of Realtors- contribute funding to pay for advertising
- Neighborhood associations- contribute person to give tour, location for meeting neighbors and possibly small financial contribution
- Tour participant fee-less than \$5.00 per person, to help defray costs

### **Live In a Landmark Workshop**

#### **Purpose**

To educate potential and current homeowners about purchasing and rehabilitating historic and older homes.

#### **Administration**

PACNY, working with local professionals (architects, landscape architects, engineers), contractors, and realtors.

### **Target audience**

Prospective homeowners, empty nesters, and first-time homeowners. No qualifications are necessary to participate- the program is open to anyone who is interested.

### **Program Structure**

The Live in a Landmark workshops would run according to the following structure:

- Workshops on weekends throughout the year, offering different topics.
- Day-long events from 10am to 3pm:  
10am-12pm – Basic overview  
12pm-1pm – Lunch  
1pm-3pm– Special workshop topic; topic changes from one workshop to another

Workshop content to include:

- Identifying suitable vacant properties for acquisition and rehabilitation
- Financing an acquisition and rehabilitation project (tax incentives, loans, etc.)
- Working to different degrees of restoration and rehabilitation
- Discussing requirements such as insurance, inspection, etc.
- Working with professional designers and contractors
- Identifying information about available resources (financial, construction, etc.)
- Showcasing local available properties

Special Topics to include:

- Live and Work in a Landmark-Utilizing large houses for home and business
- National Register Listed Properties– Research & documentation methods
- Windows-Energy Efficient AND Historically Appropriate

### **Program Funding**

The Live in a Landmark workshops would be fairly inexpensive to implement, but



potential funding and assistance could come from the following sources:

- PACNY- program costs will be supported by public and corporate grant funds to coordinate workshops
- Individual real estate agents or Greater Syracuse Association of Realtors- contribute funding to pay for advertising, people to teach at workshop sessions
- City of Syracuse- assist with setting up vacant/available property database and website
- Chamber of Commerce- contribute funding to pay for refreshments
- Volunteer professionals- contribute time to teach at workshop sessions
- SHPO grant- year 1- program materials: database, publicity materials
- SHPO grant- year 2- run program
- Workshop participant fee-less than \$15.00 per person, to help defray costs

## **Making Syracuse Home: The Acquisition Program**

The Acquisition Program will be used to save historic and older properties from the finality of demolition. The program will limit the amount of demolition that presently occurs by obtaining an option to buy or accepting donations of historic or older homes located within the city's conservation areas or historic districts. By locating appropriate buyers and creating protective covenants, the Acquisition Program will be used to preserve and protect our historic and older treasures for generations to come.

### **Purpose**

To protect properties and buildings from demolition within the city of Syracuse. By using the acquisition program to preserve historic buildings, other places and related landscapes will also be protected, preserved and actively used across the city. Investing

in historic properties in the city will encourage more investment and property improvements, which will spur further economic benefits. Rehabilitating and using vacant structures will provide a greater tax base for the city.

### **Administration**

PACNY, working with strong community groups that are interested in historic preservation, and want to become a citywide group willing to run the program. Coordinate program between PACNY, the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board, the City Departments of Economic Development and Community Development.

### **Target audience**

Anyone who wants to purchase and appropriately rehabilitate an historic or older property and has good credit history can offer a proposal.

### **Program Structure**

The program will accept property donations, or buy options on endangered historic and older properties and locate appropriate buyers. The program would run according to the following structure:

- Acquire start-up funding.
- Locate properties within the conservation areas or historic districts
- Acquire properties through donation or by purchasing options.
- Conduct a region-wide search for the appropriate buyer.
- Connect with the potential buyer.
- Create an agreement between the program administrator and the prospective property owner that requires them to rehabilitate the property in accordance with the historic design guidelines.
- Agree upon protective covenants to be inserted into the deed of ownership.





- Review and approve the proposal for rehabilitation and repairs to the home via the design guidelines.
- Some properties will be rehabilitated prior to sale (i.e. through Empire Housing), and some will be rehabilitated after sale.

### **Program Funding**

The Acquisition Program would be most effective with significant financial resources, and potential funding and assistance could come from the following sources:

- Syracuse Neighborhood Initiative (SNI), or other congressional assistance
- SHPO grant
- Corporate sponsorships
- Generous individuals
- Neighborhood associations

### **Helping Syracuse Homeowners: The Revolving Loan Fund**

The Revolving Loan Fund will provide property owners with low-income loans to rehabilitate or repair their older and historic properties. Financial assistance will provide an incentive for existing property owners to improve the appearance of their property, and the fund will restrict loans to people willing to rehabilitate in a historically appropriate way. Providing property owners with assistance will promote a positive image of saving the city's older and historic properties.

### **Purpose**

To protect properties and buildings from deterioration and demolition within the city of Syracuse. Investing in historic and older properties in the city will encourage more investment and property improvements, which will spur further economic benefits. Rehabilitating and using vacant structures will provide a greater tax base for the city.

### **Administration**

Coordinate program between PACNY, the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board, the City Departments of Economic Development and Community Development.

### **Target audience**

Any resident of the City of Syracuse who has lived in their home for more than 3 years, has good credit history and wants to rehabilitate a historic or older property within city limits.

### **Program Structure**

The fund will be used to offer low-interest loans to property owners who are willing to rehabilitate their property. Properties must be older or historic, and possess value to the surrounding area. The program would run according to the following structure:

- Acquire start-up funding.
- Property owners submit a rehabilitation proposal to apply for the loan.
- Review and approve the proposal for rehabilitation and repairs to the home via the design guidelines.
- If the proposal is satisfactory, the property owner shall receive the loan. If not, the proposal can be adjusted and resubmitted.
- Assign a preferred contractor.
- The loan will be given to the property owner for 5, 7, and 10 year periods, and will possess various interest rates depending on the amount provided.
- Amounts provided to be determined by available program resources.

### **Program Funding**

The Revolving Loan Fund would be most effective with significant financial resources, and potential funding and assistance could come from the following sources:

- Syracuse Neighborhood Initiative (SNI), or other congressional assistance



- SHPO grant
- Corporate sponsorships
- Generous individuals
- Neighborhood associations

## **Saving Syracuse**

Saving Syracuse strives to assist low-income, disabled or elderly property owners with the seasonal maintenance and repair of their historic and older homes. Working in conjunction with the city's Tomorrows Neighborhoods Today (TNT), a target area will be chosen each year and will benefit from a group of neighborhood volunteers performing seasonal maintenance and repair at no cost to the homeowner. The goal of the program is to ensure that the historic and older residential fabric of the city be preserved and last through time.

## **Purpose**

To preserve and rehabilitate older and historic homes, properties and neighborhoods. To assure that these properties, particularly those whose owners are unable to perform the necessary repairs, will be saved from deterioration and last through time. To make a sustainable impact by preserving older and historic properties in partnership with the community.

## **Administration**

Saving Syracuse will be run in conjunction with the existing Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT) program run by the City of Syracuse, Division of Neighborhood Planning. Neighborhood associations located throughout the city are encouraged to assist in the fight to preserve and rehabilitate older and historic properties throughout the community.

## **Target Audience**

Older and historic property owners, specifically low-income families, and those who are elderly or disabled.

## **Program Structure**

The Saving Syracuse workday will take place on the last weekend in April of every year, coinciding with National Rebuilding Day. The event will run according to the following structure:

- Each year the program will help preserve and rehabilitate one target block in one TNT neighborhood per year.
- The block and neighborhood will be selected by the Application and Selection Process

## ***Application and Selection Process***

The following attributes must be met:

1. The property must be an older or historic property owned by a low-income family or individual, elderly individual or a disabled individual, who cannot perform the rehabilitation and maintenance on their own.
  2. The property owner must be a resident of the neighborhood for a minimum of 5 years prior to the rehabilitation.
  3. The property owner must be current on all city, state and federal taxes.
- The targeted block and properties in the TNT planning area that are selected are provided with a team of neighborhood volunteers to perform seasonal rehabilitation and maintenance, such as painting, cleaning, weatherizing, and minor carpentry work.
  - The team will be comprised of volunteers that range from contractors and rehabilitation professionals to neighborhood residents with no prior knowledge of rehabilitation yet possess a caring and generous attitude. The unskilled volunteers work side by side with these skilled tradespeople.
  - An appointed staff person working with the City of Syracuse's Department of Neighborhood Planning and the TNT



Program will coordinate the volunteers and donations of materials.

- All repairs are free for property owners. Property owners and family members are asked to welcome the volunteers into their homes and work alongside them to the extent possible.

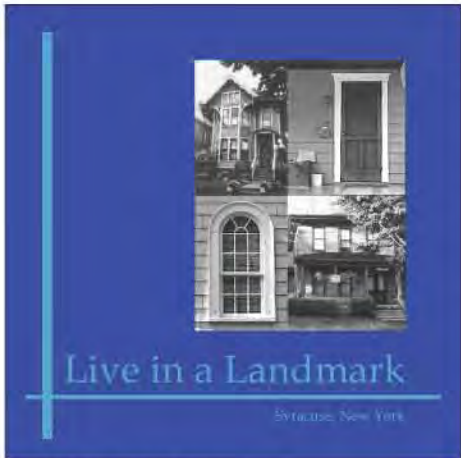
### **Program Funding**

Program costs for Saving Syracuse will be supported by public and corporate grant funds, as well as by significant contributions of volunteer time and donated materials. Potential funding and assistance could come from the following sources:

- Generous individuals
- Corporation sponsorships
- Labor organizations
- Foundations
- Civic and community organizations
- Churches and synagogues
- Congressional funds made available through the TNT program.







Example of "Live in a Landmark" informational booklet.

Given all the potential programs that might be developed to support preservation activities, three specific project types were considered and economic programs specific to each were developed. The project types are:

1. training prospective homeowners in the acquisition and redevelopment of historic and older residential properties;
2. acquisition and significant rehabilitation of historic and older residential properties;
3. routine maintenance of historic and older residential properties, specifically for low-income, elderly and disabled residents.

#### Live in a Landmark

Live in a Landmark is a program through which the community can market city living to prospective homeowners. It is based on a two-part approach. The first element of Live in a Landmark is a basic introduction to different city neighborhoods through a guided tour. The tour gives people an idea of what to expect from each city neighborhood and the neighbors who live there. The second element is the Live in a Landmark workshop, designed to give people the information necessary to undertake a home acquisition and rehabilitation project. Together, these two program components will help people more clearly understand the opportunities that exist for purchasing and living in one of Syracuse's historic or older homes.



Posters displayed in public places, alerting local residents of the upcoming Saving Syracuse workshop.



#### Saving Syracuse

Saving Syracuse strives to assist low-income, disabled or elderly property owners with seasonal maintenance and repair of their historic and older homes. Working in conjunction with the city's Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT), a target area will be chosen each year and will benefit from a group of neighborhood volunteers performing seasonal maintenance and repair at no cost to the homeowner. The goal of the program is to ensure that the historic and older residential fabric of the city be preserved and last though time.

The purpose of the workdays is to preserve and rehabilitate older and historic homes, properties and neighborhoods. Saving Syracuse will ensure that these properties, particularly those with owners who are unable to perform the necessary repairs, will be saved from deterioration.

Saving Syracuse will be run in conjunction with the existing Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT) program. City neighborhoods are encouraged to assist in the fight to preserve and rehabilitate older and historic properties throughout the city.

Each year, the program will help rehabilitate a target block in one TNT neighborhood. A team of volunteers will perform seasonal rehabilitation and maintenance. Teams will be comprised of unskilled volunteers that work side by side with skilled tradespeople. A person working with the city and TNT will coordinate volunteers and donations. All repairs are free for property owners. Property owners and family members are asked to welcome the volunteers into their homes and work alongside them to the extent possible.



Interesting discussion and exchange of knowledge at "Live in a Landmark" workshops.

The tours will promote city living, homeownership, and rehabilitation of historic and older homes. By marketing city living and historic and older buildings as attractive options, more people will become interested in purchasing and residing in such properties. Rehabilitated historic and older houses will expand the city tax base, encourage other homeowners to make property improvements, and increase the economic vitality and livability of the surrounding area.

Live in a Landmark will be administered by the Preservation Association of Central New York (PACNY), working with neighborhood associations and the Greater Syracuse Association of Realtors.

Each tour will focus on a different neighborhood and will start with a short history background. The tour will take either a walking or vehicular route through the neighborhood, stopping at designated historic properties, notable locations, available vacant houses, and houses with rehabilitation in-progress or completed. Participants will meet neighbors or neighborhood association representatives.

The workshops will educate potential and current homeowners about purchasing and rehabilitating historic and older homes. Workshops will occur on weekends throughout the year, with topics to include: identifying suitable vacant properties for acquisition and rehabilitation, financing an acquisition and rehabilitation project, working to different degrees of restoration and rehabilitation, and discussing requirements such as insurance and inspection.



Owners Homes and Offices -Live and Work in a Landmark

#### Helping Syracuse Homeowners: Revolving Loan Fund

The Revolving Loan Fund will provide property owners with low-interest loans to rehabilitate or repair their older and historic properties. Financial assistance will provide an incentive for existing property owners to improve the appearance of their property, and the fund offer loans to people willing to rehabilitate in a historically appropriate way.

The Fund will protect buildings from demolition and deterioration within the city of Syracuse. Investing in historic and older properties will encourage more investment and property improvements, which will spur further economic benefits. Rehabilitating and using vacant structures will provide a greater tax base for the city.

The program will be coordinated between PACNY, the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board, and the City Departments of Economic and Community Development.



#### Preserve Your Neighborhood Northside Community



#### Saving Syracuse

April 26, 2003 9:00 AM  
Grant Middle School (2400 Grant Blvd)  
Sponsored by Syracuse Merchants  
Call (315) 123 - 4567 for details



Example of a poster for publicizing "Saving Syracuse" workdays.



Before, during and after rehabilitation of Sumner Street residence in the University Neighborhood.

#### Making Syracuse Home: The Acquisition Program

The Acquisition Program will be used to save historic and older properties from the finality of demolition. The program will reduce the amount of demolition that presently occurs in Syracuse by acquiring historic or older homes located within the city's conservation areas and historic districts. The program will locate appropriate buyers and create protective covenants for these properties.

By using the acquisition program to preserve historic buildings, other places and related landscapes will also be protected, preserved and actively used across the city. Investing in historic properties in the city will encourage more investment and property improvements, which will spur further economic benefits. Rehabilitating and using vacant structures will provide a greater tax base for the city.

The Acquisition Program will be administered by PACNY, working with strong community groups, the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board, and the City Departments of Economic and Community Development.

The program will accept property donations, buy options on endangered historic and older properties, and locate appropriate buyers.



Brochures advertising the Revolving Loan Fund and the Acquisition Program.





## Conclusion

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## CONCLUSION

In their book *Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl*, Richard Moe and Carter Wilkie tell us that:

In saving our heritage of older buildings and neighborhoods, we strengthen a partnership that makes for orderly growth and change in our communities: the perpetual partnership among the past, the present, and the future. This partnership recognizes we that we cannot afford to live in the past, so it encourages each generation to build in its own style, to meet its own needs by taking advantage of the best contemporary thought and technology. But it also recognizes that we can't afford to reject the history, the culture, the traditions and values on which our lives and our futures are built....

...[W]hen this bond works as it is suppose to, that partnership produces a healthy society with confidence and an enduring concept of community....

Bricks and boards of old buildings, and the buildings that together compose a place, are tangible expressions of people long gone, an entryway into a community's collective memory. By saving places where memory resides, we become part of an infinite continuum, immersed in a perpetual stream in which past and future are inseparable parts. In that way, preservation helps us satisfy the need for continuity that art historian Sigfried Gideon says is "part of the very backbone of human dignity."

Day-to-day contact with the evidence of our past gives us confidence because it enables us to know where we came from as well as where we are. It gives us a standard against which to measure ourselves and our accomplishments. And it confronts us with the realization—sometimes exhilarating, sometimes disturbing—that we, too, will be remembered and held accountable. Future generations will look at our work as the standard against which to measure their own performance. Will we be remembered for what we have allowed to disappear? Or will we be remembered for what we have left behind? The answer is ours to decide.

Across the nation, preservation of a city's older and historic places has become a primary tool for community revitalization. No longer is it a single issue, a single property concern. Rather it is a means for inspiring and empowering local citizens to take responsibility for protecting the collective cultural landscape that constitutes their city. It is a tool by which people can identify those places that enhance the quality of life and shape the spirit and identity of a community.

The Preservation Component of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Syracuse establishes the policies necessary for political and civic leaders to ensure the retention and continued use of the city's important places. It outlines how advocacy organizations that share a commitment to urban living can expand the resource base for successful preservation and revitalization of older and historic city neighborhoods. It describes how local government in conjunction with business people can infuse traditional commercial and industrial areas with a mix of resurrected and new uses, and





capitalize on the long-term investment inherent in older business districts, commercial corridors and industrial sectors. It offers ways that local cultural and educational institutions can more fully celebrate city history through coordinated programs and expand heritage tourism. And it unequivocally makes the case for protecting the rich fabric of Downtown as the primary cluster of significant historic resources.

Adoption and implementation of the Preservation Component of the Comprehensive Plan will—as Moe and Wilkie suggest—guarantee that Syracusans will be remembered for respecting the tangible evidence of their past and protecting it for future generations.



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