

THE RELEVANCY GUIDEBOOK

HOW WE CAN TRANSFORM THE FUTURE OF PRESERVATION



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COVER PHOTO

People are at the heart of historic preservation. But for preservation to be a relevant solution it must respond to the needs and wants of, and be an accessible tool for, people connected to historic places. The rights of communities to determine what is worth saving is paramount to building a just, inclusive and welcoming practice.

Pictured are residents and volunteers in February 2022 advocating for the preservation of Altgeld Gardens – Phillip Murray Homes on Chicago’s far South Side, a public housing community listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Community members joined the [Skyline Council of Landmarks Illinois](#), the organization’s young professionals committee, and local environmental justice organization, [People for Community Recovery](#), to “heart bomb” Altgeld’s vacant Shop Building to call for its preservation and reuse. Their goal is to bring a locally owned grocery store to the space. Photo by Lewis Purdy for Landmarks Illinois.

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FOREWORD

FOREWORD

We often talk about historic preservation as if it is small and of little consequence, but over the 45 years I have been working in this field I have come to see that it connects to almost everything that makes communities good places to live and work. When people asked, I used to say, “I work on old buildings.” My answer these days is much more complex. I work with people to save places that have meaning to them and that give their community its character. Saving these places has environmental and health benefits, and creates investment and jobs, sometimes for the first time in decades. Small? Unimportant? I don’t think so, and neither does this project’s author, Bonnie McDonald, President & CEO of Landmarks Illinois.

I hope by now many of you will have encountered Bonnie’s amazing voice. She is passionate about the need to make historic preservation more equitable and just in order to do more for more people. Her kindness and her determination are a combination that cannot be resisted. Because she is so inclusive in her outlook and so well-respected in the field her message is reaching, not just every corner of Illinois, but across America.

When Bonnie first came to the Landmarks Illinois Board with her proposal for The Relevancy Project I don’t think any of us realized what a monumental undertaking it was going to be. But we had seen Bonnie in action—her tenure with our organization has been transformative—and we knew that the need for a new vision and new practices was urgent. The Board and the staff were not only supportive, but eagerly undertook to go along for the ride. A comprehensive look at preservation was part of our 50th anniversary work in 2019-2021. A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan is nearing the finish line. With the help of local advocates and trust-building, we are now being invited as partners into community-based preservation projects where preservation had once overlooked local voices and resources. And we are starting work on a new 5-year strategic plan that will consider many of the forward-thinking practices captured in The Relevancy Project. It showing us ways to make preservation relevant to more people in more places. We want you to experience this same growth and transformation. The Relevancy Project will help you find your way.



Figure 1: Jean Follett (L) visiting with Ophelia Niemann (R), owner of the historic Manske-Niemann Farm near Litchfield, Illinois in 2015. Jean is a passionate advocate for rural communities and ensuring that the future of preservation includes historic places in small towns and rural America. Photo by Landmarks Illinois.

Take some time to get acquainted with The Relevancy Project. I recommend taking a deep dive into essays that speak to work you are already doing. Then add others to your list as you are able. Not everything will be an obvious fit for every organization. But every essay offers insights and new ways of thinking about the future of historic preservation.

Although the Project is worth reading from start to finish, the changes it proposes, whether incremental or sweeping, cannot happen all at once. To be relevant, historic preservation is going to have to meet people where they are and tackle some of the biggest challenges of our times. Many of you are already working on this shift. For others, the change will be difficult, requiring a rethinking of programs you and your colleagues may have been engaged with for decades. Because our work requires us to constantly balance the need for change against the desire to preserve, the struggle to make preservation more relevant will be a familiar one.

We can and we must change. I hope we can work together to meet the challenges and implement the ideas contained in The Relevancy Project.

Jean Follett, PhD
Strategic Planning Task Force Co-Chair and
Board Member, Landmarks Illinois Advisor,
National Trust for Historic Preservation

HOW TO USE THE RELEVANCY GUIDEBOOK

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A travel guidebook provides maps to orient you and options on what to do from a source that has vetted the options. A guidebook's best feature is that there is no set path. You choose your own experience based on your interests, time and mobility. Envisioned as a similar tool, The Relevancy Guidebook provide ideas, models and resources from the field's innovators to move preservation practice towards relevance. You choose your own path.

ORGANIZED FOR EASY NAVIGATION

The Relevancy Guidebook layout provides quick and in-depth references to choose from based on your available time and interests:

- Navigate to a section by clicking on the hyperlink in the **Table of Contents**.
- **Easily return to the Table of Contents from any page** by clicking on "The Relevancy Guidebook" in the footer.
- The **Executive Summary** provides the project findings at a high level.
- **Eight topical essays** explore preservation's opportunity areas in depth and include data and references. Follow the hot links from the Table of Contents to go directly to your interest area.
- **Prompts** at the beginning of each essay provide questions to frame and consider the topic.
- The **Quick Reference Guides** at the end of each essay summarize the opportunity to help make the case to others. Download these as handouts.
- The **List of Ideas** in Appendix 1 are crowdsourced ideas and methods to take action in each opportunity area.

- An extensive **resource list** in Appendix 2 provides information and models from across the country.
- The **Interviewee List** in the Acknowledgements identifies thought leaders and prospective partners as you plan your actions.

MORE ABOUT THE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDES

The Executive Summary condenses The Relevancy Project's entire findings. But, what if you want to learn a bit more, or share information about, a specific topic? Use the Quick Reference Guide at the end of each essay. Each guide lists 10 reasons to focus on that topic, 10 ideas to make preservation more relevant in that opportunity area and supporting data and resources. Download and share these resources with others. The guides succinctly summarize preservation's opportunity areas as handouts for advocates, decision makers, partners, colleagues, funders, volunteers, the media and anyone else who can participate in evolving the preservation field. Refer people to The Relevancy Guidebook essays, endnotes and appendices if they are looking for citations or additional information.

MORE ABOUT THE LIST OF IDEAS TO BUILD A RELEVANT HISTORIC PRESERVATION MOVEMENT (APPENDIX 1)

After reading the topical essays, you may ask how we will pursue these opportunities. The Relevancy Project interviewees provided ideas on how to make preservation more relevant in each of these areas. Find their ideas in Appendix 1 grouped by topic and further categorized for easier reference. As with this guidebook, you choose your own path to pursue the ideas that are most relevant, meaningful and feasible for you.

PREPARING TO USE THE RELEVANCY GUIDEBOOK AND PURSUE CHANGEMAKING IDEAS

Here are some steps to take to make efficient use of The Relevancy Guidebook and your time:

- Start by envisioning what a relevant preservation movement is to you. Write this down and revise it until it clearly articulates your vision. If you are a visual person, create a collage that expresses your vision. Find the right vehicle for you. Here are some helpful questions to ask yourself:
 - What does success in preservation look like to you?
 - Who would be engaged in your work?
 - What types of places would be a priority?
 - Where could you deepen or expand your work to be more relevant?
- Create a set of values and principles to guide your work. Using your values and principles as a filter to make and explain choices can ensure transparency, accountability and help navigate challenges. Here is a blog post from May 2022 on [how to create nonprofit organizational values](#) from Donorbox, which includes a process that could apply to individuals, institutions, regulatory agencies and private corporations.
- Choose ideas to pursue using Appendix 1. Look at the ideas list in the topical areas that are most interesting to you. Identifying the things that you are most interested in will help you face headwinds. Pick a manageable number of action steps and set a timeline to implement them. Be prepared to give your reasons for choosing these ideas as you persuade others to join you. Anticipate challenges that you may encounter and make a plan to overcome these challenges. Here are more questions to ask yourself in this process:
 - Which ideas, if implemented, would move your work closer to your vision for preservation?
 - About which ideas do you feel the most conviction, resolve, curiosity or excitement?
 - Think about a few ways to measure your progress. These can be quantitative, qualitative or both. How will you know when preservation is more relevant to a wider group of people?
 - Look at what others have done. Reference Appendix 2 in this guidebook for models and resources and consult the list of The Relevancy Project interviewees for prospective mentors or partners.
 - Whose support do you need and want to move the needle? Begin, or continue, to build and steward a network of allies. Find people who want to implement change, help them do so and collaborate as a brain trust.
 - Talk about what you envision with others and generate conversations that further the discussion. Foster inclusive dialogue about preservation's challenges and create opportunities to develop solutions in community with others that will make preservation relevant to more people. Be vocal about what you want preservation to be.
 - Use the Quick Reference Guides for talking and data points. Hand them out to colleagues, or drop the information into presentations, letters, reports or testimony. Feel free to use the information and design something more useful to you.
 - Facing a headwind? When being challenged as you try to make change, remember to return to your vision, values and principles, activate your support network and find other preservationists doing work that inspires you. Remind yourself that change, especially the transformational kind, takes time. Practice self-care to ensure that you are resilient, can apply perspective and that you can persist with courage.

WHO IS THE “WE” USED IN THIS PUBLICATION?

Note that when “we”, “our” or “some” are used in this publication, it refers to preservation professionals and people who identify as participants in the preservation movement.

THE RELEVANCY GUIDEBOOK IS A PRODUCT OF ITS TIME

Hyperlinks used throughout the guidebook provide quick access to resources and data, but they are also likely to break as the document ages. Full titles are included in the endnotes or Appendix 2 when possible to maintain access to the resource.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PREAMBLE

HISTORIC PLACES MATTER

People have a fundamental connection to historic places because they give context to the events that have shaped our history. Historic places are about culture and tradition, our achievements and mistakes: what we choose to save speaks to our values and beliefs. Just as destroying historic places can untether communities, saving them can help maintain a vital connection between generations, providing a source of recognition, pride, joy and hope.

WHY IS PRESERVATION STILL SO DIFFICULT?

So, if historic places are so important, why is preserving them still so difficult? Because not everyone values historic places. With lagging public support for preservation, the field faces fundamental challenges: embattled regulatory tools, a lack of political and public support (or downright hostility), misinformation and insufficient funding. Preservation also faces new challenges emerging out of an overdue examination of our practices through the lens of justice, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

PRESERVATION'S RELEVANCY CRISIS

For preservation to survive and be useful in a changing world, we must reckon with its relevance. (The “we” and “our” used here refers to preservation professionals and people who identify as preservationists.) A relevant tool solves a problem that connects, relates and is applicable to a person’s life. Rather than being hailed as a solution, preservation is criticized, challenged, marginalized and even vilified. We are excluded from decision-making tables when we are not seen as problem solvers. Add to this the

criticism, or truism that we lack self-awareness about the preservation field’s inequities and a reckoning is, indeed, long overdue.

The preservation community has historically been white and higher income, generally saving places that they care about. As a result, our work has overlooked a large and significant group of people, stories and historic places. Consider that prior to FY2014, the National Park Service found that only 8% of National Register sites reflect the stories of women, people of color and members of the LGBTQAI+ community. Preservation practice is irrelevant, or in danger of becoming so, because of this underlying inequity.

Further, people interviewed for this project believe we are not engaging effectively as a solution for larger social issues including advocating for racial justice, providing affordable housing and fighting climate change. The huge gap in the people we serve and the need for our goals to align with larger community goals illustrate the crisis that historic preservation finds itself in.

CHANGE IS NEEDED, BUT IT IS OVERWHELMING

Surveys have shown that the vast majority of preservationists believe that the field needs substantial change and that the pressure to do so is coming from both inside and outside of the profession. Despite this widespread recognition, there is no consensus about how to do it. Many preservationists are unsure where to begin or lack the confidence to challenge existing systems, fearing the loss of regulations and incentives that we worked hard to create. We must move beyond handwringing and into action. Otherwise, changes will be made for us and not by us.

THE RELEVANCY PROJECT

The Relevancy Project was conceived to identify preservation's opportunities, to tap our field's collective wisdom and to inspire individual and organizational-level actions that will move preservation towards relevance. Between August 2019 and February 2021, 130 people both inside of, and adjacent to, the preservation field were interviewed about common concerns, best practices and innovations. Their responses, and subsequent research, were published in an 11-part blog series in 2022 on Landmarks Illinois' [website](#). The Relevancy Guidebook is a compilation of the project interviews, research and resources in an easy-to-reference document to inform and inspire actions to make preservation relevant to more people. Find in-depth information about the underlying principles, key findings and reference citations in the guidebook essays, which focus on each opportunity area. Follow the Table of Contents hotlink to go directly to your interest area. Note that Appendix 1 lists ideas for actions to take in support of preservation's relevance and Appendix 2 has an extensive resource list.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

Common principles emerged during The Relevancy Project interviews, underpinning the motivation to change our practice. They provide the framework for the project's findings.

- History is important to humanity.
- Places are important to people's mental and physical wellbeing.
- People have a right to place.
- Preservationists want to help more people save places that matter to them and to their community.
- Preservation practice should not only be equal, but equitable.
- Communities should not only be involved in discussions, but also be in the lead on decision-making

KEY FINDINGS

OPPORTUNITY AREAS FOR PRESERVATION TO ENHANCE ITS RELEVANCE

As previously noted, project interviewees believe that our field is not relevant because preservation is not actively engaged in addressing social issues. The following are the most frequently cited, important and, not surprisingly, daunting opportunity areas for moving preservation forward.

1. **Dismantle our culture of preciousness.**
Preservation regulations are designed to protect historic material rather than prioritize the needs of people living in and using these places today. The focus on a subjective, yet rigid definition of integrity turns historic places from things that are venerated for the stories they can tell into assemblages of precious materials. This practice can weigh heavily against under-resourced property owners, perpetuating preservation's lack of inclusion and equity.
2. **Create a just preservation movement.**
To be more relevant to more people, the places we help preserve must include more people and tell the stories valued by, and reflective of, our increasingly diverse nation. Who decides which places are saved must be an inclusive process where people are respected and valued, treated with fairness and dignity, and lead the decision-making. Until we address implicit bias and our field's imbedded, unjust practices, including those tied to land use policies, we will continue to be exclusive.
3. **Preserve and create affordable housing.**
The United States has an undersupply of all housing types, especially at low-income

price points. A majority of Americans see housing affordability as a problem despite geographic, demographic and economic differences. Historic buildings of all types can be adapted for housing and can increase the overall supply by converting places from their original purpose to residential use.

4. Fight climate change through preservation.

In a 2021 Gallup poll, 65% of Americans reported worrying between a fair amount and a great deal about climate change. Reusing existing buildings helps mitigate climate change by eliminating building material waste and avoiding upfront carbon emissions from new construction. Estimates are that two-thirds of our existing buildings will still be in operation in 2040, so improving their energy efficiency and climate resilience is essential.

5. Connect preservation to health and wellness.

The right to health, education and culture are designated and protected human rights. Historic places connect to these rights. Although they can be emotional anchors, strengthen social connections and improve healing, the physical and mental health and wellness benefits of preserving historic places remain largely unexplored.

6. Create more preservation jobs.

We need to expand the pool of workers that value preservation and can influence change. Building a diverse preservation workforce results in teams that are more effective and is imperative to telling our full history. Making construction apprentice programs more accessible and attractive is imperative as droves of long- experienced

tradespeople leave the field. Internship, hiring and employee retention practices need to be competitive and center people's needs and we must address widespread levels of burnout.

7. Tell better stories.

Basing a presentation around architectural style, architect names and dates is a surefire way to make people feel like outsiders. When we tell relatable stories about people and historic places, especially in a group setting, we create valuable, memorable and emotionally beneficial experiences. Entertaining and informative stories have the potential to change people's minds about history and build future advocates for our historic places.

8. Practice values-based fundraising with an abundance mindset.

When we align our operations with our principles, our team's fundraising passion, joy and success follow. As our work becomes more relevant to more people, preservation philanthropy will increase. We can change our fundraising practices to believe in abundant resources – that there is enough for us all. Share resources and mentor other organizations that want to grow their fundraising skills. A rising tide lifts all boats.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Remaining relevant is a dynamic practice that will see us continually engaging with stakeholders, learning about their needs and delivering the resources that connect, relate and are applicable to them. As we are building preservation practices that better respond to society's interests, let us:

- Make community engagement, reevaluation and evolution our foundation,
- Create a preservation movement that is accessible, inclusive, just and relevant, and
- Ensure a future where everyone and anyone can save, maintain and reuse places that matter to them and to their community.

ESSAYS

WHY IS PRESERVATION STILL SO DIFFICULT?

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ESSAY PROMPTS:

1. Is preservation celebrated, criticized or both where you work and why?
2. What problems are most pressing in your community? How would preservation need to change to be a part of the solution?
3. What do you need to learn, know and have ready as you approach new partners and communities around these issues?
4. What are you and/or your organization willing to do, and how ready are you, to ensure preservation becomes more relevant?

People have a fundamental connection to historic places because they give context to the events that have shaped our history. Historic places are about culture and tradition, our achievements and mistakes: what we choose to save speaks to our values and beliefs. Just as destroying historic places can untether communities, saving them can help maintain a vital connection between

generations, providing a source of recognition, pride, joy and hope [Figure 2].

So, if historic places are so important, why is preserving them still so difficult? Because not everyone values historic places the way that we do for a multitude of reasons. Perhaps they did not visit historic sites as a child or they had a bad history teacher. Some people see any older home as a fixer upper beyond and consider historic places being in the way of a higher and better use. With lagging public support in communities nationwide, historic preservation continues to face fundamental challenges: embattled regulatory tools, a lack of political and public support (or downright hostility), misinformation and insufficient funding. The preservation field has made strong gains in public education and engagement, the creation of tools that help people and communities and bringing the work of saving historic places into the mainstream. We can point to tens, if not hundreds of thousands of success stories. Rarely, however, are these easy wins. The struggle to preserve continues nearly 60 years after the National Historic Preservation Act was passed and 45 years after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld local landmarking as a public benefit. In addition to the challenges I note above, we are facing new ones that are



Figure 2: Former Manzanar War Relocation Center prisoners Shi Nomura and Sue Kunitomi Embrey advocated for decades for its recognition and protection as a site of conscience. People have a fundamental connection to Manzanar as a historic place. There is an [annual pilgrimage](#) to the [Manzanar National Historic Site](#), in California's Owens Valley, each April. Photo by jvotes, CC BY 2.0. Photo unchanged.

emerging out of an overdue examination of preservation through the lens of justice, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

The preservation field has talked ad nauseam about the misinformation that dogs our work: preservation is anti-progress, hinders growth, is against change, is too expensive, and historic properties are not energy efficient. The list could go on. However, we have not dealt effectively with the belief underpinning these messages: preservation is less relevant than other societal values or is simply irrelevant to a large swath of the public.

WHAT IS “RELEVANCE” AND WHY AREN’T WE?

The historic preservation movement faces a relevancy crisis. ¹ To many, this will be a difficult statement to take in. It is challenging to see your life’s work discounted and rendered unimportant and, worse, inequitable. Some feel this criticism is unwarranted and only see our intentions as benevolent and our impact as positive. Others believe we are woefully lacking in self-awareness about the inequities in our field and that a reckoning is long overdue. Despite the widespread recognition that change is needed, there is little consensus about what to do. However, if we do not begin to change, decisions will be made for us and not by us. It is time to move beyond assessment and hand-wringing and into action.

Something is “relevant” to a person when it connects, relates and is applicable to an aspect of their life. Here is a tangible example. Nina Simon, former Executive Director of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History (MAH), wrote about tapping into relevance in her book, “[The Art of Relevance](#).”²

“Relevance is a key that unlocks meaning. It opens doors to experiences that matter to us, surprise us, and bring value into our lives.”³

– Nina Simon, “The Art of Relevance”

Simon gave a 2017 TEDX Talk about the collective work to make the MAH more relevant to its community. ⁴ When Simon arrived at the MAH in May 2011, she found a museum in trouble. The museum had no money and most Santa Cruzans were not aware it existed. The MAH “did not matter enough to enough people in our community.”⁵ Simon engaged people living near the MAH in a conversation about what programs they would find meaningful. Knowing what the surrounding community wanted enabled the museum to deliver relevant programs. With this approach, attendance tripled and the MAH’s bank account went from \$16,000 to \$1.6 million in Simon’s first five years as its director.⁶ If we measure relevance by people’s actions, then the MAH clearly hit the mark. Simon shows us that to be relevant is to engage people in defining what they value and want and then responding with accessible, relatable, applicable and effective solutions.

The preservation field is reckoning with its relevance. Rather than being hailed as a solution, preservation is criticized, challenged, marginalized and even vilified.⁷ There have been efforts to de-designate historic districts, gut preservation ordinances, cut state and local preservation office budgets and eliminate financial incentives [Figure 3]. Preservation organizations struggle to make ends meet with decreasing numbers of foundation partners, major donors and members. We are excluded from decision-



Figure 3: A preservation advocate holds up a protest sign at the City of Evanston, Illinois City Council meeting on June 18, 2018. The council was discussing their staff's recommendation to demolish the Harley Clarke Mansion, a local landmark and National Register-listed property owned by the City of Evanston itself. Photo by Landmarks Illinois

making tables when we are not seen as part of the solution. If we were seen as relevant, we would be included as problem solvers.

There is a quip: “if you have to ask if you’re relevant, you’re not.” But it is not that simple. The places we save and our practices for doing so are relevant to our current supporters. Thanks in large part to several interviewees for this project, engagement by people previously underrepresented in preservation is growing in parts of our field. However, as Nina Simon realized when she arrived at the MAH, “we [do] not matter enough to enough people in our community.”⁸ The preservation community has historically been white and higher income, generally saving places that they care about. As a result, our work has overlooked a large and significant group of people, stories and historic places. To put this in context, this under-represented group encompasses 132 million people of other races in the United States, or 40% of the population, and 159 million people living below the median income - nearly half of the population.⁹ The vast majority of people interviewed as part of The Relevancy Project believe that preservation is irrelevant, or in danger of becoming so, because of this underlying inequity.¹⁰ The

interviewees also believe that our field is not seen as effectively engaging in solutions for larger social issues: fighting climate change; advocating for antiracism, social justice and enfranchisement; alleviating income inequality; and providing affordable access to things considered human rights, like housing, health care and transportation. The huge gap in the people we serve and the need for our goals to align with larger community goals, both problems which were raised repeatedly by interviewees, illustrate the crisis that historic preservation finds itself in.

Two studies reinforce these findings. The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) conducted an August 2019 online survey of the preservation field entitled, “Challenges and Innovations Occurring in the Preservation Field.” Over 1,000 people responded. In a series of blog posts, the NTHP reported that 86% of respondents felt that preservation needed to innovate, 92% wanted our work to be fair and equitable, and 96% wanted to ensure we were telling a more complete American story.¹¹ A second study was carried out by University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) Professor Randy Mason, and Research Associate Kaitlyn Levesque, who published their findings in March 2022,

[“Preservation and Change: Survey of Attitudes and Opinions in the Historic Preservation Field.”](#)¹² More than 2,000 preservation

professionals participated in their online survey between late 2020 and early 2021.¹³ Like the NTHP findings, the UPenn research demonstrated consensus about the need for substantial change, noting that the pressure to change is coming from both inside and outside of the preservation profession [Figure 4]. Like the NTHP survey, UPenn respondents felt that preservation needed to become more diverse, cultivate new leadership and partnerships, and focus more on intangible heritage.¹⁴ Significantly, the UPenn survey also found “deep divides” within the field over the issue of change.

WE AGREE THAT PRESERVATION NEEDS TO CHANGE

At the 2020 Past Forward Conference, Renee Kuhlman, the NTHP Senior Director of the Preservation Services and Outreach Department, noted that historic preservation’s relevance was debated at the 1991 National Preservation Conference as the National Historic Preservation Act marked its 25th anniversary. This questioning continued when the act turned 50 in 2016. Thirty years of discussion is long enough.

The Relevancy Project was conceived to identify preservation’s opportunities, to tap our field’s collective wisdom and to inspire individual and organizational-level actions that will move preservation towards relevance. It is a response to the continued call for easy-to-use tools. The Relevancy Guidebook is the

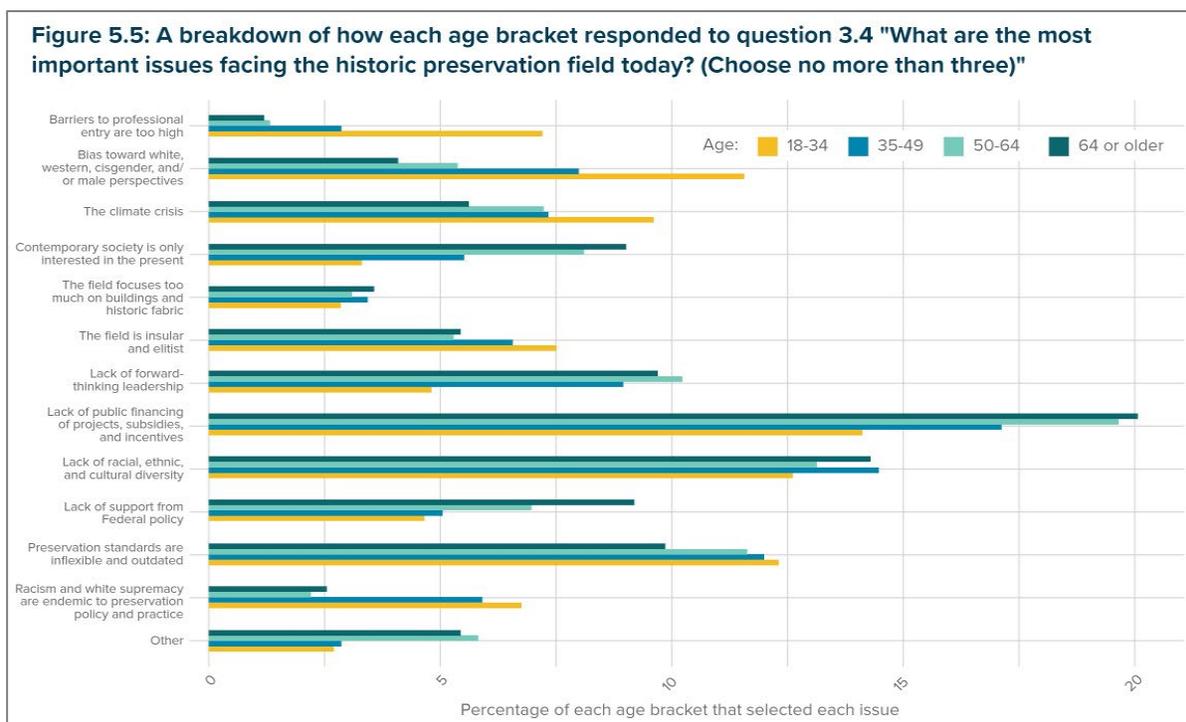


Figure 4: From ["Preservation and Change: Surveys of Attitudes and Opinions in the Historic Preservation Field, Report of Findings,"](#) University of Pennsylvania, March 2022. Response breakdown by age to the question, "What are the most important issues facing the historic preservation field today?"

corresponding collection of strategic and tactical resources adding to the field's action-oriented toolbox. Refer to Appendix 2 in this guidebook for links to these resources.

Having devoted over half my life to preservation, the Relevancy Project comes from a deep dedication to our work and fears for its future viability. My preservation career has included working for national and state preservation nonprofits, lobbying coalitions, state and local government, historical societies and house museums.¹⁵ I currently serve as President & CEO of [Landmarks Illinois](#), previously ran the [Minnesota](#) statewide preservation organization, and volunteered as board chair for the [National Preservation Partners Network](#) from 2018-2022. From these experiences, I have built a national network of colleagues who provide continual information, support and inspiration. We often discuss the challenges we face that relate to the preservation movement's problems and our frustration with the overwhelming scale of needed change.

Pre-pandemic, my day began and ended in an overcrowded commuter train. Audiobooks became a way to unplug and simultaneously learn something. Jean Case's "[Be Fearless](#)," my April 2019 listen, lit a fire in me to make visible the problems I see in preservation and join with others to do something about them.

"It's time for us to be bold, act with urgency and embrace risks with potential to produce exponential social returns."
- Jean Case, [Be Fearless](#)¹⁶

The Relevancy Project started as a vital component of the visioning process for Landmarks Illinois' future. In 2021, Landmarks Illinois celebrated its 50th anniversary and our board and staff saw this as not only an

opportunity, but a mandate to explore making our organization more relevant. Landmarks Illinois formed a think tank, our 50th Anniversary Task Force, to reimagine preservation's future in Illinois and create a bold organizational vision. The task force was made up of people both inside and outside of preservation, representing community development and organizing, transportation, planning, housing, architecture, law, construction, small business, policy and preservation. This diverse group created a set of [guiding principles](#) to inform the changes we need in preservation.

Working over a 14-month period, the task force realized that Landmarks Illinois could be a testing ground for ideas that enhance preservation's relevance to an audience that extends well beyond Illinois. As part of this broader reach, I launched The Relevancy Project, to talk with my peers across the nation about preservation's challenges and opportunities. Were they seeing the same things that we are in Illinois and Chicago?

THE PROJECT'S UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

Common principles emerged during The Relevancy Project interviews, underpinning the motivation to change our practice. They provide the framework for the project's findings.

- **History is important to humanity.** Knowing and understanding our full history, even when difficult or challenging to existing narratives, helps us make sense of our current condition while influencing and informing future decisions.
- **Places are important to people's mental and physical wellbeing.** Places

become associated with identity, emotion, values and social connections. People experience pain and distress when places they find comforting are lost. Conversely, places can also help people heal.

- **People have a right to place.** Places are far more than material objects. They can illustrate history, story, culture, heritage and tradition, all of which tie to individual and community identity.
- **Preservationists want to help more people save places that matter to them and to their community.** We want preservation to be accessible and welcoming to more people, as well as creating an environment where people feel that they belong.
- **Preservation practice should not only be equal, but equitable.** Equal access is important. It is also important to meet people where they are, recognizing that they may want or need something different, or additional, in order to engage.
- **Communities should not only be involved in discussions, but also be in the lead on decision-making.** Authentic community engagement requires time, access, trust building and listening to all voices, not just the loudest or those who can attend meetings. Participatory decision-making is imperative.

PROJECT METHODS

Between August 2019 and February 2021, I interviewed 130 people both inside of, and adjacent to, the preservation field about common concerns, best practices and innovations [Figure 5]. Every interviewee answered the same set of questions. I analyzed and synthesized the interviewees' responses between the summer of 2021 and 2022 and did additional research to

understand the issues they raised. The outcomes were shared in an 11-part blog series published over the summer of 2022 on Landmarks Illinois' [website](#) and shared on the [Historic Preservation Professionals](#) Facebook page, my [LinkedIn](#) and social media pages. The Relevancy Guidebook is a compilation of the interviews, research, blog posts, ideas and resources in one, easy-to-reference document.



Figure 5: Community development expert Ciere Boatright of Chicago, Illinois was one of 130 project interviewees who contributed to The Relevancy Project. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, over half of the interviews were conducted via video conference. Photo by Landmarks Illinois

BE FEARLESS AND TAKE ACTION

The Relevancy Project explored, questioned and challenged longstanding preservation philosophy, pedagogy and practice. These assertions did not reflect the beliefs and opinions of all interviewees and not everyone agreed with the concerns and conflicts being raised. Some may find the assertions difficult, irresponsible or even dangerous to the preservation field. Others will be encouraged that these criticisms are getting daylight and discussion, as illustrated by numerous post comments.

The previously cited "Preservation and Change" survey, and this project's interviewees, reinforced that the majority of

preservationists believe that our work needs to change, but there is no consensus on which actions to take. Those calling for change largely fall into three categories:

- Preservation needs incremental tweaking
- Preservation needs systemic change
- Dismantle preservation and start over

Is it possible to reach consensus on an approach? Coming to agreement on common goals and aligning perspectives amongst these three groups is unlikely. Is consensus necessary for us to move preservation toward a more relevant future? We could spend an inordinate amount of time trying or accept the state of preservation as it is. Tens of thousands of people across this land are working to save the places that are important to them, to their community and to ensure that we are telling the full history. This is our shared movement. Disagreeing on how to improve this work need not prevent us from acting. Be fearless and take action, however you can.¹⁷ Whether we work to dismantle, overhaul or tweak systems, at least we are working to make preservation more relevant according to our worldview. There is no time like the present to change the future.

A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO WHY PRESERVATION IS STILL SO DIFFICULT

10 REASONS WHY ... PRESERVATION IS IN THE MIDST OF A RELEVANCY CRISIS

- **People have a fundamental connection to historic places.** These sites give context to the unfolding sequence of events that have shaped our history.
- **Because these sites are interwoven with the story of how we came to be—our identities—**they are living memories with layers that continue to accumulate.
- **Just as destroying historic places can untether communities, saving them can help maintain a vital connection between generations,** providing a source of recognition, pride, joy and hope.
- **Despite how strongly people connect with older places, preserving them continues to face fundamental challenges** due to the underlying belief that historic preservation, as a practice, is less relevant than other societal values.
- **Rather than being hailed as a solution, preservation is criticized,** challenged, marginalized and even vilified. If we were seen as relevant, we would be included as problem solvers.
- **The historic preservation movement faces a relevancy crisis** because it is simply irrelevant to a large swath of the public.
- **Something is “relevant” to a person when it connects, relates and is applicable to an aspect of their life.** To be relevant is to engage people in defining what they value and want and then responding with accessible, relatable, applicable and effective solutions.
- **The vast majority of The Relevancy Project interviewees believe that preservation is irrelevant,** or in danger of becoming so.
- **The huge gap in the people we serve and the need for our goals to align with larger community goals,** both problems that were raised repeatedly by interviewees, illustrate the crisis that historic preservation finds itself in.
- **Despite widespread recognition that the preservation field needs change, there is little consensus about what to do.** However, if we do not begin to change, decisions will be made for us and not by us. It is time to move beyond assessment and into action.

10 IDEAS TO MAKE PRESERVATION MORE RELEVANT

- **Make people, not materials, the focus of preservation.**
- **Do work that is a solution to pressing community issues** and demonstrate how our work relates to people's day-to-day lives. This includes fighting climate change, providing housing, especially affordable housing, creating jobs and creating more just, equitable, inclusive and accessible spaces.
- **To be more relevant to more people, our movement and the stories told through the places we help preserve must expand to include more people and their perspectives.** Any place is a place of conscience. We must become better storytellers to engage people in learning our full history.
- **Respect people's lived experience and local knowledge as expertise** and treat them as respected partners with an equal seat at the table.
- **The power to decide what is important in a community should be with the people most connected to the place.**
- **Understand the gravity of what we do.** Open ourselves up to a worldview that our actions have implications for people's lives, both positive and negative. Think about what is beyond the "save." What are the short- and long-term consequences of our actions on people and the community?
- **As we approach any preservation project, we should think about our framework being the impact/furthering of community priorities,** social equity, accessibility, health, carbon mitigation and climate resilience.
- **Preservation needs to be more accessible,** flexible and responsive to the people living in a place now. Our processes and language needs reevaluation by a broad community of stakeholders, and we need to mitigate bias-based subjectivity in these processes.
- **Historic places are the sum of their layered stories.** Material changes that happen over time are a part of the story. The presence of changes that reflect a building's evolution should not prevent its historic designation; in fact, they enrich the building's story. Places are living things. Respect the layers.
- **Make preservation multi-dimensional.** Preservation can't be its own thing any longer. We need to align with and join with other professions that are engaging people in shaping places for their benefit and for an equitable, healthful and resilient world.

SUPPORTING DATA

- **The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) conducted an August 2019 online survey of the preservation field** entitled, “Challenges and Innovations Occurring in the Preservation Field.” Of the over 1,000 people who responded, 86% felt that preservation needed to innovate, 92% wanted our work to be fair and equitable, and 96% wanted to ensure we were telling a more complete American story.
- **More than 2,000 preservation professionals participated in the University of Pennsylvania’s “Preservation and Change: Survey of Attitudes and Opinions in the Historic Preservation Field”** by Professor Randy Mason and Research Associate Kaitlyn Levesque and published in March 2022. Their research demonstrated consensus about the need for substantial change, noting that the pressure to change is coming from both inside and outside of the preservation profession. Respondents felt that preservation needed to become more diverse, cultivate new leadership and partnerships, and focus more on intangible heritage. Significantly, the UPenn survey also found “deep divides” within the field over the issue of change.
- **The vast majority of 130 people interviewed as part of The Relevancy Project believe that preservation is irrelevant, or in danger of becoming so**, because of its underlying inequity.
- **The preservation community has historically been white and higher income, generally saving places that they care about.** As a result, our work has overlooked a large and significant group of people, stories and historic places.
- **Thirty years of discussion is long enough.** At the 2020 Past Forward Conference, Renee Kuhlman, the NTHP Senior Director of the Preservation Services and Outreach Department, noted that historic preservation’s relevance was debated at the 1991 National Preservation Conference as the National Historic Preservation Act marked its 25th anniversary. This questioning continued when the act turned 50 in 2016.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- Beyer, Scott. “[Historic Preservation Is Great, Except When It Isn’t](#)”, Governing: The Future of States and Localities website, 28 September 2020.
- Case, Jean. “[Be Fearless: 5 Principles for a Life of Breakthroughs and Purpose](#).” New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, January 8, 2019.
- Frey, Patrice. “[Why Preservation Needs a New Approach](#),” Bloomberg CityLab, February 8, 2019.
- Kuhlman, Renee, Jim Lindberg and Amy Webb. “Building Relevance: A Snapshot of the Preservation Movement” Series: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation, October 8, 2020.
- Mason, Randall and Kaitlyn Levesque. “[Preservation and Change: Survey of Attitudes and Opinions in the Historic Preservation Field](#).” Urban Heritage Project/Penn Praxis, March 2022.
- Mayes, Thompson M. “[Why Old Places Matter: How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-Being](#).” Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.

- Page, Max. "[Why Preservation Matters.](#)" Yale University Press, 2016.
- Simon, Nina. "[The Art of Relevance.](#)" Museum 2.0, 2016. See [Nina Simon's TrustLive presentation](#) at the PastForward 2016 Conference in Houston, Texas, 16 November, 2016.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- Landmarks Illinois' [Guiding Principles.](#)
- "[Leading the Change: A National Impact Agenda for the Preservation Movement.](#)" National Trust for Historic Preservation, undated.
- "[Preservation Priorities Task Force.](#)" National Preservation Partners Network, National Trust for Historic Preservation, undated.

THE CULTURE OF PRECIOUSNESS

THE CULTURE OF PRECIOUSNESS

ESSAY PROMPTS:

1. How would you characterize preservation's culture? What aspects of the work are prioritized and should they be?
2. Do you believe that historic places are treated as precious? If we shifted our focus to people living in a place today, how would preservation be different?
3. What is gained and what is lost by the culture of preciousness?
4. How could the preservation designation process work differently?

PRESERVATION FOCUSES TOO MUCH ON THE MATERIAL

I remember the first time that I felt disappointed with preservation practice. The subject of this rising doubt was a long-vacant, deteriorating historic building that, because its construction was specific to its original use,

had limited reuse options. Preservationists spent years trying to attract a new user. One finally came along proposing housing units, but that use required installing windows into a windowless brick wall.¹⁸ These windows were necessary for the building's reuse and to comply with building code. The regulatory reviewer determined that the proposed openings did not meet the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and prevented the project from qualifying for Federal Historic Tax Credits. The developer walked away. I too walked away, asking if a windowless wall was worth more than saving the building and creating new housing. The reviewer was just doing their job, following the regulations and their training.¹⁹ But, didn't we all become preservationists to save places [Figure 6]? Are we missing the forest for the trees?

Herein lies one systemic issue inhibiting preservation's relevance: using "integrity," as defined in regulation, as a gatekeeper to designation and incentives puts too much weight on the materiality of significance.²⁰ Preservation professionals learn that the integrity criterion measures how much original material remains to tell the story of the place's

Figure 6: Specific building types like grain silos may appear difficult to adapt to a new use, but numerous adaptive reuse examples can be seen worldwide. To make the often needed historic tax credits available, our guidelines need more flexibility for necessary alterations. Built in 1906, the Damen Silos were amongst the few remaining grain elevators in Chicago before their 2023 demolition.





Figure 7: The Sheldon and Harriet Peck Home in Lombard, Illinois, is significant for its association with the abolitionist Pecks who made their home an Underground Railroad stop. However, because the 1839 portion of the home is partially obscured by later additions, the home has been determined ineligible for National Register listing to date. Photo courtesy of Jean Follett.

significance. Our practice assesses when these changes cross what is essentially a subjective line of when a property does, or does not, convey its significance – that is, if a person can, or cannot, understand why a place is historic [Figure 7].²¹ Inevitably, places change over time, whether actively or passively. Someone could argue that these changes were preservation: investing in the building’s material and long-term usability. To the building owner, it could seem counterintuitive that by maintaining or improving the building, it has been ruined for historic designation purposes. This might seem like an oversimplification, but it is essentially the

message that we are delivering. And, when we use the term “integrity” to explain this, it can be offensive to hear that your property doesn’t have enough of it to make the cut [Figure 8]. It becomes one of the narratives used to label preservationists as out of touch with reality, “hysterical preservationists,” who are always saying “no” to change. These negative narratives matter, especially when they become embedded as public opinion, are shared by the media and influence decision makers.

Our regulations are designed to protect historic material rather than prioritize the



Figure 8: Blues legend [Muddy Waters' Chicago home](#) was, as of November 2022, on the National Register pending list. Its listing had been questioned over its historic integrity since significant interior changes were made since Waters moved out in 1973. Waters' great-granddaughter, Chandra Cooper, owns the home and is pictured here with civil rights activist Timuel D. Black, Jr. Photo by Landmarks Illinois.



Figure 9: The Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Frederick Bagley House in Hinsdale, Illinois was saved at the 11th hour after fears it would be a teardown. The State Historic Preservation Office suggested that the home can't be nominated to the National Register for architectural significance until the replacement aluminum siding is removed that covers the original wood shakes underneath. Photo courtesy of Jean Follett.

needs of people living in and using these places today. We don't expect people to live and work in museum-like settings, so why mandate that places arrive relatively untouched in order to receive protection? According to the National Register for Historic Places criteria for listing, "historic places either retain integrity (that is, convey their significance) or they do not."²²

"We assume the material is telling the story. That's not always the case."

Erica Avrami, PhD
James Marston Fitch Assistant Professor of Historic Preservation
Columbia University
January 15, 2021
New York, NY (via video conference)

We leave ourselves no middle ground [Figure 9]. This focus on a subjective, yet rigid definition of the material aspects of integrity turns historic places from things that are venerated for the stories they can tell into things that are precious. This "culture of preciousness" elevates historic material as the

deciding factor for what gets saved and what does not.

PRESERVATION NEEDS TO PUT A HIGHER VALUE ON SIGNIFICANCE OVER INTEGRITY

Preservationists preserve historic places, which are largely material.²³ What motivates us to do this work? Our field originated to preserve history, heritage, and architecture and has evolved to preserve culture, lifeways, identity, memory and story through place. One only need look back at "[With Heritage So Rich](#)," the 1966 report of the U.S. Conference of Mayors Special Committee on Historic Preservation that created our current preservation regulatory framework, to see that material culture was not our primary mission:

"If the preservation movement is to be successful, it must go beyond saving bricks and mortar. It must go beyond saving occasional historic houses and opening museums. It must be more than a cult of antiquarians. It must do more

than revere a few precious national shrines. It must attempt to give a sense of orientation to our society, using structures and objects of the past to establish values of time and place...In sum, if we wish to have a future with greater meaning, we must concern ourselves not only with the historic highlights, but we must be concerned with the total heritage of the nation and all that is worth preserving from our past as a living part of the present.”

- “With Heritage So Rich,” (1966)²⁴

The culture of preciousness values integrity over significance, which flies in the face of this framing document. If we are truly about saving places and their stories, significance must be considered independent of integrity [Figure 10]. That is, the stories that took place in a building and about its design or construction, are present even if original materials and details are compromised. If our charge is to preserve “the total heritage of the nation,” then significance must be inclusive of all people who are, and have been, on this land. For places to be “a living part of the present,” then adherence to a strict integrity standard,

Figure 10: Henry Gerber founded the nation's first gay rights organization in this [Chicago home](#) in 1924. Do we need the interior to be as it was in 1924 to make this home worth protecting? The house was designated a Chicago Landmark (2001) and a National Historic Landmark (2015). Many places of LGBTQIA+ history were intentionally hidden for safety reasons. How many would no longer meet the integrity criteria because they have been altered over time? Photo by Elisa.rolle, CC BY-SA 4.0. Photo unchanged.



“The value of a community is not based on the material of the buildings or places they lived. Don’t value the materials over the history of that place.”

Jeffrey (Free) Harris
Independent consultant
Former Member, Virginia Historic Resources Board and
Former Director of Diversity, National Trust for Historic Preservation (2003-2008)
September 11, 2020
Hampton, VA (via video conference)

as it is currently interpreted, is incongruous. For a place to be “living” it must evolve to meet present needs. Material changes that happen over time are a part of the story. The presence of changes that reflect a building’s evolution should not prevent its historic designation; in fact, they enrich the building’s story.

The culture of preciousness also perpetuates a lack of inclusion and equity in preservation. Properties that do not meet the integrity standard are not designated and are thus ineligible for incentives like historic preservation tax credits. Low-income

homeowners can be negatively impacted by the requirements for like-designed replacement materials for locally designated properties if the guidelines are inflexible or omit claims of economic hardship. The Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies tabulated results from the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s 2019 American Housing Survey [Figure 11].

“When we get so precious, we lose a connection.”

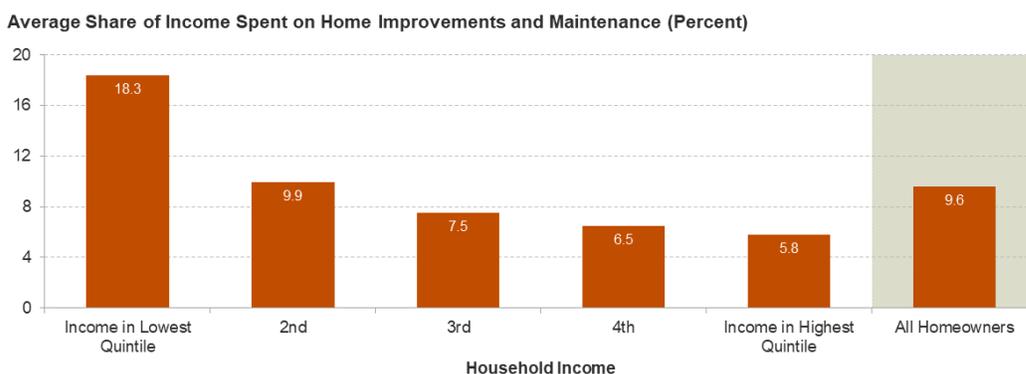
Chris Moore
 Executive Director
 The Washington Trust for Historic Preservation
 November 14, 2019
 Seattle, WA

Amongst their findings are that repairs and improvements made by low-income homeowners represent three times as much of their income as higher-income homeowners.²⁵ Preservationists must work

with homeowners to ensure affordable building operations, maintenance and hazardous material remediation.²⁶ For property owners that are under-resourced, local designation should be accompanied by more flexible replacement guidelines, free or affordable financing for maintenance and improvements, and accessible information about the permitting process and other resources. Preservation will continue to be irrelevant, or a threat, to under-resourced property owners and renters if they are not engaged in the designation process, if the designation increases maintenance costs or triggers code enforcement without any accessible financial incentives, or if the designation brings no tools to prevent gentrification and displacement [Figure 12].

To be seen as relevant, preservation must move beyond the culture of preciousness to put greater priority on the people interacting with historic places today and tomorrow.

Figure 2: Lower-Income Homeowners Spend Three Times as Much of Their Incomes on Home Improvement and Maintenance Projects as Higher-Income Homeowners



Notes: The lowest income quintile includes homeowners with incomes of less than \$32,000. The highest income quintile includes homeowners with incomes of more than \$144,000. Homeowners with zero or negative income are assumed to spend 0% of income for improvements and repairs, while those spending over 100% are top-coded at 100%. Average share of income spent on home improvements and maintenance includes households with no spending.
 Source: JCHS tabulations of HUD, 2019 American Housing Survey.

3 | © PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE

Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University JCHS

Figure 11: Source: [“Home Repairs and Updates Pose Considerable Burdens for Low-Income Homeowners,”](#) by Sophia Wedeen, Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, June 16, 2022.



Figure 12: In 2006, a large portion of Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The City proposed local historic district designation in 2019. Many residents and businesses in the historically Mexican American community fought the designation due to gentrification fears and concerns about building repair cost burdens. They prevailed and the district was denied. Photo by pasa47, CC BY 2.0. Photo unchanged.

A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO PRESERVATION'S CULTURE OF PRECIOUSNESS

10 REASONS WHY ... PRESERVATION NEEDS TO CHANGE ITS PERSPECTIVE

- **Material “integrity,”** as defined in preservation regulation, is used to evaluate and measure a place’s worthiness for official designation, thus **acting as a gatekeeper to designation.** This puts too much weight on the materiality of significance.
- **Inevitably, places change over time,** whether actively or passively. It could seem counterintuitive to people that by maintaining or improving the building, it has been ruined for historic designation purposes.
- According to the [National Register for Historic Places criteria for listing](#), **“historic places either retain integrity (that is, convey their significance) or they do not.”** We leave ourselves no middle ground.
- **This focus on a subjective, yet rigid definition of material integrity** turns historic places from things that are venerated for the stories they can tell into things that are precious.
- **The presence of changes that reflect a building’s evolution should not prevent its historic designation;** in fact, they enrich the building’s story.
- If we are truly about saving the places and stories inclusive of all people who are, and have been, on this land, then **significance must be considered independent of integrity.**
- The culture of preciousness **elevates historic material as the deciding factor for what gets saved and what does not** and prioritizes historic material over the needs of people living in and using these places today.
- The culture of preciousness also **perpetuates a lack of inclusion and equity in preservation.** Properties that do not meet the integrity standard are not designated and are ineligible for incentives like historic preservation tax credits and some grants.
- **For property owners that are under-resourced,** local designation should be accompanied by more flexible replacement guidelines, free or affordable financing for maintenance, improvements and hazardous material remediation, and accessible information about the permitting process and other resources.
- To be seen as relevant, preservation must move beyond the culture of preciousness to **put greater priority on the people interacting with historic places today and tomorrow.**

10 IDEAS TO CHANGE PERSPECTIVES ON PRESERVATION PRACTICE

- Put people before buildings.
- Look beyond just one building to the community as a whole.
- Collaboration needs to be centered as a value for the movement.
- **Words matter.** We need to meet people where they are by making our language more accessible and with less jargon.
- **Preservation practice is too rigid.** Our policies need to allow for the non-binary – the conversation shouldn't be about whether a place is, or is not, eligible for designation.
- **The National Register of Historic Places criteria, Standards and Guidelines need to be continually questioned and reconsidered.** The community of people who are engaged in this conversation needs to include people who have used, and been impacted by, this tool.
- **Reevaluate the need for, and value of, an integrity standard** for designation. Or, create a sliding integrity scale and require an interpretive plan.
- **Make it easier for a person to successfully nominate a property** for historic designation by providing easy process guides and Nomination 101 videos.
- **Stop getting in the way of people reusing buildings.** It is not written in law – it is about interpretation. Be lenient and consistent.
- **Disentangle the federal regulations from local regulations.**

SUPPORTING DATA

- The 1966 report, "[With Heritage So Rich](#)," that created our current preservation regulatory framework specifically **noted that material culture was not to be preservation's primary mission:** "If the preservation movement is to be successful, it must go beyond saving bricks and mortar...It must be more than a cult of antiquarians. It must do more than revere a few precious national shrines. It must attempt to give a sense of orientation to our society, using structures and objects of the past to establish values of time and place...In sum, if we wish to have a future with greater meaning, we must concern ourselves not only with the historic highlights, but we must be concerned with the total heritage of the nation and all that is worth preserving from our past as a living part of the present."
- The Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies tabulated results from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's [2019 American Housing Survey](#). Amongst their **findings are that repairs and improvements made by low-income homeowners represent three times as much of their income** as higher-income homeowners.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- Consult the [1994 International Council on Monuments and Sites \(ICOMOS\) Nara Document on Authenticity](#).
- Frear, Sherry. “[Diversity + the National Register: “How will we know it’s us?”](#) 2021 PastForward Conference, November 2, 2021. 10.
- Frey, Patrice. “[Why Historic Preservation Needs a New Approach](#).” Bloomberg CityLab, February 8, 2019. Frey references [Historic England’s gradient designation system](#) as an example.
- United States Conference of Mayors Special Committee on Historic Preservation. “[With Heritage So Rich](#).” Originally published by Random House, New York, 1966, reprinted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1999.
- Wedeen, Sophia. “[Home Repairs and Updates Pose Considerable Burdens for Lower-Income Homeowners](#).” Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, June 16, 2022.

CONTEXT STUDIES AND DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

- The National Parks and National Historic Sites of Canada. “[Guide to the Preparation of Commemorative Integrity Statements](#).” February 2002. 14.
 - Canada includes in its “[Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Sites in Canada](#),” a conservation decision-making process that includes developing an understanding of the site that includes its “evolution over time,” “past and current importance to its community,” “traditional practices associated with the historic places” and “the interrelationship between the historic place, its environment and its communities should also be considered.”
- “[National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation](#).” National Park Service, 1997.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- [Beyond Integrity](#), a coalition of advocates in Seattle and King County, Washington, looking for more equitable preservation practices.
- [Just City Index](#), Harvard University Graduate School of Design.
- Examples of programs to de-silo preservation include:
 - The [Michigan Historic Preservation Network](#) being a part of the Governor’s [Sense of Place Council](#), formed in 2006, which helped them to forge strong relationships with organizational partners that later helped with other issues.
 - The [New York Landmarks Conservancy](#) is the only preservation organization that is a member of the [New York Building Congress](#) to keep open lines of communication with developers.
 - [Preservation Maryland](#) manages [Smart Growth Maryland](#), the state’s smart growth coalition opening it up to a large group of partners.

PROMOTING A JUST PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

PROMOTING A JUST PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

ESSAY PROMPTS:

1. Should, and how would, the preservation movement prioritize equity above equality?
2. How would you define inclusion and diversity for your preservation practice?
3. In what ways would increasing inclusion and community self-determination as part of the decision-making change your work?
4. Have you seen preservation used as a weapon against or for something in your community? Who was benefiting and why? Who was not?
5. How does the preservation process need to change in your mind to dismantle systemic injustice and racism in our practice?

PRESERVATION'S IMBEDDED INJUSTICE

INVITATION IS NOT INCLUSION

If there is one topic that unites this project's interviewees, it is that the preservation field is neither as inclusive nor as diverse as we want it to be.²⁷ Preservationists almost unilaterally support telling the full American story, recognizing that our work has overlooked a large and significant group of people, stories and historic places. To be more relevant to more people, our movement and the stories told through the places we help preserve must expand to include more people and their perspectives. We are falling short on making

changes that create pathways for inclusion and diversity.²⁸ What is preventing the preservation field from creating these necessary pathways? I believe that some of us do not know where to begin. Others feel overwhelmed by the scale of needed change. They consider change both hard and uncertain.

Many organizations begin by inviting people underrepresented in their groups, such as people of color, young people, those who identify as LGBTQAI+ and/or people with disabilities, to participate.²⁹ Opening the door is not inclusion. Inclusion creates an environment where people are respected and valued, treated with fairness and dignity, and participate in decision-making. Inclusive spaces are welcoming, safe, and provide a sense of community and belonging. To be inclusive is to have genuine, sincere, intentional, actionable and ongoing engagement with diverse people and communities. Importantly, the people who have excluded others are responsible for inclusion, not those that have been excluded.³⁰

“How do we create a field that people want to be a part of?”

Felicia Mayro

Former director

Neighborhood Preservation Center

August 19, 2019

New York, NY

Preservationists have excluded people, intentionally and unintentionally, through our policies and practices. We have to reckon with this truth in order to begin repairing what we have damaged. Preservation will never be diverse without being inclusive and we cannot practice inclusion without facing the truth that exclusion comes from our field's imbedded,

unjust practices – many of which are tied to land use policies.

INEQUITIES IN LAND USE AND PRESERVATION PRACTICE

Land use practices have had merit in improving peoples' lives. But these practices have also benefitted some to the detriment of others. Discriminatory zoning practices have resulted in our nation's continuing racial and economic segregation: redlining, Urban Renewal, the regulation of density and the widespread demolition of social / public housing and foreclosed properties [Figure 13]. Environmentally harmful industries have been concentrated in under-resourced communities. At the same time, discriminatory banking practices have included the manipulation of appraisals, denials or limits to lending, and predatory lending, including Land Sale Contracts and sub-prime loans.³¹ In many municipalities, the government colluded in this generational discrimination by allowing, and perpetuating, racial covenants that attach to

deeds. These actions, and the motivations behind them, were (and are) abhorrent and destructive. That they were (and are) considered acceptable is painful and shameful. The work to understand the generational repercussions of these practices is only just beginning. It is time for a truth and reckoning process for zoning, real estate development and banking and the preservation work that is interwoven with them.

EVALUATION IS NOT NEUTRAL

Preservation can often begin with evaluation using defined criteria. Our field argues over whether the criteria themselves are implicitly biased. This guidebook does not go into that argument, as the topic needs due space. Resources in Appendix 2 more thoroughly cover this debate. What we do know is that the people who apply the criteria are knowingly, or unknowingly, subjective because people are not neutral, nor is their training. Preservationists have been given a point of view on what is significant. Case in point:



Figure 13: Chicago-based photographer and activist Tonika Lewis Johnson unveiling her "[Inequity for Sale](#)" project landmarker in 2021, designed with Paola Aguirre Serrano of BORDERLESS Studio. Inequity for Sale presents the living history of Chicago's Englewood neighborhood homes sold under predatory Land Sale Contracts in the 1950s and 1960s. Tonika was advised that the homes would be ineligible for local landmark designation, so she created her own "landmarkers". Photo provided by Tonika Lewis Johnson.



Figure 14 and Figure 15: A grove of giant sequoia trees and a detail of the sequoia's growth rings in a downed tree, Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Park, Three Rivers, California. Photo by author.

I have spoken with preservation colleagues across the country about their State Historic Preservation Offices' decisions. What one reviewer approves in state A is denied in state B. Fortunately, our point of view can evolve. Preservation increasingly recognizes that vernacular places are significant, deviating from the priority given to "High Style" architecture. Implicit bias imbedded in cultural norms and academic training might influence how significance is determined, as well. In a nation with inhabitants from every part of the world, it is the historian's duty to become aware of their own cultural bias and engage other perspectives throughout the evaluation process.

IS ONLY ONE PERIOD OF A PLACE'S HISTORY SIGNIFICANT?

One of the most humbling, breathtaking sights that I have ever seen is the giant sequoia, the

world's largest and oldest living organism. The growth rings of its 30-foot trunk, each building strength with and over the others, are a living archive of 3,000 years of environmental change [Figure 14 & Figure 15]. We would never look at a giant sequoia and evaluate which layer is most significant. While each layer tells a unique story, these magnificent, historic trees are the sum of their layered parts.

Distinguishing a period of significance is like removing outer layers of bark, killing the tree to reveal its heartwood. Historic places are the sum of their layered stories. Is there a layer that is most significant? This implies that the people and their stories before and after the period of significance are less important. Is this a fair practice? Does it have to be either/or? With this practice we become judge and jury about what has value.

Can we really restore something to its period of significance? Restoration only simulates the feeling of a place and time. Restoration is a re-creation that erases the integrity that the current conditions represent. Aren't we actually making a place inauthentic when we swap current conditions for new materials trying to look historic? Does a place have to look exactly the same for someone to experience its history? Even worse, we cannot reverse the removal of layers of history. There needs to be another way that doesn't pick historic winners and losers. We are interpreters – we must learn to tell the story without removing some of the layers.

This argument is complicated, fraught with unintended consequences and an inconvenient truth. We see the power that restored (recreated) places have to inspire people. What happens to preservation if we stop trying to re-create history that tells only one part of the story?

SURVEYS IDENTIFY ONLY WHAT CAN BE SEEN

Unlike local landmarking, the National Register of Historic Places is not tied to land use laws, but its processes also need to be questioned and reconsidered. Where does the preservation process begin? As federal and state government preservation programs formed in the 1970s, they often began by identifying historic resources through a windshield survey. Architectural historians traveled around communities looking at places and making decisions as to whether places met designation criteria.³² Surveys like this continue to be a historic resource identification method at a large scale, especially for local preservation programs. Windshield surveys are primarily visual and

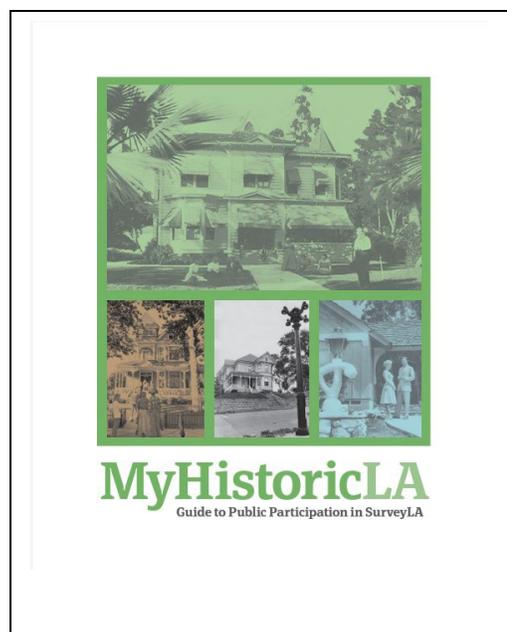


Figure 16: [SurveyLA](#) was the City of Los Angeles' first-ever citywide historic resources survey. Field surveys were completed between 2010-2017. Angelenos were invited to participate in identifying important places in their community through MyHistoricLA, a process that included group activities, public survey forms, interviews and collecting research materials. Find out more about SurveyLA here. Photos on publication cover courtesy of the Los Angeles Public Library.

focus on what can be seen: the architectural elements. The survey process can lack inclusion because:

- Local people who value preservation are generally those who will participate in a survey effort. What about others living, working and studying in the area? [Figure 16] They have knowledge that can provide a more complete understanding of the layers of history and contemporary value. How do we ensure we record these other stories and evaluate significance from other perspectives? If we only think about the past, we are working against being inclusive and diverse.

- Surveys can be expensive, preventing research that would identify significant historic people, events and lifeways that cannot be seen through a windshield. Additionally, large-scale surveys are rarely re-surveyed leaving resources unrecognized that might be significant in a new context.
- When there is time and money for more in-depth research, primary sources may be limited or may not exist at all for the stories of underrepresented groups that were, intentionally or unintentionally, not documented. It has not always been, and is still not, safe to document all stories. History is not neutral. Even primary sources come with a point of view.
- Oral histories are not always treated as primary sources, though they may be more available and accurate than written accounts.
- Community members may have difficulty accessing primary and secondary sources because of their location or the need for internet access.³³

THE RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION, ACCESS AND SELF-DETERMINATION

Who makes the decision about what is important in a community? To promote inclusion and equity, the power to decide should be with the people most connected to the place. They are experts in their own right.³⁴ Preservation has to reconsider its entire process, ensuring that people connected with that place are represented every step of the way. This includes making sure the survey, research, evaluation and nomination process, and the decision-making are all inclusive and accessible. Materials

should be available in the languages spoken in the community, materials should not be full of jargon, the process should be explained with consideration for different learning styles, gatherings should be at convenient times and community representatives should be a part of organizing all of these steps. Who is defined as a resident should also be considered. Remember that renters, students and the unhoused care about their community, too.

“We have to grapple with responsibility for and equity of [gatekeeping]. People can serve as navigators rather than gatekeepers. People want to be supported and informed.”

Fallon Samuels Aidoo, PhD
Former Jean Brainard Boebel Assistant Professor of Historic Preservation
Department of Planning & Urban Studies
University of New Orleans
October 8, 2020
New Orleans, LA (via video conference)

Preservationists work with people’s histories and their identities. We have free (or, relatively free) access to sources enabling us to create a narrative about another person’s identity. Are we entitled to another person’s story just because we have access to the records? Should we be asking for permission to tell another person’s story? If these questions are compelling, they will lead to others about the ethics and practicality of a right to history that need further exploration.

PROMOTING A JUST PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

WHAT IS A JUST PRESERVATION MOVEMENT?

Given the imbedded injustice in preservation policy and practice, we have a duty to dismantle and rethink these parts of our systems. We are perpetuating injustice if we fail to invest in change and build capacity where there has been inequity. People who have been excluded by these systems must play a pivotal role in shaping the movement toward a just future.

Defining justice is important. Landmarks Illinois defines justice as the practice of being fair and reasonable and ensuring people receive the treatment or outcome they deserve based upon equity, ethics and the law. Therefore, a just preservation movement is one where people have accessible supports to achieve the outcomes they want for the places they value.

Some may argue that preservation tools are readily accessible. For example, anyone can, in theory, submit a National Register nomination. But in practice, the current process often requires either specialized knowledge or an inordinate amount of time, patience, money (and available technical assistance) to be successful.³⁵ Additionally, if preservation practice was truly fair and accessible, designated historic properties would reflect the makeup of our nation. Prior to FY2014, the National Park Service found that only 8% of National Register sites reflect the stories of women, people of color and members

of the LGBTQ community.^{36/37} Since 2014, the National Park Service has awarded almost \$6.25 million in Underrepresented Communities (URC) grants to diversify National Register sites.³⁸ Of the National Park Service's 18 grant programs, seven are now dedicated to recognizing the resources of underrepresented communities [Figure 17].³⁹ In this way, the National Park Service is prioritizing equity in its grantmaking and providing a model for our field. This kind of equity is what is needed for preservation to be a just practice.

JUSTICE IS RESPECTING DIFFERENT WAYS OF THINKING AND BEING

Equality is about equal opportunity, whereas equity is about fairness, that is, providing people with the support they need to achieve



Figure 17: Edificio Comunidad de Orgullo Gay de Puerto Rico ([Gay Pride Community Building](#)) in San Juan was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016. Expanding the listings telling the nation's full history has been a National Park Service priority. Photo by Ian Poellet, April 13, 2017, CCShareAlike 4.0 International. Photo unchanged.

outcomes that are more equal.⁴⁰ People differ in how they learn and engage. As such, people's needs and availabilities are different. We cannot simply engage with those stakeholders that have the most free time or the strongest feelings (and therefore greater likelihood of showing up) and call our job done. Respecting and accommodating differences is a baseline just practice. More equitable outcomes emerge when people are comfortable engaging in the process and feel that they have been heard.

One example is the opportunity and need to include indigenous peoples' voices in a just preservation movement [Figure 18].⁴¹ Justice and equity mean respecting the many beliefs about and concepts of land and land management, cultural practices, stories, ancestry and time. Telling the full American story, which preservationists almost unanimously support, starts with understanding the history of the land and how the historic places we are trying to save came to be there. Colonists and the United States government practiced unscrupulous and illegal tactics to take the land from and lives of

Indigenous people / American Indians / Native Americans and Pacific Islanders.⁴² Indigenous people/ American Indians / Native Americans / Pacific Islanders continue to live on the land and have ancestral claims and cultural and religious rights to land on which they may, or may not, live.

“We need equity for memory, non-tangibles, culture, tradition as much as places and buildings. We have the perspective of sacredness. Sacredness falls like rain, but it pools in places.”

Cheyenne St. John
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Lower Sioux Indian Community
November 6, 2020
Morton, MN (via video conference)

They have a right to self-determination and agency to manage and participate in discussions about the land and the remains and resources both below and above ground. Several organizations have turned to land acknowledgements to promote truth.



Figure 18: U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Deb Haaland speaking at a October 21, 2022 [public meeting at Chicago's Roberts Temple Church of God in Christ](#). The Secretary's appointment as the first Native American person to serve on the President's cabinet is groundbreaking, as is her managing a department that is responsible for the U.S. government's historic, cultural and natural regulations, resources and lands that are significant to Indigenous people / American Indians / Native Americans and Pacific Islanders. Photo by Frank Butterfield, Landmarks Illinois.

However, land acknowledgements are increasingly seen as reflexive and missing the larger responsibility to build genuine partnerships, allyship or co-conspiratorship that support Indigenous people and initiatives.

JUSTICE IS TELLING THE FULL STORY – PAST AND PRESENT

It is important to tell the full story of our own work. Thousands of people who would not identify as preservationists are doing preservation every day. Though I argue that preservation practice is in the midst of a relevancy crisis, the fact is that maintenance, reinvestment and adaptive reuse happen with or without us. Preservation professionals do not entirely drive or manage the process. People have been preserving, repairing, reusing and moving buildings in what is now the United States for 3,000 years. The Pueblo, Hohokam, Woodland, Native Hawaiian and other peoples built and reused structures that are still standing today. Spanish missions and forts and a plethora of 17th century structures still stand thanks to continued maintenance long before the preservation movement arrived. In [The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America](#), author Richard Rothstein celebrates unsung preservation heroes: those who sustained cities through 50 years of Urban Renewal and suburban flight [Figure 19].⁴³ Neighborhoods are full of older and historic buildings that survived thanks to those who used and maintained them, whether out of choice, necessity or both.⁴⁴ This practice continues not only in urban areas, but in rural communities, as well. Just look to the [Rural Indexing Project](#) that has documented the built environment in small cities across 25 states.⁴⁵ This is preservation, too.



Figure 19: [Bishop Louis Henry Ford bought the Henry B. Clark House](#), believed to be Chicago's oldest house, in 1941. The bishop and his wife, Margaret, lived in, restored and held worship services in the home until the city purchased it in 1977. Despite the Fords being the home's longest owners, the Henry B. Clark House historic name stood until recently when Pastor Kevin Anthony Ford, the bishop's grandson, and preservation activist, Elizabeth Blasius, led a successful campaign to rename and reinterpret the home. It has been renamed the Henry B. and Caroline Clarke/Bishop Louis Henry and Margaret Ford House. Photo by Landmarks Illinois.

A June 2022 Instagram post by [@sylvanaquafarms](#) points to further irony and injustice in attempts to tell the full American story.⁴⁶ The case in point was a former Southern plantation-turned museum claiming to have reinvented itself to 'belong to everyone.' However, the author points to the fact that the only narrative told about Black Americans at the site is about their enslavement. To paraphrase, it is as though Black history ended with slavery. The post went on to call attention to the museum's \$300 million endowment. If the organization belonged to everyone, according to the



Figure 20: [James Madison's Montpelier](#). Photo by Ron Cogswell, June 25, 2018, CC BY 2.0. Photo unchanged.

author, these funds would be dedicated toward fighting for justice for Black Americans today. The author is telling the museum how it can, and should, be just and relevant.

Events at James Madison's Montpelier further illustrate the gulf that can emerge between naming and fulfilling just intentions [Figure 20]. In 2018, Montpelier hosted the National Summit on Teaching Slavery that resulted in the "[Engaging Descendant Communities in the Interpretation of Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites](#)," a best-practices rubric towards inclusion and justice in historic interpretation.⁴⁷ Structural parity was amongst the recommended best practices, including equal board representation by the descendant community. The Montpelier Descendants Committee (MDC) was formed in 2019, was officially recognized in 2020 by the Montpelier Foundation as the descendant community's sole representative, and in 2021, the Foundation amended its bylaws to share equal authority with the MDC.^{48/49} When the relationship between the two organizations took an acrimonious turn, the Foundation proposed reversing its position on the MDC's

sole representation and equal authority.⁵⁰ Then National Trust for Historic Preservation president and CEO Paul Edmondson cast in stark language the Foundation's actions as contrary to a just preservation movement: "the original commitment... acknowledged the right of the descendant community to define itself, rather than to be defined by the Foundation. The newly proposed revision to the bylaws would do the opposite." After months of public outcry, the Foundation returned to supporting shared authority with the MDC.⁵¹

The board's proposed bylaw changes revealed their struggle and a lack of conviction for structural parity, as they perceived a challenge to their power. Montpelier's experience provides an example of one site's journey toward justice, the challenge that governing bodies may have to achieve equality and it illustrates that more tools, like accessible, affordable implicit bias and anti-racism training and implementation, are needed.

JUSTICE PREVENTS PRESERVATION FROM BECOMING A WEAPON

When only a small group of people know how to navigate preservation regulation, those who know it can use it as a weapon against those who are less familiar. A recent [ProPublica article](#) details how one cultural resource management firm manipulated its findings when threatened by their client.⁵² Gulf South Research Corporation was hired by Greenfield, an agricultural corporation, to conduct compliance work to acquire a Corps of Engineers permit to build a 54-silo grain elevator near Wallace, Louisiana on the



Figure 21: Site in the foreground of the proposed Greenfield grain elevator next to Wallace, Louisiana. Photo Credit: Photo by David Grunfeld, The Times-Picayune | NOLA.com, Friday, Oct. 15, 2021. Accessed from The Times-Picayune |NOLA.com, “National Urban League demands EPA civil rights probe of Wallace grain terminal project,” by Mark Schleichstein, November 21, 2022.



Figure 22: Organizers from Louisiana, including the Descendants Project co-founders Joy Banner (fourth from left) and Jo Banner (fourth and sixth from left), testify at the United Nations on August 12, 2022 opposing the Greenfield grain elevator and other industrial projects being built on land that may house unmarked graves of enslaved people and their descendants. Photo by Brandy Y Productions courtesy of the Descendants Project. Learn more about the [Descendants Project](#) advocating to stop the Greenfield grain elevator.

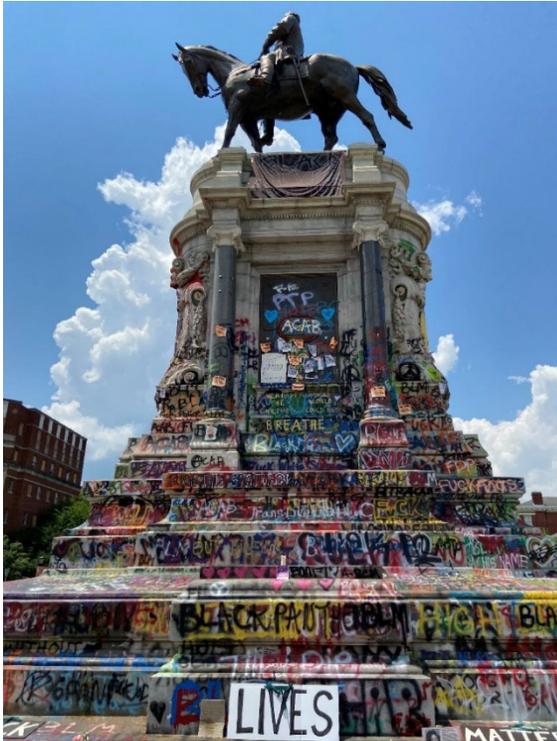


Figure 23: [The Robert E. Lee Monument in Richmond](#), Virginia, photographed July 1, 2020. Activists called for the statue's removal after counter-protesters were murdered at the August 12, 2017 white supremacist Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. The removal campaign intensified after George Floyd's murder on May 25, 2020 and the monument became a venue for racial justice images and statements. Those protesting the statue's removal fought an unsuccessful court battle citing the historic agreement to ensure the statue's perpetual protection. Additional counterclaims were made that removal would disrespect heritage, erase history, and destroy protected landmarks and artworks. The Lee statue was taken down in September 2021, and its pedestal in February 2022, after the court ruled in favor of removal. The statue was later transferred to the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia. Photo by Mk17b, CC ShareAlike 4.0 International. Photo unchanged.

Mississippi River [Figure 21 & Figure 22].⁵³ Gulf South's architectural historian, Erin Edwards, recommended that the project would cause an adverse effect on historic resources, including those associated with enslaved people and the aftermath of slavery. Edwards' supervisors changed her report to a recommendation of no adverse effect. We know this thanks to Edwards' courage as a whistleblower. How many other manipulated findings go unreported? How many other communities have lost historic resources because of those who know how to game the system?

Preservation has also been used to prevent additions and alterations along aesthetic lines even when those changes may respond to needs provided for by law. In one mid-sized city, a local community organization is utilizing preservation to prevent adding accessory dwelling units (ADU) in an historic district, citing the threat to the district's character. This is despite the city approving and pushing for ADU construction in a community where it takes four average wage earners to afford a one-bedroom apartment. Another local community association sued to prevent the construction of a garage at a locally designated home, despite the Historic Preservation Commission staff awarding the permit. The garage, which is on the home's rear façade, but faces another primary street, would accommodate accessibility needs for a person who uses a wheelchair. Community members openly stated that the person should have moved to a neighborhood more conducive to their needs and that the garage 'looks just horrible.' The owner successfully countersued in federal court under the Fair Housing Act.

It is important to emphasize how significant history can be to both personal and collective identity, leading to the use of history

education and preservation as a weapon. Continuing calls for racial justice and integrating diversity, equity and inclusion into history curricula has led to debates over teaching our full American story. The debate has led states like Texas and others to propose and pass bills directing which histories are taught and which are not.⁵⁴ As of July 2023, 37 states have adopted measures to limit how the history of racism is taught in U.S. classrooms.⁵⁵ Arguments over monuments' removal have been a proxy for self-determination about representation and historical truth. Some claim monuments are historically significant artworks and markers of heritage. Racial justice protesters call out monuments as propagandist symbols of white supremacy and settler colonialism [Figure 23]. States like Alabama and Florida have proposed or passed laws using historic preservation arguments to foreclose on public dialogue and penalize removal.^{56/57/58} Preservation regulation cannot be a weapon to prevent public due process or obfuscate our nation's traumatic, unjust and challenging histories. Recall that 96% of surveyed preservationists want us to tell a more complete American story.⁵⁹

FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE

To be relevant, we must do more than tackle injustice in our own movement. We need to help dismantle injustice wherever it lives in our communities and touches our work. Tackling inequity requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society, especially when the disparity is about failing to tell a complete and living story about ongoing injustices that have deep historic roots. Places can be a part of the solution.

Communities must be in the lead. Preservationists can be a resource when called upon, but we must have the awareness that we are not all-knowing. How can we ensure that community members speak for themselves, shape the process and that their voices are heard? And not just the loudest or exclusionary voices.

“Justice is essential to healthy communities.”

Katherine Malone-France
Chief Preservation Officer
National Trust for Historic Preservation
February 21, 2020
Washington, D.C.

My hope is that the challenges raised above inspire individuals and groups to evaluate their own actions, to reckon with the truth, and to work toward repairing our practices so that we can help save places with people, and not for people.

A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO PROMOTING A JUST PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

10 REASONS WHY ... PRESERVATIONISTS MUST BUILD A JUST PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

- **To be more relevant to more people**, our movement and the stories told through the places we help preserve must expand to include more people and their perspectives.
- **If preservation led more truth telling**, more people would be interested. Historic preservation can be a cultural competency tool.
- **Preservationists almost unilaterally support telling the full American story**, recognizing that our work has overlooked and excluded a large and significant group of people, stories and historic places.
- **Our evaluative process is not neutral**. It is the historian's duty to become aware of their own implicit bias and engage other perspectives throughout the evaluation process.
- **Historic places are the sum of their layered stories**. Selecting a "period of significance" chooses one story as more important than another. We cannot reverse the removal of layers of others' histories.
- **When only a small group of people know how to navigate preservation regulation**, those who know it can use it as a weapon against those who are less familiar.
- **Land use practices, including preservation, have benefitted some to the detriment of others**.
- **Preservationists have excluded people**, intentionally and unintentionally, through our policies and practices. Prior to FY2014, the [National Park Service](#) found that only 8% of National Register sites reflect the stories of women, people of color and members of the LGBTQ community.
- **Preservation will never be diverse without being inclusive** and we cannot practice inclusion without facing the truth that exclusion comes from our field's imbedded, unjust practices. We have a duty to dismantle and rethink these parts of our systems.
- **To be relevant, we must do more than tackle injustice in our own movement**. Places can be a part of the solution to help dismantle injustice wherever it lives in our communities and touches our work.

10 IDEAS TO BUILD A JUST PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

- **Increase funding to organizations led by, and with a mission dedicated to amplify the work of, underrepresented communities** in the preservation field. Put funders directly in touch with organizations doing the work.
- **Engage in anti-racism, bias, and justice, equity, inclusion, diversity and accessibility training.** Partner-up to share the information and the cost.
- **Reserve seats on boards and commissions** for people doing the work of preservation, but that are underrepresented in decision-making.
- **Hiring a person from an underrepresented community is only going halfway.** You also need an organizational strategy, internal and external, about justice, equity, inclusion, diversity and accessibility. Support workers that are community liaisons for preservation since they are out front.
- **A core value** of the nonprofit organization [BlackSpace](#) is to “move at the speed of trust.” Adopt this as a core value for your efforts. Consider creating a Community Benefits Agreement before beginning a project.
- **Make resources available in the multiple languages spoken in your community** and design them in ways that are accessible to people with sight impairments or various learning styles.
- **Show that people with disabilities are welcome and deserve access to historic places.** Advocate for easy-to-find accommodations like ramps, handrails and elevators. By minimizing the placement of these accessibility tools, we put the building’s visual appearance and material integrity above the user.
- **Respect Native Americans’ traditional knowledge.** The approach should be that traditional knowledge is the same as scientific knowledge. Ensure oral histories are sought out and respected.
- **Understand how the historic places we are trying to save came to be there.** Telling the full history includes naming the use of, and the people that used and benefitted from, unscrupulous, coercive, exploitive, unjust, violent and/or illegal practices to forcibly remove indigenous people/ American Indians / Native Americans / Pacific Islanders from their ancestral lands, and these acts to force unpaid and stolen labor through enslavement, imprisonment and labor leasing. We must acknowledge that governments, colonizers, settlers, and our economic system, benefitted from those practices, including by building on the land.
- **Acknowledge the lives and names of those who labored to build, manage and sustain a place.**

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- Anguiano, Ruben. "[Taking the Next Steps to Address Past Planning Harms.](#)" Housing Solutions Lab, undated.
- Avrami, Erica. "[Building a Foundation for Action: Anti-Racist Historic Preservation Resources.](#)" Columbia Center for Archaeology. December 22, 2020.
- Avrami, Erica, Editor. "[Preservation and Social Inclusion.](#)" Issues in Preservation Policy. Columbia Books on Architecture and the City, 2020.
- Diaz-Griffith, Michael and Mary Wang. "[On Being and Anti-Racist Preservationist.](#)" Nicholas Hall, June 26, 2020.
- "[Engaging Descendant Communities in the Interpretation of Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites: A Rubric of Best Practices Established by the National Summit on Teaching Slavery.](#)" National Trust for Historic Preservation African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, V1.0, October 25, 2018.
- Fullilove, M.D. Mindy Thompson. "[Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and What We Can Do About It.](#)" New Village Press, 2016.
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- Page, Max. "[Why Preservation Matters.](#)" Yale University Press, 2016.
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- "[Roots of Structural Racism Project,](#)" by the Othering and Belonging Institute. The link takes you to an interactive map of racial segregation in the United States.
- Rothstein, Richard. "[The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America.](#)" Liveright Publishing Corporation, New York, 2017.
- Wells, Ph.D., Jeremy C. "[10 Ways Historic Preservation Policy Supports White Supremacy and 10 Ways to End It.](#)" University of Maryland, May 12, 2021.

CONTEXT STUDIES AND DOCUMENTATION GUIDELINES

- "[African American Heritage Theme Study,](#)" National Park Service, March 17, 2022.
- "[American Latino Heritage](#)" (2013) and "[American Latino Heritage NHL Registration Guidelines](#)" (2022) Theme Studies, National Park Service.
- "[Cultural Context Statements.](#)" City of San Antonio.
- Faulkner, Carol. "[Pathfinder for Women's History Research.](#)" National Archives.
- "[Finding a Path Forward: Asian American Pacific Islander National Historic Landmarks Theme Study,](#)" National Park Service, 2017.
- "[Latino/Chicano Historic Context Study.](#)" City of Denver.

- [“Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender \(LGBT\) Context Statement.”](#) SurveyLA: Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey, September 2014, Revised February 2023.
- [“Series: LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History.”](#) National Park Service, undated.

FUNDERS

- [African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund](#), National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Of the National Park Service’s [18 grant programs](#), seven are now dedicated to recognizing the resources of underrepresented communities. Since 2014, \$6.25 million has been awarded from the National Park Service [Underrepresented Communities Grant Program](#) to diversify National Register-nominated sites.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- [Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation](#) (APIA-HiP)
- [Black in Historic Preservation](#)
- k. kennedy Whiter’s’ [\(un\)Redact the Facts™](#) and blog, [unredactthefacts](#).
- [Latinos in Heritage Conservation](#)
- [National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers](#) (NATHPO).
- [NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project](#)
- [Rural Indexing Project](#)

PRESERVING AND CREATING AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH PRESERVATION

PRESERVING AND CREATING AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH PRESERVATION

ESSAY PROMPTS:

1. Do you see preservation connecting more deeply with housing access in your community? How could you initiate or deepen your housing work?
2. Is working on housing a good fit for your skills, resources and capacity?
3. Who could you partner with to increase your housing impact? What value can you add?
4. Are there places in your community that could be reused as housing? What would you need to move a housing reuse forward?

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IS A UNIVERSAL ISSUE

A majority of Americans see housing affordability as a problem.⁶⁰ The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines [an affordable place to live](#) as one where housing costs are below 30 percent of a person's income.⁶¹ Rural (40%), suburban (46%) and urban (63%) residents believe the lack of affordable housing is a major problem [Figure 24]. A recently-released [National Main Street Center study](#) noted that 87% of Main Street program managers were concerned about that state of their downtown district housing, but fail to see how they can be a part of the solution.⁶² Concerns about housing access are nearly universal, despite geographic, demographic and economic differences.⁶³

The United States has an undersupply of all housing types, with the least available inventory at low-income price points [Figure 25].⁶⁴ A [Harvard University study](#) reported that “it could take a decade of record-level

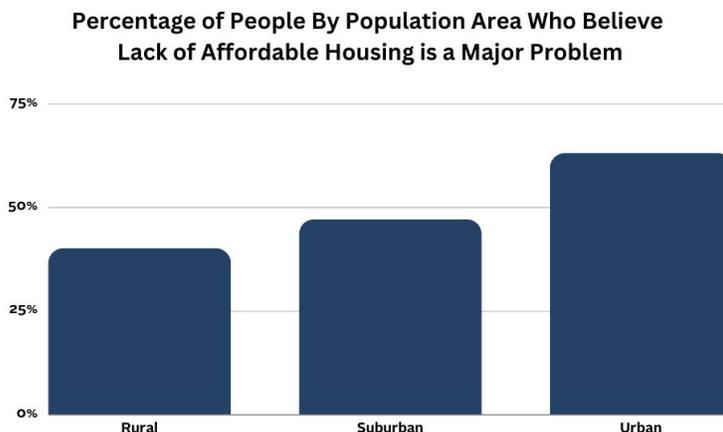


Figure 24: Percentage of People by Population Area Who Believe Lack of Affordable Housing is a Major Problem. Schaeffer, Katherine. “[A growing share of Americans say affordable housing is a major problem where they live.](#)” Pew Research Center, January 18, 2022. Accessed July 30, 2022.



Figure 25: Nonprofit developer Redmellon Restoration and Development used the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits to create [Iberville Offsite Rehabs I & II](#), 46 scattered site, historic home rehabilitations in New Orleans' Seventh Ward and Treme providing housing for formerly homeless women and children. Photo by NewUrbanism, CC BY 2.0. Photo unchanged.

homebuilding to meaningfully increase affordability” for homebuyers.⁶⁵ Home purchase price growth has hit a record high.⁶⁶ The National Association of Realtors® found in its “[2022 Obstacles to Home Buying Report](#)” that “the lack of affordable homes is the top obstacle holding back potential home buyers of all races.”⁶⁷ Investors are 28 percent of homebuyers, often purchasing homes in the market’s lower-third price point. They rent or sell them for profit, further decreasing the affordable supply.⁶⁸

Lack of affordable rental housing is affecting under-resourced renters, as well. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, extremely low-income renters face a lack of affordable housing access in every state and major metropolitan area.⁶⁹ New apartments are priced for high-income renters, while the low-income supply dwindles.⁷⁰ Almost half of all renters spent more than 30% of their income on housing in 2018 and within this group, 25 percent spent more than half their income.⁷¹

Housing insecurity and homelessness result from a lack of affordable housing. The [National Alliance to End Homelessness reported](#) that over 580,000 people were experiencing homelessness in America as of January 2020.⁷² In 2019, an estimated 3.7 million practiced “doubling up,” living with other families or people due to housing insecurity.⁷³

These statistics show that preservation could be more relevant to more people if we help preserve and create more affordable housing.

“Our largest need is affordable housing.”

Fairleigh Jackson
Executive Director
Preserve Louisiana
August 12, 2019
New Orleans, LA

PRESERVATION CAN INCREASE HOUSING SUPPLY

Historic buildings of all types can be successful housing conversions: schools, warehouses, large office buildings, storefront retail, sacred places, fraternal buildings, hospitals and more. A building’s original use is often obsolete due to changing demographic, economic or social circumstances, leaving an underperforming, unmaintained and/or vacant building.

Adaptively reusing existing buildings for housing can increase the overall supply by converting places not originally designed for residential to this use.⁷⁴ In Los Angeles, a groundbreaking 1999 [Adaptive Reuse Ordinance](#) has helped create 46,000 housing units in downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods [Figure 26].⁷⁵ A 2022 [RAND Corporation study](#) on Los Angeles County’s critical housing shortage found that adaptive reuse could provide between 9% – 14% of the county’s next-eight-years of housing need.⁷⁶



Figure 26: The Kor Group converted the former Mobil Oil/General Petroleum Building into the [award-winning](#) Pegasus Apartments, a 322-unit residential building, using Los Angeles' innovative [Adaptive Reuse Ordinance](#). Photo by Codera23, CC BY-SA 4.0. Photo unchanged.



Figure 27: Working with the local government and advocates, Landmarks Illinois (LI) helped find a developer to reuse the vacant, former Hotel Belleville in Belleville, Illinois. With AIA Illinois, LI helped pass the state's 2018 rehabilitation tax credit making additional financing available. Renamed Lofts on the Square, the building now provides 47 affordable senior housing units. Photo by Andrew Bruah Photographer and used with permission.

“We need to take empty 50s, 60s, 70s buildings and convert them into housing. The lives of cities depend on this. Encourage housing everywhere.”

Carl Elefante, FAIA, FAPT
Principal Emeritus

Quinn Evans

August 28, 2020

Washington, D.C. (via video conference)

Preservationists can help this process by introducing developers to properties that are good candidates for housing conversion [Figure 27]. At Landmarks Illinois our annual awards program regularly introduces us to housing developers who adaptively reuse existing buildings, oftentimes for affordable apartments. We connect these developers to advocates and municipalities with buildings that can be converted to housing.⁷⁷ We can also talk up the benefits of adaptive reuse to developers. Reusing existing buildings reuses existing infrastructure, thereby cutting down on the time and cost for municipal approvals and permitting.⁷⁸ The construction process can begin and end more quickly than new construction.⁷⁹

PRESERVATION CAN INCREASE AND PROTECT AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY

The preservation field can point developers to adaptive reuse examples that created affordable housing units. According to Yardi Matrix, a commercial real estate data firm, 778 older commercial buildings were converted to apartments between 2010-2020 with 65% of those 96,500 housing units aimed at low-to-middle income renters [Figure 28].⁸⁰ HUD makes a case for preservation by reusing existing affordable rental housing properties, though their use of the term “preservation” is



Figure 28: The Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless (MCCH) in Bethesda, Maryland, adapted a vacant office building into 32 affordable, supportive housing units for the homeless, now called Cordell Place. "Such a successful and significant victory for affordable housing would have been impossible if MCCH had had to buy vacant land and resort to new construction." Quote and photos from Greater Greater Washington.

about maintenance and reinvestment, not restoration:

"Preserving existing affordable housing has a variety of economic and social benefits and is typically more efficient than building new units... The cost of constructing new ... affordable rental housing from the ground up... would be staggering. By contrast, preservation typically costs about one-half to two-thirds as much as new construction. Preservation also enables people to stay in their homes and neighborhoods, where they can enjoy the social capital they have built within their communities... Although costs such as maintenance expenses may be higher over the life of a rehabilitated property, rehabilitation is still more cost effective than new construction."⁸¹

Pairing the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit (FHTC) and HUD's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) incentivizes housing rehabilitation and creation [Figure 29]. The FHTC incentivized the rehabilitation or creation of 549,005 housing units between 1977-2016.⁸² As of Fiscal Year 2021, 185,525 of these units were low- to moderate-income rental, though

it is not clear how many were created versus rehabilitated.⁸³ The FHTC renovated or created just 7,220 low- to moderate-income housing units in Fiscal Year 2021 when there is a shortage of 7 million affordable rental units.^{84/85} Our field is exploring how we can help to reduce this shortage.⁸⁶

PROTECTING PUBLIC HOUSING

Preserving existing public housing prevents this shortage from increasing. Public housing is government-built, affordable rental housing originally intended for residents making 80% or less of area median income.⁸⁷ There are almost 930,000 public housing units in the United States housing over 1.7 million people.⁸⁸ The 1991 American Housing Survey found that 39% of public housing units were built after 1970, 36% between 1950 and 1969, and 25% prior to 1950. If these buildings are still standing, the newest would be 52 years old and the oldest, 85 years.⁸⁹ Since the mid-1990s, housing authorities have demolished over 200,000 units that were classified "obsolete," due to the original lack of quality construction for some of these buildings, as well as deferred capital

maintenance [Figure 30].⁹⁰ Most public housing buildings that are between 50-to-90 years of age need substantial reinvestment. Preservationists can join residents, activists and housing authorities in evaluating if and how historic public housing meets residents' needs and wants. Public housing's future is about more than the building: it is about the future of peoples' homes, lives, communities and more. Conversations have layered complexities that engage memory and experiences around identity, justice and power, so entering the discussion needs to be done thoughtfully and after building trust with partners.

PROTECTING NATURALLY OCCURRING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Subsidized rental units represent a small percentage of affordable housing in the U.S. Eighty percent of all affordable rentals in large markets and 75% of affordable units nationwide are referred to as “naturally occurring affordable housing,” or NOAH, that is considered broadly affordable, but remains unsubsidized by any federal program.⁹¹ This type of housing is often small- or mid-sized

rental buildings, over 35 years old, that are particularly vulnerable because investors purchase them at low cost, renovate and then raise rents [Figure 31].⁹² Duplexes and triplexes may also be subject to de-conversion from multi-family rental to single-family housing, or be demolished to make way for a single-family home. Of the 12 million affordable housing units in the U.S., 9 million are naturally occurring.⁹³ Low-income people of color are the predominant NOAH renters.⁹⁴ Developing preservation strategies to maintain NOAH properties and to protect their affordability would make preservation relevant to the estimated 23 million people living in these buildings.⁹⁵

NOAH also pertains to affordable homeownership. Here again, preservation has an important role to play in working with homeowners to preserve affordability, help provide maintenance and hazardous material remediation funding and prevent displacement. Municipalities and nonprofits have applied land use and real estate tools such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), land trusts and housing cooperatives to preserve affordable homeownership. See the “Housing-Related Models” section below for links to these programs.



Figure 29: The Laborers' Home Development Corporation adapted the former Paris High School in Paris, Illinois, in the state's rural central-east region, into 42 affordable senior housing units using both Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. Several of the project's residents attended high school in the building. Photo by J.L. Jordan Photography, WJW Architects PC.



Figure 30: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) proposed demolishing the Connell F. Smith Sr. Building in Cairo, Illinois, the area's fifth public housing complex to close. Sixty residents will be displaced in a community already experiencing a severe affordable housing shortage. Landmarks Illinois has joined with residents, housing advocates and other government agencies calling for HUD to create new affordable housing in Cairo. Photo by Don Patton, Cairo Historical Preservation Project.

“Preservation needs more intersectionality. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs), for example, are one solution to a housing supply or preservation problem because they can add new homes and change the rationale for why some houses get demolished. We can show a connection between ADU policy and preservation to help keep people in their homes.”

Steven Vance
 Founder and CEO
 Chicago Cityscape
 February 14, 2020
 Chicago, IL

ROADBLOCKS TO OVERCOME

There are several roadblocks to increasing housing through preservation, including regulations, perceptions and incentives.

REGULATIONS

Municipal zoning and building codes can make it difficult to convert historic buildings to housing. Follow the work of Cornell law professor and Chair of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Sara Bronin, founder of [Desegregate CT](#), for messaging, model language and other programs to emulate, including the [National Zoning Atlas](#). ([Find more about Sara Bronin's work here](#))

PERCEPTIONS

Some residents in under-resourced or marginalized communities, as well as [Yes In My Back Yard](#) (YIMBY) advocates, believe that historic designation causes or contributes to gentrification, displacement of people of color and low-income residents and prevents affordable housing construction. While we can point to studies that dispel these claims, communities will reject preservation based on this perception. Read Dan Bertolet's articles citing these arguments in the “Further Reading” section below. Considerable work is needed to study historic preservation,



Figure 31: Small rental apartment buildings over 35 years old often provide naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), which is particularly vulnerable to investors who purchase, renovate and raise rents. This small, 1954 apartment complex in Miles City, Montana, is a NOAH example. Montana's housing prices increased by 79% between 2022-2023, the second highest jump in the nation. Photo by David Schott, June 16, 2008, CC BY 2.0. Photo unchanged.

affordability, gentrification and displacement, build constructive partnerships with local YIMBY chapters and find collaborative means to create more affordable housing in historic communities, including conversations about increasing neighborhood density.

The perception that historic preservation is always more costly than new construction is a significant roadblock. We can provide relevant data that demonstrates when preservation costs less than new construction, as well as first-person testimonials from developers and community development corporations. When preservation is more costly, which it sometimes is, we need more incentives to close the gap.

INCENTIVES

More financial resources are needed to maintain or purchase NOAH buildings. Owners and renters, affordable and market rate, need resources for hazardous material mitigation and energy efficiency improvements that work in harmony with historic material.

Home maintenance and repairs can also be financially burdensome for low-income homeowners. A 2019 HUD study found that low-income homeowners spend little on maintaining and improving their homes. When they do, it represents three times as much of their income as high-income owners and generally goes to maintenance and disaster repair.⁹⁶ We need to work with partners to create accessible, affordable maintenance and repair funds for low-to-middle income property owners.

The value of the FHTC decreases when paired with the LIHTC. Advocate for the [Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act](#) to become federal law, which would make it easier to use with the LIHTC. (Find a legislative fact sheet here published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.) When using the FHTC, the regulators need to strike a balance between strict interpretations of The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and enabling an adaptive reuse to proceed.

Furthermore, because properties must be National Register-listed to qualify for the FHTC, the incentive is not available to many property owners, especially in low- to moderate-income communities. Properties in these areas may not have been included in early surveys, for example. In communities where there has been limited to no access to traditional financial capital, property deterioration or maintenance efforts with “incompatible” material may prevent the historic place from meeting the integrity criteria. These would be reasons to reinstate the federal non-historic preservation tax credit, discontinued in 2017, which previously offered a 10% income tax credit for investments in non-listed properties built prior to 1936.

Clearing these and other roadblocks will take input, knowledge, planning and collective action. We will need to forge partnerships, collect and analyze data, develop case studies, create financial tools and change policy at the federal, state and local levels. Most of all, we can expect changing practices and policies to take considerable focus, effort and time. Increasing housing units presents an opportunity to meet a widespread, nearly universal need. You and your organization can make the choice to put a greater focus on housing as a way to grow your relevance.

“Everyone is looking to blame someone for the affordable housing crisis. Some pick Amazon. Others pick historic preservation. Some people think it [preservation] is a fundamental part of the problem. They think it’s having more of an effect than it does.”

Dana Phelan

Historic Preservation Program Director

4Culture

November 14, 2019

Seattle, WA

A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO PRESERVING AND CREATING AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH PRESERVATION

10 REASONS WHY ... PRESERVATION AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING ARE ALIGNED

- **The United States has an undersupply of all housing types**, with the least available inventory at low-income price points. Concerns about housing access are nearly universal, despite geographic, demographic and economic differences. A majority of Americans see housing affordability as a problem.
- **Nine million of the nation's 12 million affordable housing units are considered naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH)**. Often small- or mid-sized rental buildings over 35 years old, NOAH is particularly vulnerable because investors purchase these buildings at low cost, renovate and then raise rents.
- **There are almost 930,000 public housing units in the United States housing over 1.7 million people**. Since the mid-1990s, housing authorities have demolished over 200,000 public housing units. Preserving existing public housing prevents the shortage of supportive housing from increasing.
- **Adaptively reusing existing buildings for housing can increase the overall supply** by converting places not originally designed for residential to this use.
- **Historic buildings of all types can be successful housing conversions**: schools, warehouses, large office buildings, storefront retail, sacred places, fraternal buildings, hospitals and more.
- **Reusing existing buildings reuses existing infrastructure**, thereby cutting down on the time and cost for municipal approvals and permitting.
- **The construction process for a preservation project begins and ends more quickly** than new construction.
- **According the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**: “The cost of constructing new ... affordable rental housing from the ground up... would be staggering. By contrast, **[reinvesting in an existing affordable building] typically costs about one-half to two-thirds as much as new construction**. [This] also enables people to stay in their homes and neighborhoods, where they can enjoy the social capital they have built within their communities...Although costs such as maintenance expenses may be higher over the life of a rehabilitated property, rehabilitation is still more cost effective than new construction.”
- **The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit (FHTC) and HUD's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) can pair** to incentivize reusing historic buildings for affordable housing. The FHTC incentivized the rehabilitation or creation of 185,525 affordable rental units between 1977-2021.
- **Preservation practice can shift away from its focus on the aesthetics** of historic places to **contribute effective solutions to a community's challenges**. Helping to provide housing, especially affordable housing, is perhaps our greatest opportunity to be more relevant.

10 IDEAS FOR PRESERVING AND CREATING AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH PRESERVATION

- Join partners advocating for the maintenance of, and reinvestment in, affordable and public housing.
- Support affordable housing developers through public statements about the need for, and community benefits of, affordable housing.
- Establish partnerships with affordable housing organizations, agencies and developers to help them find properties that could be adapted for housing.
- Pull together an Affordable Housing and Preservation 101 book with practices and case studies for both small and large developers.
- Look at vacant retail space for housing, including [former malls](#) and big box retail stores.
- Make our zoning and building codes more flexible so that office and commercial spaces can be converted to housing. Double the density allowance to allow housing in commercial districts.
- Advocate for the passage of ordinances that help to create more affordable housing in existing historic buildings and districts, such as accessory / additional dwelling units, adaptive reuse, affordable requirements and anti-deconversion ordinances.
- When density increases overall affordability, embrace participating in the process to add density to historic commercial areas and neighborhoods.
- Talk with local housing officials about land use policies to preserving existing buildings in order to retain Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) in existing buildings.
- Create financial resources for building maintenance for low-to-moderate income property owners. Owners and renters need more financial resources to purchase, maintain, mitigate hazardous materials, improve energy performance and improve naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) buildings.

SUPPORTING DATA

- Rural (40%), suburban (46%) and urban (63%) residents believe the lack of affordable housing is a major problem. A recently-released National Main Street Center study noted that 87% of Main Street program managers were concerned about that state of their downtown district housing.
- Home purchase price growth has hit a record high. Over 25% of homebuyers are investors purchasing homes in the market's lower-third price point. They rent or sell them for profit, further decreasing the affordable supply. The National Association of Realtors® found that "the lack of affordable homes is the top obstacle holding back potential home buyers of all races." A Harvard University study reported, "it could take a decade of record-level homebuilding to meaningfully increase affordability" for homebuyers.
- Extremely low-income renters face a lack of affordable housing access in every state and major metropolitan area. New apartments are priced for high-income renters, while the low-income supply dwindles. Almost half of all renters spent more than 30% of their income on housing in 2018 and within this group, 25 percent spent more than half their income.

SUPPORTING DATA (continued)

- Eighty percent of all affordable rentals in large markets, and 75% of affordable units nationwide, are NOAH, considered broadly affordable, but federally unsubsidized.
- Housing insecurity and homelessness result from a lack of affordable housing. Some 3.7 million practiced “doubling up” (living with other people) in 2019 due to housing insecurity. Over 580,000 people were unhoused as of January 2020.
- Between 2010-2020, 778 older commercial buildings nationwide were converted to apartments with 65% of those 96,500 housing units aimed at low-to-middle income renters. A 2022 RAND Corporation study on Los Angeles County’s critical housing shortage found that adaptive reuse could provide between 9% – 14% of the county’s next-eight-years of housing need.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- [“Affordable Housing and Density Issue Brief – Fall 2021,”](#) Preservation Priorities Task Force , a joint project of the National Preservation Partners Network and National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) [Discovering and Developing Missing Middle Housing Report](#) and the legislative guide to [Re-Legalizing Middle Housing: A Model Act and Guide to Statewide Legislation](#).
- [Density in historic environments](#).(U.K.) – A study on adding density in historic environments by Historic England and ARUP.
- Habitat for Humanity. [“2022 State of the Nation’s Housing Report.”](#) Undated webpage.
- National Alliance to End Homelessness. [“State of Homelessness: 2021 Edition.”](#) Undated webpage.
- PlaceEconomics. [“Opportunity At Risk: San Antonio’s Older Affordable Housing Stock.”](#) Prepared for the San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation, PlaceEconomics, 2019.
- Powe, Ph.D., Michael and Emi Morita. [“At Home on Main Street: A Report on the State of Housing in Downtowns and Neighborhood Commercial Districts.”](#) National Main Street Center, 2022.
- [“Public Housing: Image Versus Facts.”](#) Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Spring 1995.
- Sweeney, Erica. [“Small-Town America Needs Affordable Housing, Too.”](#) Next City, April 19, 2023.
- Walk-Morris, Tatiana. [“How Adaptive Reuse Can Help Solve the Housing Crisis.”](#) American Planning Association, May 1, 2021.
- Willis, Haisten. [“Preserving Affordable Housing.”](#) The Washington Post, March 19, 2020.

FUNDERS AND FUNDING TOOLS

- [Mezzanine Debt Loan Program](#) (Chicago, IL) – Offers low-cost, flexible financing to purchase or refinance rental properties in higher-cost markets.
- [The Neighborhood Investment Company](#) (Los Angeles, CA) – A neighborhood investment company to invest in local real estate through a low-investment real estate investment trust (REIT).
- [Small Building Program](#) (Washington, D.C.) – Funding for limited systems replacement and repairs for affordable housing in small buildings.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- [Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network](#) (Boston, MA)
- [Here to Stay Community Land Trust](#) (Chicago, IL) - An anti-displacement effort created by neighbors to deeply discount property sales prices.
- [Owe'neh Bupingeh Pueblo Restoration Project](#) (Ohkay Owingeh, NM) - Restoring the 700-year-old historic Pueblo.
- [Pilsen Housing Cooperative](#) (Chicago, IL) – A limited-equity, scattered-site housing cooperative to stand against gentrification and displacement.
- [Rural Ulster Preservation Company](#) (Kingston, NY) – providing rural affordable housing.
- [Upstairs Downtown](#) program – housing above commercial space
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) Chicago [Residential Conversions Initiative](#) (Chicago, IL) – Converting underutilized commercial space into residential.

POLICY AND REGULATORY TOOLS

- [Accessory Dwelling Units](#) (ADU) Ordinances (Sacramento, CA)
- [Adaptive Reuse Ordinance](#) (Los Angeles, CA)
- [Anti-Deconversion Ordinance](#) (Chicago, IL)
- “[Housing Needs Assessment](#)” tool by Local Housing Solutions, in partnership with PolicyMap, “to help inform local housing strategies.”
- [Mandatory Housing Affordability Program](#) (Seattle, WA)
- [Tenant Protection Program](#) (Sacramento, CA)

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH PRESERVATION

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH PRESERVATION

ESSAY PROMPTS:

1. How is climate change affecting your community? Who is most impacted? Are there impacts on the built environment?
2. What are the most needed resources for affected communities relating to the existing built environment?
3. In what ways can you help mitigate climate change impacts that would demonstrate preservation's relevance to a broader community?
4. What would you need to feel comfortable persuading others that preservation is a sustainability tool?
5. Which local or regional agencies or organizations can you collaborate with to offer repair, maintenance, energy efficiency and decarbonizing resources to historic property owners and tenants?

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IS CONTRIBUTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The American Bicentennial not only marked our nation's 200th anniversary, it was also the last year on record when the Earth's surface temperature was cooler than average.⁹⁷ Nearly 190 million Americans, 57% of the population, have only ever lived in a warming climate.⁹⁸

Weather has become more unpredictable, extreme and will worsen as temperatures rise.⁹⁹ In a 2021 Gallup poll, 65% of Americans

reported worrying between a fair amount and a great deal about global warming and 64% believed human activities were mainly to blame.¹⁰⁰ People polled believed that corporations (70%), individuals (65%) and Congress (61%) should do more to address global warming.¹⁰¹

“Our climate is in crisis. If we don’t connect to the most fundamental thing in our world, then we are irrelevant.”

Chere Jiusto
Executive Director
Preserve Montana
September 18, 2020
Helena, MT (via video conference)

Building operations account for 27% of global carbon emissions – the single largest source, while building materials and construction are an additional 13% (called “embodied” or “upfront” carbon.)¹⁰² Estimates are that two-thirds of our existing buildings will be in continued operation in 2040, so making these buildings more energy efficient is essential to reduce carbon emissions.¹⁰³ Preservation helps mitigate climate change by eliminating unnecessary building material waste and avoiding upfront carbon emissions from new construction [Figure 32].



Figure 32: Demolition wastes reusable materials and generates carbon, such as this case with the destruction of Portland, Oregon's, [Ancient Order of United Workmen Temple](#). Portland's groundbreaking [deconstruction ordinance](#) only applied to single-dwelling structures at the time. Not only were materials wasted, but also the opportunity to build proposed, needed affordable housing. Photo by Steve Morgan, September 3, 2017, CC BY-SA 4.0. Photo unchanged.

Preventing upfront carbon will not be enough. We need to improve historic buildings' energy efficiency and decarbonize building construction and operations by eliminating all on-site fossil fuel use and electrifying all systems. Renewable energy sources need to power these systems, either on-site or from a sustainable power grid.¹⁰⁴ While improving energy efficiency, projects should also adapt the building to be more resilient to climate change impacts.

Building reuse is having its moment. The American Institute of Architects has tracked new construction and renovation statistics for

20 years. In 2021, renovation reached an all-time high of 52% of U.S. architect-led design activity. Almost 70% of this work was adaptive reuse / conversions, basic interior modernization and tenant fit outs, while only 3% was labeled historic preservation.¹⁰⁵ Adaptive reuse generated so much real estate attention that one "Fast Company" reporter asked if 2022 could be the year without any new construction.¹⁰⁶ Architect Jeanne Gang authored a May 2021 article advocating for the reuse of Brutalist concrete buildings not only as historic, but also as carbon preservation [Figure 33].¹⁰⁷ This is a moment to reinforce



Figure 33: In her May 2021 "[The Plan](#)" article, architect Jeanne Gang used Miami Marine Stadium as a poster child for the benefits of concrete building preservation as a "carbon sink." Photo by Bumbiti, CC BY-SA 4.0. Photo unchanged.

that adaptive reuse (preservation) helps to mitigate climate change. We must also recognize that the reuse process generates upfront carbon emissions and at different rates, depending on the project type. The American Institute of Architects (AIA) created the “[Buildings That Last](#)” guide to assist architects in reusing existing buildings and designing new structures to last. By sharing this guide with design and construction teams, we can encourage reducing the amount of new materials.¹⁰⁸

“We know how carbon causes negative impacts. We must take our knowledge and use carbon as a building block to turn back climate change.”

Alicia Ponce, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP
Living Future Accredited
Founder and Principal
APMonarch
January 23, 2020
Chicago, IL

Preservationists have been framing the climate change imperative, opportunity, and next steps for over four decades [Figure 34]. The Relevancy Project’s purpose is to be additive, not duplicative, so I encourage familiarizing yourself with earlier work. Please see Jim Lindberg’s blog post, “[The Reuse Imperative](#),” the Preservation Priorities Task Force Sustainability and Climate Action [Issue Brief](#), and the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s National Impact Agenda [Climate Resilience Goal](#) for guidance.¹⁰⁹ This post will raise additional points made by project interviewees.

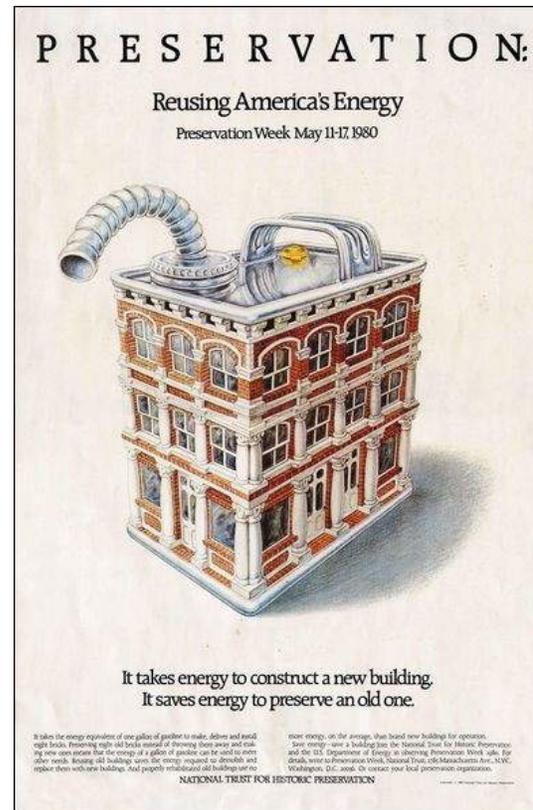


Figure 34: The 1980 Preservation Week poster by the National Trust for Historic Preservation framing historic preservation as an energy-conserving, and new construction as an energy consuming, practice. Poster image used with the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s permission.

EMBRACING SUSTAINABILITY TO MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change refers to long-term temperature and weather pattern shifts.¹¹⁰ Whereas sustainability aims to prevent the overuse of natural resources in order to maintain ecological balance. They are related, but not synonymous. Sustainable practices can mitigate climate change, but the focus is on avoiding exhausting the planet’s resources in order for future life to exist and thrive on Earth.¹¹¹

If a majority of Americans want corporations, individuals and government to do more to slow climate change then preservation needs to be an important part of the conversation about how to make existing buildings more energy efficient and how to decarbonize. This requires knowing which energy saving features will result in the greatest energy reduction with the least impact on the building for an acceptable cost. The National Park Service Technical Preservation Services provides [sustainability standards and guidelines](#), but our field would benefit from training courses covering the following topics in greater depth.¹¹²

Additionally, we must revisit our overreliance on the belief that simply preserving a building is the “greenest” choice and use an evidence-based approach. Since architect Carl Elefante, FAIA, coined the phrase, “The greenest building is one that is already built,” in 2007, it has become part of the preservation lexicon.¹¹³ The logic was easily understood by preservationists and the general public alike – keeping a building avoids disposing of its material. That is certainly true. However, the phrase is often cited as an absolute when evidence may show needed energy performance improvements to reduce carbon emissions. A thought-provoking paper, “Energy and historic buildings: toward evidence-based policy reform,” published in 2021 called out the implications of preservation’s “inherently ‘green’” status.¹¹⁴ Historic buildings have been exempted from energy codes at a time when there is an opportunity to “be at the forefront of adapting the existing built environment”.¹¹⁵ The authors call for “energy-responsive practices,” informed by evidence.¹¹⁶

STEP ONE - EVALUATE EXISTING CONDITIONS

We can advise building owners to gather data through an energy audit and a building systems evaluation [Figure 35]. This is an opportunity to partner with architects and energy companies to provide no- or low-cost services. The Chicago Bungalow Association’s [Home Energy Savings Program](#) is one model where the local electric and natural gas companies conduct assessments and homeowners may qualify for free energy saving products and weatherization services.¹¹⁷ People living in older properties are led to believe that replacing existing windows and doors is the solution to reducing their energy bills, but this is not accurate. Data shows that the highest percentage of thermal loss is through walls, then roofs and windows/doors, floors and chimneys.

“What do we need to do as a climate change solution? Every property is different. We need both an energy and resilience analysis of every house before any work is done and then develop a future focused, low carbon and cost effective plan to make the home sustainable, resilient and healthy.”

Nathan Kipnis, FAIA, LEED BD+C
Former Co-Chair, AIA National 2030
Commitment Working Group
Principal, Kipnis Architecture + Planning
November 20, 2019
Evanston, IL

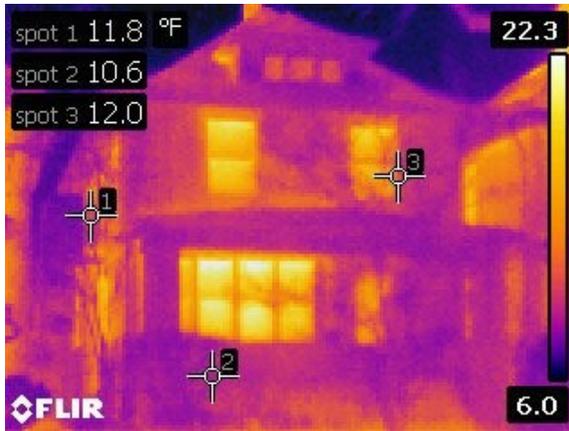


Figure 35: Thermal imaging data generated during a residential energy audit in Chicago, Illinois. Photo courtesy of Doug Farr, Farr Associates.

STEP TWO - INTEGRATE PASSIVE DESIGN MEASURES

Integrating passive environmental control measures should be the next step after evaluating what a building needs to improve energy efficiency. Passive design utilizes natural energy sources such as sunlight, wind or temperature differences to accomplish energy efficiency without using electricity or fuel.¹¹⁸ For example, not all owners understand how their building's historic ventilation systems work. We can help extend the time that the air conditioning stays off by utilizing the original cooling features, such as demonstrating the operation of a transom window, or both sashes of a double-hung window, to circulate warm and cool air. Something as simple as closing blinds or curtains during the day, and opening doors and windows for cross ventilation, may help. Though they require electricity, whole house fans can also reduce the use of chemical-based air conditioning. Adding interior or exterior storm windows and insulating sash-weight pockets can reduce thermal transfer. And, though they may seem antiquated, window awnings can cool with little to no



Figure 36: Window awnings on an older home in Logansport, Indiana. Photo by Valerie Everett, October 25, 2012, CC BY-SA 2.0. Photo unchanged.

electricity and shutters can help guard against storm damage [Figure 36].

Some architects are trying to design buildings that have very low or no net energy use. For example, [Passive House](#) is a 30-year-old, German concept, gaining traction in the U.S., to build or refurbish homes that use little energy, but are also comfortable and affordable. The Passive House Institute has [a guide to refurbishing existing homes](#) using this concept focusing on thermal insulation, airtightness and renewable energy sources.¹¹⁹ Deep energy retrofits (DER) are another concept where architects and builders seek to reduce a building's energy consumption (operational carbon) by at least 50%. To achieve this goal, DER's make extensive systems and material changes, including, in some cases, exterior insulation over the existing structure.¹²⁰ Unless a trained professional who understands existing buildings completes the DER, the process can result in detrimental outcomes like dangerous indoor air quality and moisture problems.¹²¹ Furthermore, manufacturing, transporting and adding new material produces upfront carbon



Figure 37: Solar panels on the roof of a Los Angeles home in the Hancock Park neighborhood. Much of Hancock Park is in a municipal Historic Preservation Overlay District. [California State Law](#) exempts solar installations from requiring municipal clearance, including in historic districts. Photo by Downtowngal, January 21, 2021, CC BY-SA 4.0. Photo unchanged.

emissions that reduces the overall net energy savings.

STEP THREE - CONSIDER ACTIVE DESIGN SOLUTIONS

Active design solutions are those that either use or produce electricity.¹²² First, let's explore active design solutions that reduce energy demand by producing power. A building's roof, those of secondary structures, and / or a yard, can house photovoltaic (solar) panels or shingles depending on the climate and roof orientation. National Park Service Technical Preservation Services published guidance on [how solar panels can meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards](#).¹²³ Proactively promoting solar arrays on historic buildings can dispel the myth that we care more about buildings and aesthetics than the people using them [Figure 37]. This could include local governments or preservation organizations sending solar array guidelines to the owners of designated properties, hosting solar educational seminars, and collecting and distributing case studies such as those found on the [Historecycle](#) website.¹²⁴

Purchasing green power moves energy use to more sustainable sources and promotes decarbonization. Local nonprofit community solar programs and energy utilities may offer consumers the option of purchasing their power from renewable sources, or the purchase of carbon offset credits to spur investment in sustainable power generation. The United States Environmental Protection Agency offers a helpful [guide to purchasing green power](#).¹²⁵

The National Trust in the U.K. is reactivating its sites' historic hydropower for renewable energy production. Siân Phillips, the Trust's Hydro Technical Specialist, evaluates, designs and manages green power production at their historic dams and sluices. Ten of the Trust's hydropower sites generate over 4.1 million kilowatt hours of energy used by both the organization and sold to the national power grid, helping to generate revenue to operate their 500+ sites.¹²⁶

“People do not often see the connections between our past activities and climate change, however this is changing. Historically there has been some bold risk-taking by citizens largely out of the need for self-sufficiency. A balance needs to be struck between protecting [these places] and our need to adapt to changes in our climate. The renewables programme within the Trust is one such nod to them – their bold risk-taking. They may have already had solutions built in. We must learn from the past and adapt.”

Sian Phillips

Hydro Technical Specialist

National Trust [UK]

November 6, 2020

Shrewsbury, England (via video conference)



Figure 38: [The Glessner House in Chicago](#), Illinois, had a geothermal system installed under its interior courtyard to reduce energy costs with no visual impact on the National Historic Landmark home. Photo by Teemu008 from Palatine, Illinois, October 19, 2013, CC BY-SA 2.0. Photo unchanged.

Other available resources can reduce fossil fuel dependence. Switching to all-electric heating and cooling options is easier with the growing availability of heat pumps. Air source heat pumps transfer heat energy drawn from outside air into indoor spaces. Ground source heat pumps harness the heat energy stored in the ground [Figure 38]. Air source heat pumps are becoming more common than ground source because they are less expensive to install.¹²⁷

Insulating attics can dramatically reduce up to 25% of heat loss through a building's roof. Wall insulation can reduce that up to 35% more. Accessibility needs will grow as the baby boom generation ages — the second largest U.S. population group at 73 million people.¹²⁸ Partnering with architects, aging and disability advocates to design affordable accessibility measures can help adults who want to age in place in their historic homes.¹²⁹ Safety must be prioritized when lives are at risk. Incorporating seismic retrofitting, flood and sea-level rise

mitigation measures, and drought and wildfire preparedness, can require major structural, mechanical and landscape interventions. These interventions may remove historic material and/or be visible and irreversible, making them incompatible with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.¹³⁰ The standards are where the discussion begins. Ultimately, building code requirements may supersede saving all of the historic material. To be more relevant to more people, we must be willing to compromise.

STEP FOUR - CONSIDER THE ECOSYSTEM

Historic places exist in a broader natural landscape and community. They are part of an ecological system where further steps can enhance the sustainability of a building or buildings. Growing and preserving food on a property reduces the carbon needed to cultivate, prepare and transport food from

elsewhere. Woodlawn, a National Trust for Historic Preservation historic site, is one model where partner Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food & Agriculture runs a sustainable food program with produce grown on site.^{131/ 132}

Planting trees and green roofs reduces the heat island effect. In wildfire prone areas, clearing trees and brush away from buildings may be necessary. Using native plantings or plants needing less water, as well as incorporating storm water retention and pollinator gardens, can repair ecosystems. Consult an arborist and horticulturalist to understand which native trees and plants can withstand climate change impacts on your community. Understand which plants will thrive in a changing environment without needing abundant water or fertilizers and those that will not introduce insects, viruses or bacteria that will harm other flora and fauna.

The Trustees of Reservations in Massachusetts offers a more strategic model around adapting its ecosystem to climate change. The Trustees is the largest private coastline owner in the state. It has prepared a broad [coastal strategy](#) to prepare for sea level rise, intensified storms and shoreline erosion that will impact its historic and natural sites.¹³³

Finally, making use of existing services and infrastructure, reinvesting in historic, walkable, bike-friendly and/or transit-friendly communities has carbon-saving benefits. We talk about preserving sense of place in such communities, but we can add decarbonization to our work's benefits.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Climate change is not just an energy efficiency or ecological issue. It is the greatest environmental justice issue facing our world [Figure 39]. Many of the aforementioned

climate mitigation measures come at a substantial cost. Yet, those most vulnerable to climate change impacts have the fewest resources to prepare. A 2021 [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency study](#) showed “the most severe harms from climate change fall disproportionately upon underserved communities,” especially racial and ethnic minority communities, “who are least able to prepare for, and recover from...the greatest impacts of climate change.”¹³⁴

“We should be at the forefront of solving environmental inequity.”

Brent Leggs
Executive Director
African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund
National Trust for Historic Preservation
December 10, 2019
Chicago, IL

To be at the forefront of dismantling environmental inequity, we have two, under-resourced communities to work with:

- 1) Current residents affected by climate change; and,
- 2) Climate refugees that may become our future neighbors.

For the first group, we need to offer funding and programs that make weatherization and climate change resilience more accessible and affordable. Income-eligible households, currently at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, may qualify for the U.S. Department of Energy's [Weatherization Assistance Program](#) (WAP), and additional state programs, such as [New York State's WAP](#).¹³⁵ The federal Inflation Reduction Act



Figure 39: Nonprofit [People for Community Recovery](#) (PCR) was founded in 1979 at Altgeld Gardens, a public housing community on Chicago's far South Side, to address tenant issues. After learning that residents suffered the region's highest cancer rates, PCR expanded its mission to include environmental justice. They recently expanded their environmental work to include preservation. Pictured are the PCR and Landmarks Illinois staff at an August 2022 Altgeld Gardens site visit. Photo by Landmarks Illinois.

(IRA) of 2022 provides home energy rebates to low income households for weatherization and heating and cooling electrification. Homeowners with income tax liability can qualify for tax credits to install air source heat pumps and solar panels. The IRA also funds environmental justice priorities, including:

- Fifteen billion dollars for low-income and under-resourced communities for clean energy production and carbon emission reductions;
- Three billion in block grants to monitor air quality and provide for extreme weather resilience;
- Three billion to reconnect communities divided by highways; and,
- One billion toward making public housing more energy efficient.¹³⁶

Under-resourced and resourced building owners need programs to help them tackle weatherization, hazardous material mitigation and basic maintenance. Do-it-yourself training models to look at include [Brick + Beam Detroit](#), the [Chicago Bungalow Association](#), the [San Antonio Rehabber Club](#) and Durham's [Home Repair Lab](#). These programs include construction skills mentoring, proper remediation techniques, reduced-cost or free

weatherization products and model climate resilience projects adapted to local weather events. Tool libraries make necessary, yet expensive hand and power tools accessible to those wanting to do their own work (find tool libraries at www.localtools.org.)

By 2050, our neighbors may be some of the over one billion people expected to be threatened with climate displacement.¹³⁷ Already an average of 21.5 million people per year are displaced as climate migrants / refugees.¹³⁸ Climate refugees will need our support and preparation is key. People escaping climate disasters will look for communities near family and friends, as well as access to social services, health care, job retraining, employment and housing.¹³⁹ Preservation can contribute by increasing the supply of affordable, energy efficient housing and helping to grow the rehabilitation and weatherization job sectors.

THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND

So far, this essay's focus has been on energy efficiency and carbon reduction. But climate change necessitates a conversation about the

Historic Preservation Fund, the financial underpinning for much of the work we do. The Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), which is underwritten by federal offshore oil and gas leases, is the federal funding source for the state historic preservation offices and certified local government grants [Figure 40]. The HPF was created in 1977 with the idea that one non-renewable resource could sustain another. Global warming as a concept was still relatively new to the public in 1977 when 91% of our energy still came from fossil fuels.¹⁴⁰ Today, 79% of our energy is from non-renewable sources and that number will continue to decrease.¹⁴¹ Conclusive, science-based evidence points to human resource consumption as the leading cause of climate change. If preservation wants to be a part of the climate change solution, then isn't taking fossil fuel lease revenues contrary to our goals? By taking this funding, we depend on perpetual offshore oil and gas drilling. How long will offshore oil reserves be productive? When fossil fuel demand diminishes, it will reduce the lease income. Will Congress curb these leases in the future in their next climate change commitment? Either way, preservation has an oncoming funding problem that we must get ahead of.¹⁴²

We can make the case for alternative funding sources for preservation by considering historic resources as both non-renewable and renewable. They are non-renewable because once they are demolished, they are gone. They are also renewable because they can be replenished, adapted to current conditions and reused for hundreds of years. If we are to be effective participants in the climate change debate, we will need to reframe historic buildings as a key renewable resource. People generally associate positively with renewable resources like solar and wind.¹⁴³ This positivity needs to extend to include historic places. With this in mind, we will need to explore

federal funding sources that are consistent with mitigating climate change.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

The public is increasingly recognizing adaptive reuse as a sustainable practice. That is a win for the preservation field. However, the scale of needed historic building energy efficiency upgrades, decarbonization and climate adaption is daunting. The U.S. has approximately 112 million buildings, including 100 million single-family homes.¹⁴⁴ Of these, approximately 50 million are at least 50 years old.¹⁴⁵ Collaborating with government and nonprofit partners on policy changes and resource programs is likely the only scalable approach. Energy, accessibility and life safety codes, and/or our own conscience may demand significant material interventions that our field can work to accept, and even embrace and promote, in the future.



Figure 40: An oil drilling rig right off the shore of Huntington Beach, California, in May 1975, just two years before the creation of the Historic Preservation Fund. Photo from the National Archives at College Park, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

Preservationists can, and should, do more to address the climate emergency that we are facing. Proactive energy efficiency and decarbonizing efforts will help to reduce carbon emissions, but we will continue to see the devastating effects of extreme weather and sea level rise on historic places. As preservation enhances our relevance to more people, our growing resources can better support the scale of needed planning and interventions. Our climate adaption strategies for historic places need to increase and our practices will need to adapt as our local environments change [Figure 41].¹⁴⁶ Until then, we can leverage our limited resources through proactive planning, including updating asset surveys (including below-ground resources), integrating weather modeling data, developing new mitigation and adaptive solutions and interpretive methods and creating a thoughtful, inclusive and equitable rubric to make the difficult choices ahead.



Figure 41: Water levels are rising beyond the U.S. coastlines. Extreme weather events, coupled with development, has led to rapid river rise in many parts of the world. The Edith Farnsworth House in Plano, Illinois, built right next to the Fox River, was designed by Mies van der Rohe to withstand minor floods, but not frequent, major flooding. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, the home's owner, and Landmarks Illinois, preservation easement holder, have been exploring flood remediation options. Photo by Landmarks Illinois.

A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH PRESERVATION

10 REASONS WHY...

PRESERVATION NEEDS TO HELP FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

- **The Earth's surface temperature has been warmer than average every year since 1977.** July 4, 2023 was the hottest day on Planet Earth in recorded history.
- **The warming climate has made weather across the globe more unpredictable and extreme** and this will worsen as temperatures rise. We are already seeing the global impact through glacial melt, rising sea levels and temperatures, more – and more powerful - hurricanes/typhoons, flooding, tornadoes, extreme heat, drought, wildfires, and more.
- **By 2050, over one billion people are expected to be threatened with climate displacement.** Already about 21.5 million people per year are displaced as climate refugees.
- **Those most vulnerable to climate change impacts have the fewest resources to prepare.** A 2021 [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency study](#) showed “the most severe harms from climate change fall disproportionately upon underserved communities,” especially racial and ethnic minority communities, “who are least able to prepare for, and recover from...the greatest impacts of climate change.”
- **Nearly 190 million Americans, 57% of the population, have only ever lived in a warming climate.** In a 2021 Gallup poll, 65% of Americans reported worrying between a fair amount and a great deal about global warming and 64% believed humans were mainly to blame.
- **Emitting carbon into the atmosphere warms the planet.** According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), “Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere warms the planet, causing climate change. Human activities have raised the atmosphere’s carbon dioxide content by 50% in less than 200 years.”
- **Buildings account for 40% of global carbon emissions, more than any other source.** Operating buildings emits 27%, the single largest source of global carbon emissions, while building materials and construction are an additional 13% (called “embodied” or “upfront” carbon.)
- **Preservation helps mitigate climate change by eliminating unnecessary building material waste** and avoiding upfront carbon emissions from new construction. We cannot stop there. We need to make existing buildings more climate resilient, energy efficient, use renewable energy sources, and decarbonize building construction and operations by eliminating all on-site fossil fuel use. Improving building safety in seismic areas is also a priority. The affordability of proposed interventions needs to be a priority.
- **The U.S. has approximately 112 million buildings,** with 100 million of these being single-family homes. Of these, **approximately 50 million are at least 50 years old.** Estimates are that two-thirds of existing buildings will be in continued operation in 2040, so making these buildings more energy efficient is essential to reduce carbon emissions.
- **Climate resilient historic homes should accommodate aging-in-place.** Accessibility needs will grow as the baby boom generation ages — the second largest U.S. population group at 73 million people.

10 IDEAS TO MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH PRESERVATION

- Join the [Climate Heritage Network](#) and read its [2022-24 Action Plan](#). Sign on to take action on the Climate Heritage Network’s “[A Manifesto on Keeping 1.5° Alive](#).”
- **Continue to maintain walkable, bike-friendly and/or transit-friendly communities** for their carbon-saving benefits.
- **Sustainability is a repackaging of Indigenous principles.** Look to the practices of Indigenous people to learn more about adaption to climate change. Invite indigenous people to be a part of sustainability panel discussions.
- **Proactively plan for the loss of significant places to climate change** impacts based on modeling data. Engage communities in creating asset surveys (including those belowground), inclusive and equitable methods to make difficult decisions ahead, and developing methods to interpret and remember endangered places.
- **Advise building owners to gather data through an energy audit** and a building systems evaluation to know which affordable, energy-saving features – passive and active - will result in the greatest energy reduction without wasting reusable material. This is an opportunity to collaborate with architects and energy companies to provide no- or low-cost services.
- **Make energy efficiency accessible for everyone.** Offer funding, programs, materials and case studies that make weatherization and climate change resilience, attuned to your local climate, more accessible and affordable. Create “do-it-yourself” trainings in construction skills and proper remediation techniques. Collaborate with others to create a tool library to make necessary, yet expensive hand and power tools accessible to those wanting to do their own work. Look to <http://www.localtools.org/>.
- **Reduce fossil-fuel energy use and promote renewable energy use.** Switch to all-electric cooking, heating and cooling options. Assess the benefits of photovoltaic (solar) panels or shingles depending on the climate and roof orientation. Proactively promoting solar arrays on historic buildings can dispel the myth that we care more about buildings and aesthetics than the people using them. Solar panels are reversible. Send solar array guidelines to the owners of designated properties, host solar educational seminars, and collecting and distributing case studies such as those found on the [Historecycle](#) website.
- **Energy, accessibility and life safety codes, and/or our own conscience will demand interventions that are incompatible with current preservation guidelines and standards.** To fight climate change and to be more relevant to more people, preservationists must be willing to compromise, accept, and even embrace and promote, resilience, energy efficiency and decarbonization practices.
- **We need better case studies** about how preservation can mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- **Find a new funding source for the [Historic Preservation Fund](#) that is not tied to fossil fuel.** The Historic Preservation Fund (HPF), which is underwritten by federal offshore oil and gas leases, is the federal funding source for the state historic preservation offices and certified local government grants. The HPF was created in 1977 with the idea that one non-renewable resource could sustain another.

SUPPORTING DATA

- People polled believed that corporations (70%), individuals (65%) and Congress (61%) should do more to address global warming.
- Building reuse is having its moment. The American Institute of Architects has tracked new construction and renovation statistics for 20 years. In 2021, renovation reached an all-time high of 52% of U.S. architect-led design activity. Almost 70% of this work was adaptive reuse / conversions, basic interior modernization and tenant fit outs, while only 3% was labeled historic preservation.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- Avrami, Erica, ed. "[Preservation, Sustainability and Equity](#)." Columbia University Press, 2021.
- Crownhart, Casey. "[Everything you need to know about the wild world of heat pumps](#)." MIT Technology Review, February 14, 2023.
- "[Frequently asked questions on climate change and disaster displacement](#)." The U.N. Refugee Agency, U.N. High Commission for Refugees, November 6, 2016.
- Frey, Patrice and Vincent Martinez. "[We Can't Build Our Way To Net Zero](#)." Next City, January 10, 2023.
- Gang, Jeanne. "[Revaluing Brutalist Architecture](#)." The Plan (130), Magazine 2021, May 4, 2021.
- Lindberg, Jim. Ed. Erica Avrami. "[Avoiding Carbon: Mitigating Climate Change through Preservation and Reuse](#)," in "[Preservation, Sustainability and Equity](#)," Columbia University Press, 2021.
- Oregon State Parks, The Craig Group, Cultural Trust. "[Value of Cultural Heritage in Disaster Resilience: Report and Messaging Guide](#)." Undated.
- Preservation Green Lab. "[The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse](#)." National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2011.

EVALUATIVE TOOLS

- [CARE \(Carbon Avoided: Retrofit Estimator\) Tool](#). "The CARE (Carbon Avoided: Retrofit Estimator) Tool is used for estimating and comparing the embodied, operating, and avoided carbon impacts and benefits of reusing and upgrading existing buildings or replacing them with new construction." [About page](#).
- [Uprose Climate & Community Health Vulnerability Assessment](#)

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation [Climate Change and Sustainability Preservation Initiative](#).
- "[America's Eroding Edges](#)," a partnership project with Victoria Herrmann, a National Geographic Explorer, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, about shoreline erosion and climate change impacts on communities across the nation.

- [Historecycle](#) – “founded to showcase historic building renovations where green features are integrated into the redesign.”
- Historic Environment Scotland has put a plan in place to have zero emissions by 2045, “[Out Past, Our Future](#),” prioritizing inclusion, accessibility, resilience and a wellbeing economy.
- “[Home Energy Savings Program](#).” Chicago Bungalow Association, 2022.
- [Home Repair Lab, Durham, NC](#)
- National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Leadership Forum, [Preservation & Climate Change resources](#), including the [Preservation and Climate Equity: A Resource List](#).
- The National Trust in the U.K. is reactivating its sites’ [historic hydropower](#) for renewable energy production.
- “[Net-Zero America Project](#).” Princeton University. Undated.
- [San Antonio Reuse](#)
- [Sustainability and Climate Action Preservation Priorities Task Force](#), National Preservation Partners Network and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- The Trustees of Reservations in Massachusetts has prepared a broad [coastal strategy](#) to prepare for sea level rise, intensified storms and shoreline erosion that will impact its historic and natural sites.

POLICY AND REGULATORY TOOLS

- “[Developing an Equitable Building Decarbonization Strategy for Chicago: Recommendations Report of the Chicago Building Decarbonization Policy Working Group](#).” City of Chicago, 2022.
- Kahn, Aysha. “[D.C.’s Solar for All Program Just Installed Its First Solar Shingles](#).” Next City. June 29, 2022.
- Montgomery County (MD) [Housing Fairness Impact Act](#), a proposed teardown demolition impact fee.
- [Portland Deconstruction Requirements](#)
- [San Antonio Climate Ready. Action and Adaption Plan](#)
- [U.S. Department of Energy Weatherization Assistance Program](#)
- The Washington Trust for Historic Preservation worked on legislation regarding [seismic retrofitting of unreinforced masonry](#) (URM), coupling seismic retrofitting with affordable housing in vacant second stories.

PRESERVATION AS MATTER OF HEALTH

PRESERVATION AS A MATTER OF HEALTH

ESSAY PROMPTS:

1. How do older places make you feel? How would you describe this to others?
2. Do you believe that older places help people's health and wellbeing?
3. Are you willing to explore unconventional ideas about people's connection to place as a means to expand preservation protections?
4. What kind of data would you be asked for to demonstrate preservation's connection to human health? Do you have local partners, like a university, who could help with data-driven studies on preservation's health benefits?
5. Are you feeling burned out? Are you tapping into self-care resources for coping and wellness recovery? What are the root cause(s) of your burnout?

OUR CONNECTION TO PLACE IS A PART OF OUR WELLBEING

Health and well-being have been at the forefront of our lives with COVID-19's appearance and repeated surges, as well as Monkeypox and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) outbreaks. For many of us living through COVID-19, there were interruptions and alterations to our daily patterns, including where, when and how we gathered. The importance of places became clear when we could no longer access them. Places are where we make a living, receive vital services, learn, practice our faith, recreate and, perhaps most importantly, where we connect with others. Substantially altering access to these vital

things has taken its toll, with up to 80% of people in the United States experiencing depression, anxiety, grief and/or isolation.¹⁴⁷

The Relevancy Project began in 2019 before COVID-19's arrival. Over half of the project's 130 interviews took place after the spring 2020 lockdowns. After March 2020, people seemed more eager to talk about the physiological relationship between place and sense of community. Preservationists are comfortable with economic and aesthetic talking points and we are beginning to use sustainability language with some regularity, but preservation's connection to health is largely unexplored. Interviewees acknowledged that we need data, examples and tested messaging to start communicating the idea that our work preserves and improves health.

"We need language that isn't so squishy. People need empirical evidence. Can we tie [preservation] to other facts and data, like social determinants of health and resilience?"

Di Gao

Senior Director of Research & Development
National Trust for Historic Preservation

March 27, 2020

New York, NY (via video conference)

Again, the Relevancy Project's purpose is to be additive, not duplicative. Reference [Thompson \(Tom\) Mayes'](#) and [Raina Regan's](#) thoughtful work connecting preservation and health as a good start for this topic. Mayes, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's (NTHP) chief legal officer and general counsel, [published several works](#) exploring the relationship between old places and mental and physical health.¹⁴⁸ In her [Uplifting Preservation](#) blog,

Regan, program analyst and National Park Service liaison for grants programs at the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, writes extensively about our field's mental health challenges.¹⁴⁹

WHAT IS HEALTH?

The concept of health has evolved with our greater understanding of human physiology and psychology. The [World Health Organization](#) defines “health” as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”¹⁵⁰

We are part of an ecosystem where we relate to other living things, and to our physical surroundings. The planet's living organisms need a healthy ecosystem to survive. We can measure our ecosystem's health at an individual, community and ecological level. The guidebook's previous essay, “Fighting Climate Change through Preservation,” explored how preservation can achieve environmental health by fighting climate change. How can preservation promote community health? By integrating preservation into public health practices.

Public health works to protect and improve the health and well-being of individuals and their communities, from the neighborhood to the global level.¹⁵¹ California's Public Health Consortium included opportunities to engage with culture as one of its [20 community health indicators](#).¹⁵² [Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Index](#), the nation's metric for success, also includes culture. The index includes questions about psychological wellbeing, health, time use, community vitality and cultural diversity and resilience, all of which have a relationship to preservation.¹⁵³ Encouraging local public health professionals

to adopt culture as a health indicator is a first step, which we can follow by engaging with public health agencies to identify where else preservation integrates with their plans.



Figure 42: The [Cham Dance](#) is Bhutan's traditional dance performed as a group during the nation's annual Tshechus festival. Photo by Sabine Blankevoort, October 23, 2022, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

The World Health Organization includes “social well-being” in its definition of health.¹⁵⁴ Beyond public health, we can consider how historic places strengthen social connections [Figure 42]. In “[Why Old Places Matter](#),” Tom Mayes explores how old places provide a sense of continuity, belonging, memory and identity.¹⁵⁵ These connections are at both the individual and group level. An entire group's health can suffer after losing a special place. Demolition erodes, and even destroys, communities by removing the spaces where people interact with each other. The emphasis in the United States on protection of property rights means that people often have little choice about what stays or goes in their communities. [Dr. Mindy Thomson Fullilove](#) explored the collective loss resulting from Urban Renewal, a program that displaced 1 million people and destroyed 2,500 neighborhoods nationwide between 1949 and 1973 [Figure 43].¹⁵⁶ “[Root shock](#) is the traumatic stress reaction to the destruction of all or part of one's emotional ecosystem.”¹⁵⁷

Displaced residents suffered physical and mental distress, including “post-traumatic stress disorder,’ ‘depression,’ ‘anxiety,’ and ‘adjustment disorders.’”¹⁵⁸

[Solastalgia](#) is another term describing place-based trauma. A recently coined term, solastalgia “refers to the pain or distress caused by the loss of a comforting place; the sense of desolation people feel, consciously or unconsciously, when their home or land is lost.”¹⁵⁹ Preservationists know this feeling when watching the demolition of places that we have worked tirelessly to save. Grief and disruption to a person’s sense of orientation accompany the loss of one’s special place.

“How do we make a philosophical shift in the field? Reframe preservation as health. The buildings we live in impact our health.”

Nicholas Redding
President & CEO
Preservation Maryland
August 20, 2019
Baltimore, MD

PLACE AS MEDICINE

How can place help heal these deep wounds? Urban researcher Michael Mehaffy and architectural theorist Nikos Salingaros authored a [2019 blog](#) for the National Trust for Historic Preservation studying the link between historic places and resilient human environments, or environments that heal quickly from damage.¹⁶⁰ In the blog, they explored how natural forms emulated in architecture, such as acanthus leaves on a column capital, mimic nature’s healing properties. Exposure to nature has medicinal qualities, including reducing stress and pain



Figure 43: Urban Renewal projects intentionally targeted minority communities, like Miami’s Interstate 95 that destroyed much of [Overtown](#), known as “Miami’s Harlem”. The forced removal and displacement of residents, and widespread demolition of community fabric, has had negative generational impacts across the nation. Photo by B137, March 13, 2013, CCo, via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

levels, and boosting the immune system.¹⁶¹ Perhaps because of its healing properties, humans have a predilection for natural forms that scientists call “biophilia.”¹⁶² Research shows that people have a similar, positive physiological and psychological response when exposed to architecture that incorporates natural forms [Figure 44].¹⁶³ In this way, historic places within natural environments or featuring natural elements could be seen as a form of healing medicine.

Older places’ healing properties go beyond their design. They can also be forums for discussion, learning and healing around the generational impacts of genocide, displacement and enslavement. The [#LandBack Movement](#) is a First Nations’ and Indigenous people-led [movement to reclaim ancestral lands](#) enabling their return as nature’s sovereign caretakers.¹⁶⁴ Chef Sean

Sherman, an Ogalala Lakota Sioux tribal member, is regenerating ancestral knowledge about Indigenous food culture as medicine. In a [2021 interview](#) with Illinois State University, [Chef Sherman](#) remarked on the prevalence of medicine in our landscapes: “I think that the more closely connected you are to the environment... then you start to see nothing but food and medicine basically everywhere you look... There’s a deep benefit to understanding how Indigenous peoples connect to their environment. It is more than physical, it is spiritual.”¹⁶⁵ Chef Sherman calls out the land as a sacred source of ancestral knowledge, nourishment and healing. Can historic places also provide similar medicine? Historic places can be spaces where we acknowledge traumatic, unjust and challenging histories and share knowledge of our nation’s full history [Figure 45]. They can also be healing places through a reconciliation and reparations process, such as that begun at Montpelier (see “Promoting a Just Preservation Movement” essay). Preliminary indicators that historic places connect to, and improve, a person’s and a community’s health and healing warrants greater research to talk about this preservation benefit.

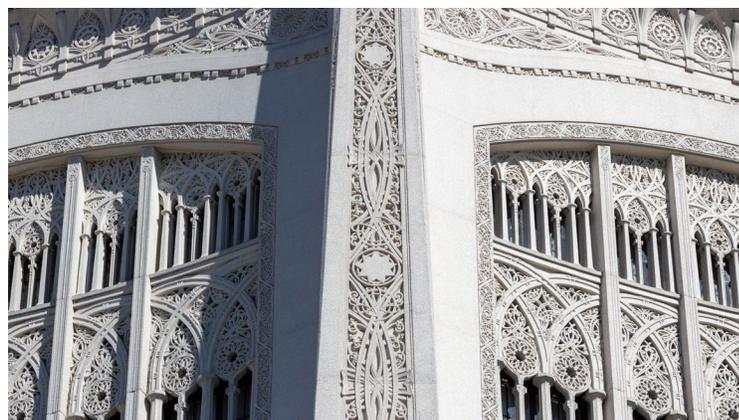


Figure 44: Almost every wall surface of Wilmette, Illinois' [Bahá'í House of Worship](#), a National Historic Landmark, is a gallery of organic forms beautifully rendered in Portland cement. The temple attracts 250,000 visitors per year. James Conkis, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.



Figure 45: The monument at the [Manzanar War Relocation Center](#) near Independence, California, now a National Historic Site. Manzanar is a site of conscience where [thousands gather annually](#) to remember the Japanese Americans incarcerated during WWII and to protest for human rights. GFred1, May 2016, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

“During COVID, people’s mental health has suffered and the National Trust [UK] served the communities by remaining open. We hope people have enjoyed [our sites]. We were in lockdown in the U.K. and open spaces could largely remain open. The Trust made the decision to keep its parklands open to provide a space for people to enjoy nature, get outdoors for recreation and help improve the opportunities for people’s mental health during a time of unprecedented uncertainty.”

Sian Phillips, Hydro Technical Specialist, National Trust [UK]
November 6, 2020, Shrewsbury, England (via video conference)

“Heritage communities are healthy communities: Shell Guam, Inc. donated 72 hectares of property to the Guam Preservation Trust for the purpose of a heritage preserve where medicinal plants thrive for traditional healers and propagation of rare native plants and trail making are maintained by university students. Guam Preservation Trust has a grant writing workshop that assist communities in writing grants to showcase their medicinal recipes in publication or demonstration.”

Joe Quinata

Chief Program Officer

Guam Preservation Trust

August 28, 2020

Hagatna, Guam (via video conference)

THE RIGHT TO PLACE

The World Health Organization names health as a fundamental human right.¹⁶⁶ If connecting with place is pivotal to our health, should people have the right to access and protect places that they do not legally own?

Arguably, the right to one’s history is a protected human right. Human rights are those we possess simply because we exist, not because we are a citizen of a political state.¹⁶⁷ The right to health, education and culture are designated human rights protected under the [United Nation’s International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) (ICESCR).¹⁶⁸ Article 12 of the ICESCR affords us the human right to enjoy “the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.”¹⁶⁹ Article 13 provides the right to access and participate in education to “the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity...education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free

society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups...for the maintenance of peace.” Article 15 recognizes the right to participate in cultural life and to take necessary steps to conserve, develop and diffuse culture. Unfortunately, U.S. preservationists are disadvantaged from using human rights law to protect historic places. President Jimmy Carter signed the ICESCR treaty in 1977, but Congress has not ratified the agreement¹⁷⁰ The U.S. is still obligated as a signatory to refrain from defeating the treaty’s purpose, but U.S. courts are unlikely to enforce it until ratification.¹⁷¹

Preservation attorneys have been exploring the idea of enshrining preservation as a civil right, which is a right guaranteed to citizens and, in certain cases, non-citizens, by the Constitution and federal law. The NTHP included Dallas’ Tenth Street Historic District on its 2019 11 Most Endangered Historic Places list [Figure 46].¹⁷² Tenth Street is one of the few surviving Freedman’s Towns, which were self-governing communities established by African Americans during the Jim Crow era. Demolition increased in the district after Dallas’ 2010 ordinance expedited removal of “dilapidated” housing that was under 3,000 square feet – this size standard encompassed the majority of the district’s homes. [The Tenth Street Residential Association](#) (TSRA) filed suit against the City of Dallas claiming the ordinance violated the residents’ civil rights under the federal Fair Housing Act.¹⁷³ In August 2020, the [U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals](#) upheld the lower court’s ruling that the TSRA did not have standing to bring the case. Let us dig deeper into this legal argument.



Figure 46: Dallas' [Tenth Street Historic District](#). Photo by QuesterMark from Where the West Begins, United States, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

What if historic properties had their own legal standing in court and could sue to save themselves? This may sound strange. How can an object bring a legal case? This is not so foreign in U.S. law. A corporation has certain rights to personhood, for example.¹⁷⁴ Attorneys, advocates and scholars have been working on a newer area of law called [environmental personhood](#), where natural features acquire legal rights to protect themselves from harm, typically environmental damage or destruction.¹⁷⁵ The nonprofit [Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund](#) (CELDF) has helped dozens of domestic and international governments on Rights of Nature ordinances and ballot measures.¹⁷⁶ They are currently working with Indigenous water keepers in Minnesota to support "[Manoomin](#)" (wild rice) v. [The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#) [Figure 47] to stop a pipeline that is located off the White Earth Reservation that [threatens the sacred grass](#) "right to live and thrive."¹⁷⁷ The case was tried in tribal court, which had already passed a Rights of Nature law. The White Earth Band of Ojibwe Court of Appeals [dismissed the case](#) in March 2022 citing a lack of legal precedent.¹⁷⁸ Attorneys working on Manoomin's behalf filed in April 2022 to have the court reverse its decision.¹⁷⁹ The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe has taken up a case in

tribal court where salmon are suing the City of Seattle for the right to exist and regenerate.¹⁸⁰ Clearly, more cases like this are needed to establish precedent. Rights of Nature lawsuits help us to consider the benefits and implications of granting historic places personhood. It is certainly an interesting opportunity to expand preservation's legal underpinnings.



Figure 47: Manoomin (wild rice) harvesting, Floodwood, Minnesota. Photo by Lorie Shaul, September 11, 2021, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

“Remind people of the relevance of preservation...[it is] not just non-extant or extant buildings. We are trying to capture the climate of our society, behaviors, milestones and heritage. There are adaptive evolutions during these moments. Preservation can serve a purpose to remember a way of being, a way of thinking.”

Cheyenne St. John
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Lower Sioux Indian Community
November 6, 2020
Morton, MN (via video conference)

BURNOUT ENDANGERS PRESERVATIONISTS

You may think that exploring mental health, solastalgia, and a place’s right to personhood is beyond preservation’s boundaries. The Relevancy Project was conceived to explore the varied reasons that places matter to people, especially the unconventional. Connecting preservation and health is just another way to reach a broader audience. We have to make preservation more relevant to more people. By doing so, I believe that we can move from reactive to proactive, save places in less time, raise more money and improve wages and benefits – all factors that lead to preservationists’ feeling burned out. Burnout amongst preservationists is a real concern. Up to 50% of the nonprofit workforce reports being at or near the burnout point.¹⁸¹ Public sector burnout is even higher at 65%.¹⁸²

Our work centers on serving the public. People count on us. How can we provide good and useful service when our tanks are empty? We have a responsibility to thoughtfully use

and care for stories, properties, identities, knowledge and communities that are not our own. Burnout can put this needed thoughtfulness on the back burner, stymie optimism and creativity and prevent the growth of a culture of “yes,” rather than “no.”

The problem of burnout must be addressed systematically and programmatically as leaders retire or join in the Great Resignation to move into different fields. Future leaders are leaving the field. In addition to Raina Regan’s Uplifting Preservation blog, Vu Le humorously describes the trials of leading a nonprofit, including burnout, in his [Nonprofit AF blog](#).¹⁸³ Preservation commissioners and board members should read his posts to understand why staff burnout is so prevalent. Fair wages and competitive (or better) benefits are a start, but we also need to provide the following to retain our preservation talent:

- Training and accountability in making a welcoming and supportive workplace for all
- Workload reduction and time to take vacation
- Professional development, mentoring and sabbaticals
- Paid-time-off for caregiving
- Trusted management of one’s own programs and projects
- Ample resources and tools
- Promotional and leadership opportunities
- Engaging everyone in an organization in deciding on the future
- Staff members may want to organize and/or form a union for collective action
- Listening, engaging and acting with the voices calling for change.

A CALL TO HEALTH ACTION

In the lead-up to a 2017 PastForward Conference health session track, Tom Mayes gave a call to action: “The specific health impacts of older places have not yet been explored deeply.”¹⁸⁴ That was almost six years ago. Little data, case studies or communication has become available since then to help us talk about preservation’s health benefits. What is available is largely academic and needs to be broken down into language that is more accessible. This is a call to action to collaborate with social scientists, environmental health researchers and policymakers to backup what we know: that connecting with our history enhances our health.

A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO PRESERVATION AS A MATTER OF HEALTH

10 REASONS WHY... PRESERVATION IS A MATTER OF HEALTH

- Places can support health and help heal deep wounds.
- The [World Health Organization](#) defines “health” as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” “Social well-being” relates to our connection with others and the health of that group as a whole. An entire group’s health can suffer after losing a special place. Demolition erodes, and even destroys, communities by removing the spaces where people interact with each other.
- **People displaced from their special places suffer “root shock,”** defined by Dr. Mindy Thompson Fullilove as physical and mental distress, including “post-traumatic stress disorder,’ ‘depression,’ ‘anxiety,’ and ‘adjustment disorders.’” [Solastalgia](#), another term describing place-based trauma, “refers to the pain or distress caused by the loss of a comforting place; the sense of desolation people feel...when their home or land is lost.”
- **Exposure to nature has medicinal qualities,** including reducing stress and pain levels, and boosting the immune system. Perhaps because of its healing properties, humans have a predilection for natural forms that scientists call “biophilia.”
- **Research shows that people have a similar, positive physiological and psychological response** when exposed to architecture that incorporates natural forms. In this way, historic places within natural environments or featuring natural elements could be seen as a form of healing medicine.
- **Older places’ healing properties go beyond their design.** They can also be forums for discussion, learning and healing around the generational impacts of genocide, displacement and enslavement.
- **Historic places can be spaces where we acknowledge traumatic, unjust and challenging histories** and share knowledge of our nation’s full history. They can be healing places through a reconciliation and reparations process.
- **The right to health, education and culture are designated human rights** protected under the [United Nation’s International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) (ICESCR). Preservation attorneys have also been exploring the idea of enshrining preservation as a civil right.
- **We have an opportunity to explore the varied reasons that places matter to people,** especially the unconventional. Connecting preservation and health is another way to reach a broader audience, but the connection requires further exploration, data and messaging.
- **Before investing in exploring this new area, the problem of burnout in preservation must be addressed** systematically and programmatically as leaders retire or join in the Great Resignation to move into different fields. Future leaders are leaving the field.

10 IDEAS TO CONNECT PRESERVATION TO HEALTH

- **Collaborate with public health professionals, social scientists, social service agencies and policymakers** to research the beneficial and detrimental health impacts related to the preservation and destruction of place. Publish and distribute the resulting data and case studies.
- **Develop effective messages** to communicate how preservation impacts and benefits individual and community health.
- **Encourage local public health professionals to adopt culture as a health indicator** and identify where else preservation integrates with their plans.
- **Join with partners like city health departments** to prioritize programs to address hazardous materials and environments in historic buildings. Preservationists have a responsibility to identify and address negative health impacts of older buildings.
- **Use historic places as sites of conscience**, and the subject of, reconciliation and reparations conversations and processes. [The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience](#) has [toolkits](#) to engage in these conversations.
- **Connect with local counselors to provide service referrals if and when special places are demolished**, and/or if people are displaced from these places, to address the negative mental and physical health impacts of root shock and [solastalgia](#).
- **Research legal precedent and policy on historic places as a human and civil right**, as well as historic places' right to legal personhood. Work on policies or law test cases that gives people a right to the places of memory, history and culture, even if they do not own them.
 - For a related movement on the rights of environmental personhood, watch Kelsey Leonard's TEDWomen 2019 talk, "[Why lakes and rivers should have the same rights as humans](#)," about the legal personhood of water.
- **Talk with your Congressional representatives** to advocate for ratification of the [United Nation's International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) (ICESCR), signed in 1977 by President Jimmy Carter. The United States must ratify the treaty for courts to recognize the provisions as law.
- **The problem of burnout must be addressed systematically and programmatically.** Read about the humorous trials of leading a nonprofit, including burnout, in Vu Le's [Nonprofit AF](#) blog. Le names steps that boards and staff members can take to promote equitable and healthy work environments. Similarly, read the [Uplifting Preservation](#) and [Uplifting Preservation Archive](#) blogs by Raina Regan on how to address burnout.
- **Collaboration and partnership building can be a burnout prevention strategy.** Are there organizations or agencies that you can collaborate with to share plans, resources, or to address common challenges and opportunities? Rather than having organizations working separately on the same problem, can they build several programmatic models as a coalition? If preservation organizations and agencies collaborated at every level, we could leverage each's resources to develop shared solutions.

SUPPORTING DATA

- [Dr. Mindy Thomson Fullilove](#) explored the collective loss resulting from Urban Renewal, a program that displaced 1 million people and destroyed 2,500 neighborhoods nationwide between 1949 and 1973. In her book by the same name, Dr. Thompson Fullilove defined her findings as “[Root Shock](#),” “the traumatic stress reaction to the destruction of all or part of one’s emotional ecosystem.” Displaced residents suffered physical and mental distress, including “‘post-traumatic stress disorder,’ ‘depression,’ ‘anxiety,’ and ‘adjustment disorders.’”
- Substantially altering our access to places, routines and connections with others during the pandemic took its toll, with up to 80% of people in the United States who reported experiencing depression, anxiety, grief and/or isolation.
- The right to health, education and culture are designated human rights protected under the [United Nation’s International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) (ICESCR) under Articles 12, 13 and 15.
- Up to 50% of the nonprofit workforce reports being at or near the burnout point. Public sector burnout is even higher at 65%.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- Bearfoot, Cheyenne. “[Land Back: The Indigenous Fight to Reclaim Stolen Land](#).” KQED, April 21, 2022.
- “[Boosting Public Health by Preserving the Past: Q&A with Bloomberg Fellow Eli Pousson](#).” Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, May 19, 2020.
- Fullilove, MD, Mindy Thompson. “[Root Shock: How Tearing Up City Neighborhoods Hurts America, and What We Can Do About It](#).” New Village Press, 2004.
- [Gorman, Cheeraz](#). “[Who moved my memories](#).” TEDxGateway Arch, October 16, 2014. Performance piece and commentary on Demond Meeks’ work, [SlumBeautiful](#) about St. Louis’ College Hill neighborhood, where Gorman grew up. Also listen to Gorman’s podcast, “[I Remember a Place Name](#).”
- Jayasinghe, Tiloma. “[Avoiding Burnout and Preserving Movement Leadership](#).” Nonprofit Quarterly, July 8, 2021.
- Layton Aging and Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center, [Sharing History through Active Reminiscence and Photo-Imagery \(SHARP\) walking study](#) using historical asset mapping created by the [Architectural Heritage Center](#).
- Mayes, Tom. “[PastForward Reading List: Introduction to Health and Historic Preservation](#).” National Trust for Historic Preservation, August 8, 2017.
- [Nonprofit AF](#) blog by Vu Le.
- Orthel, Bryan D. “[Linking public health and heritage work](#).” [International Journal of Heritage Studies](#), Volume 28, Issue 1, 2022, 44-58.
- Regan, Raina. “[The Burnout Crisis in Historic Preservation](#).” National Trust for Historic Preservation, September 1, 2021. Also refer to [Uplifting Preservation](#) and [Uplifting Preservation Archive](#) by Raina Regan.

- [“The Rights of Rice and Future of Nature.”](#) 99% Invisible, Episode 496, June 21, 2022.
- Rocchi, Julia. [“Dallas’ Tenth Street Historic District Celebrates Temporary Halt on Demolitions.”](#) National Trust for Historic Preservation, August 16, 2019.
- Shiman, David. [“Economic and Social Justice: A Human Rights Perspective.”](#) University of Minnesota Human Rights Resource Center, undated.
- Weir, Kirsten. [“Nurtured by Nature.”](#) Monitor on Psychology, American Psychological Association, Vol. 51, No. 3, April 1, 2020.

EVALUATIVE TOOLS

- [“Bhutan’s Gross National Happiness Index.”](#) Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, University of Oxford, undated.
- [“Tool Kit: How to Prevent Nonprofit Employee Burnout.”](#) The Chronicle of Philanthropy, undated.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- [The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience](#) has [toolkits](#) “connecting past struggles to today’s movements for human rights.”

POLICY AND REGULATORY TOOLS

- [“California Health in All Policies Task Force: 2010 Healthy Communities Framework \(HCF\).”](#) California Health in All Policies Task Force, undated.
- [“International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.”](#) United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, undated. Also refer to [“Protect Human Rights.”](#) United Nations, undated.

JOB CREATION THROUGH PRESERVATION

JOB CREATION THROUGH PRESERVATION

ESSAY PROMPTS:

1. What are the most relevant topics to teach in preservation today to prepare students for the future? What should be removed from the curriculum?
 2. Do you have a shortage of skilled craft workers in your community? If so, how has this affected preservation development and your own work?
 3. What can you do to entice people to enter the construction trades?
 4. Reflect on your past hiring processes. Did you reach sought-after job candidates? Have you evaluated your hiring practices, employee compensation and other intangible benefits?
 5. Are there other sectors besides a traditional preservation career where preservation-minded people could influence the future of our existing built environment? How might you encourage people to consider other careers?
1. Having a workforce that represents the nation's diversity creates stronger organizations and is imperative to telling our full history.
 2. The workforce of preservation-minded people needs to grow if we are going to have any impact in the areas that will make us more relevant to more people.
 3. Our knowledge and skills must expand, so education programs need to evolve to support this expansion.
 4. We need to expand the pool of workers that have a preservation ethic, knowledge and commitment to influencing change. Our workforce can make change by working both inside and outside of the existing preservation field.

Exploring the preservation labor force as a topic could have come first in this guidebook. Foundational to making preservation more relevant is having a labor force that is willing and able to do the work. Changing what we do, and how we do our work, requires more capacity – knowledge, funding and time, but people most of all. Based on The Relevancy Project interviews, we believe these are the necessary steps when it comes to future jobs in preservation:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics does not track the historic preservation industry specifically. We fall under many industries, so determining the size of the preservation labor force is difficult. A 2012 National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) market study entitled, “Field Guide to Local Preservationists,” estimated that there are over 500,000 “Preservation Leaders and Members” in the United States.¹⁸⁵ However, the study defines a “Preservation Leader” as “people who consider preservation to be their number one cause and who are extremely active in preservation-related activities.”¹⁸⁶ Presumably, that definition includes most of the preservation workforce. Back out the NTHP’s then 250,000 members and supporters, the members and supporters of the 1,000 other preservation groups and we are down to a small workforce that preserve our nation’s older buildings.¹⁸⁷ These numbers have not been publicly updated over the past 10 years to see if and how our field is changing. Millennials are now the largest group within

the U.S. labor force at 35%, compared to Generation X at 33% and Baby Boomers at 25%.¹⁸⁸ Millennial preservationists have made incredible contributions to, and been leaders of, the conversation about needed change. Though their position in leadership and their influence continues to grow, established leaders must continue to either make room - or make way - for the fresh perspectives that rising generations bring to the field. But first, emerging preservationists need to overcome barriers to enter the field in the first place.

DISMANTLING BARRIERS: ACADEMIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE) lists 63 historic preservation and allied academic programs with a cumulative enrollment of over 2,200 students.¹⁸⁹ NCPE does not offer program cost data, but the average Master of Arts degree in the U.S. costs \$72,800.¹⁹⁰ Many professional preservation jobs require a Master's degree. However, tuition is likely a barrier for low- to moderate-income students who want to acquire the credentials to enter the field. Only 10% of low-income adults have a four-year college degree by the age of 25 compared to 50% for those from high-income families.¹⁹¹

Increasing our field's economic, racial, ethnic and geographic diversity depends, in part, on the accessibility and relevance of required education. Both access to a preservation degree and the curriculum that underpins it need reform. Preservation education focuses predominantly on philosophies developed over 40 years ago and is centered on the administration of preservation regulation.¹⁹² Preservation educators and supporters called on NCPE in an August 2020 open letter to reform and decolonize preservation pedagogy to support racial equity in the field. They stated,

“We, the undersigned, are preservation educators, students, and practitioners who believe that racial equity is of utmost importance for the future of historic preservation...

Transforming the field of historic preservation is essential and paramount given the diversity of our nation, its people, and its built environment.

Addressing systematic racism and anti-Blackness is one step forward, and NCPE as a national organization must address more impactful and systemic reforms.”¹⁹³

Beyond what is taught and how much it costs to earn a degree, supporting oneself as a preservation professional can be a barrier. More than half of all college students leave school with student loan debt [Figure 48].¹⁹⁴ Combine that with low pay for entry-level preservation jobs and the high cost of living in many communities and it is a recipe to ensure only high-income individuals, or those with supplemental incomes, work in preservation.

“There’s incredible inequity in the preservation field as to who gets the money, and even the preservation jobs.”

Justin Garrett Moore, AICP, NOMA
Former Executive Director
New York City Public Design Commission
March 31, 2020
New York City, NY (via video conference)

DISMANTLING BARRIERS: PRESERVATION TRADES TRAINING

Not everyone interested in working in preservation wants or needs an academic degree. Some want to work directly with historic building materials. Recent data from the July 2022 [“Status of Historic Trades in America”](#) report by PlaceEconomics, created

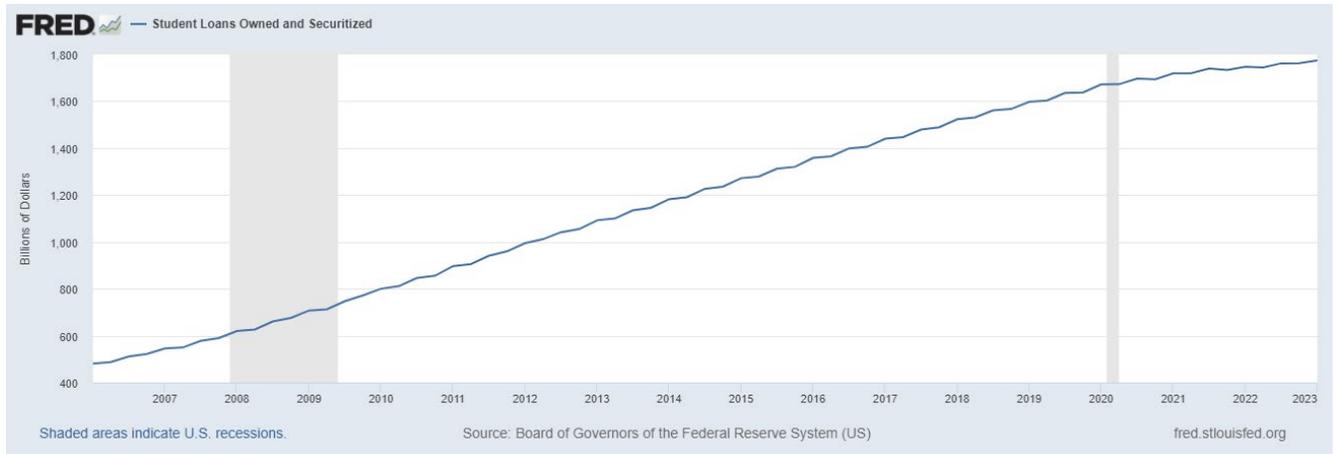


Figure 48: U.S. [student loan debt](#) as of January 1, 2023 is fast approaching \$1 trillion, \$800 billion. Source: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (US), accessed July 1, 2023.

for [the Campaign for Historic Trades](#), quantifies that 1.3 million workers are now employed in building rehabilitation and that 165,000 new jobs are created annually in this sector [Figure 49].¹⁹⁵ This number is expected to grow.¹⁹⁶

However, not enough people are entering trades training apprenticeship programs to replace the 40% of construction workers that are expected to retire in the next nine years [Figure 50].¹⁹⁷ According to 2021 data, the Associated General Contractors of America report that 89% of contractors are having difficulty finding craft workers.¹⁹⁸ What does this craft worker crisis look like for the specialized preservation trades? The Campaign for Historic Trades, a program of [Preservation Maryland](#), is currently collecting baseline data via a survey to predict future construction skills needs. The campaign has made significant strides towards putting the infrastructure in place for preservation trades training programs nationwide, in partnership with the [National Park Service's Traditional Trades Advancement Program](#) and the [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation](#). I include tradespeople as part of the vital preservation labor force. While there is some overlap in hiring, retention and safety practices between the trades and other

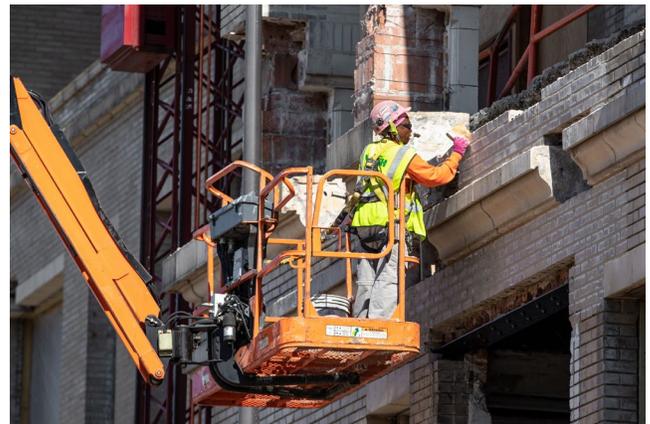


Figure 49: Masonry contractor working on historic [Cook County Hospital](#) in Chicago, Illinois. Photo provided by Walsh Construction.



Figure 50: Walsh Construction sponsored a [Pre-Apprentice Program](#) where candidates gained experience participating in the historic [Cook County Hospital renovation](#). Photo_by_Torque, provided by Walsh Construction.

preservation practitioners, there are also challenges that are specific to those in the trades. The Preservation Priorities Task Force, a joint project of the National Preservation Partners Network and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has published an [Issue Brief](#) noting the challenges and possible solutions to increasing the number of craft workers with traditional building skills, including a more accessible system to enter the preservation trades and find employment.¹⁹⁹

“[Preservation] needs to be personal to reach people. We need to talk about community impact, especially now. People will need jobs. We need a new WPA.”

Nancy Finegood
Former Executive Director
Michigan Historic Preservation Network
April 10, 2020
Eaton Rapids, MI (via video conference)

DISMANTLING BARRIERS: HIRING AND RETENTION PRACTICES

Prospective employees often encounter barriers to entering, or moving up, in the preservation field. [Sarah Marsom](#), activist, consultant and creator of the Dismantle Preservation movement, has led a public campaign for [cultural resources pay equity](#).²⁰⁰ The campaign calls for paying interns and demands that organizations and job boards post salaries as a matter of compensation transparency [Figure 51]. These are two important hiring practices for employers.

There are several other areas to consider when approaching an employee search. Have you had a job posting open longer than you expected without a successful hire? One or more of the following may be the issue. Here are barriers to



Figure 51: Former Landmarks Illinois intern [Alyssa Frystak](#) (R) and Director of Advocacy Lisa DiChiera (L) in 2018. Alyssa worked on the annual endangered and awards programs as a paid intern. As of July 2023, she is Associate Director of Research and Data Analytics for [PlaceEconomics](#) and chairs Landmarks Illinois' [Skyline Council](#). Photo by Pivot Photography.

remove when creating job descriptions, job postings and during the hiring process, as well as incorporating these practices to retain employees. The points are presented in order of the reasons that the Pew Research Center found that people quit their jobs:²⁰¹

- **Paying too little.** Data varies on the “nonprofit discount,” that is, the willingness of not-for-profit workers (public sector and nonprofits) to accept lower wages because we are doing “good work.” The latest [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) nonprofit wage report (2016) showed that nonprofit workers actually earn more than their for-profit counterparts do.²⁰² If you had to go back and re-read that, you are in good company considering the deeply held belief that nonprofit workers are paid less. The report recognizes that there is an inequity in this figure: nonprofit service workers receive a wage advantage, sales and office workers are at parity with their for-profit counterparts, and management and professional workers are at a pay

disadvantage.²⁰³ Women not-for-profit workers are at an even greater disadvantage with [our pay still .83 to every dollar](#) a man earns.²⁰⁴ Add rising inflation to this inequity. As of August 2022, over half of U.S. workers reported their [wages are not keeping up with inflation](#).²⁰⁵ The [wage gap is widening](#) even further between higher and lower wage earners, including in the cultural resource management sector.²⁰⁶ With the tightest labor market in the postwar era, employers have to offer compensation that is competitive with the surrounding markets to attract candidates.

- **Not allowing flexible work environments.** The pandemic changed worker expectations about the ability to choose their own workplace and work hours with 95% of knowledge workers wanting the [flexibility to make their own schedule and location decisions](#).²⁰⁷
- **Having antiquated benefits.** Employers also need to provide competitive benefits. Study your surrounding markets for for-profit, public sector and nonprofit organizations to understand standards for paid time off (PTO, vacation and sick time), quality health insurance, with plans that provide the option for dependent, domestic partner and spousal coverage, and life insurance. Understand the industry standard for employer premium coverage. Landmarks Illinois just began offering three months of paid caregiver leave, which is a highly desirable benefit. Providing paid, or unpaid, caregiver leave will enhance your company's competitiveness. Providing paid professional development, volunteer time and sabbatical options is attractive to employees, as well.
- **Being lax on protective policies and practices for workers.** At the very minimum, employers need policies that

prevent and address workplace harassment, including sexual harassment, anti-discrimination, equal employment opportunity and whistleblower policies. Workplace safety includes not only preventing bodily harm, but the mental and physical effects of unsustainable workloads that can lead to burnout (see the essay, "Preservation as a Matter of Health," for more information about burnout.) Employees at several cultural institutions have moved to unionize to ensure healthy work conditions and equitable pay, including the [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#) historic site and the [Philadelphia Museum of Art](#). The National Council on Public History hosted a [workplace organizing workshop](#) in August 2022 to assist workers in fighting for their workplace rights.²⁰⁸

- **A special note about workplace health.** On July 11, 2022, 24-year-old anthropologist [Kaylen Gehrke died of suspected heat-related conditions](#) on her first day on the job conducting an archaeological survey in Kisatchie National Forest in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana.²⁰⁹ At the time of Kaylen's death, the heat index was 107 degrees. We mourn Kaylen's passing and call out that her death was completely avoidable. Many of us may remember that on the first day of a job, power dynamics lead us to follow others for customary work practices and to avoid drawing attention when we cannot do something, or when we perceive something as unusual or unsafe. The news report does not indicate that Kaylen's supervisors took any action to stop work and allow the team to return after the heat index subsided.

- **Too many required responsibilities.** Because we rarely have enough workers to handle our workload, there is a tendency to overload position duties. A prospective employee may see the length of required duties as a surefire path toward an unbalanced workload and burnout.
- **Recognize that there is bias when applying for positions.** Research shows that men apply for jobs when they meet an average of 60% of the criteria. Yet, women and other people who are systematically marginalized tend to only apply if they meet every requirement. Landmarks Illinois now includes the following language in all of its job descriptions:
 - “Not sure if you qualify for the position? Research shows that men apply for jobs when they meet an average of 60% of the criteria. Yet, women and other people who are systematically marginalized tend to only apply if they meet every requirement. If you believe that your perspective, approach and experience would enable you to succeed as the [position name], we encourage you to apply.”
- **Requiring years of experience.** You are setting up a chicken-and-the-egg scenario if you want an entry-level employee, or are paying an entry-level wage, but you require three-to-five years of experience to qualify. Consider what you are really asking for when requiring a certain level of experience and phrase this differently.
- **Requiring an academic degree.** Requiring an academic degree can be a significant barrier to entry. Explore what knowledge and experiences you want your employee to have upon entry. Could that knowledge come from other life experiences? Landmarks Illinois has begun to eliminate academic degree requirements for some positions, or include language about the value of life experience, to encourage applications from those who may not otherwise consider the position.
- **Only posting on preservation-based job sites.** An applicant may not know about preservation-related job boards like PreserveNet or the National Trust for Historic Preservation. LinkedIn, Indeed and NPO.net listings open up the pool of candidates more broadly, as well as introduce a diversity of skills a person from outside preservation could add to a work team.
- **Remaining inside your immediate community to find candidates.** If you are trying to hire a person who will contribute skills and perspectives outside of those already on your team, ask your board members or commissioners, partner organizations and friends, to share the job description more broadly.
- **Asking a candidate about their pay history.** First, this practice is [illegal in 21 states](#).²¹⁰ Knowing a person’s prior pay rate can cause a supervisor to have unconscious bias in deciding what compensation to offer. Rather, develop a narrow pay range for what you believe the job is worth to your organization or agency. Make that range public. Develop a series of parameters that will guide how you will decide what level of compensation to offer. These practices help to mitigate unconscious bias in pay decisions.
- **Do people understand when and how they are reviewed and when and how to ask for increased compensation?** Inform new employees about any probationary period, the performance evaluation process and when and how they can ask for compensation increases in the future.
- **In annual performance reviews, ask about your employee’s aspirations and provide them with support to achieve these aspirations.** An employee may want

professional development such as training or mentoring, and they may identify what position they are hoping to achieve within your organization in the future. Ensure that you are planning ahead when you hire an employee to consider opportunities for professional growth within your organization and make a plan with them so that they understand how and when a promotion can or will happen.

DISMANTLING BARRIERS: CONTRACTING PRACTICES

Barriers to working in preservation go beyond employment. We also need to consider creating pathways for our vendors, consultants and contractors. It is easy and efficient to maintain an existing vendor relationship after building trust, but this may prevent diverse vendors from working with you. A best practice is to begin with a spend diagnostic. Review your list of vendors, consultants and contractors and note how long you have worked with them and any other characteristics that support your equity goals, such as supporting women-owned (WBE) or minority-owned business enterprises (MBE). Make it a practice to conduct a Request for Proposals (RFP) process every certain number of years, providing an opportunity for others to bid. Ask employees, board members or commissioners, partner organizations and workforce development organizations to share the RFP with their community. Develop a rubric based on the RFP parameters that applies a logical, quantitative point system to assess each proposal in order to avoid unconscious bias being the reason for your decision.

FUTURE PRESERVATION JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Several funders are leading the way to support organizations that are led by preservationists

of color, building inclusive capacity, and helping to tell the full story. [Monument Lab](#), a Philadelphia-based nonprofit public art and history studio studying monuments nationwide, received a \$4 Million grant from the Mellon Foundation in 2020 to hire its first staff.²¹¹ The [African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund](#) (Action Fund), a National Trust for Historic Preservation Program led by [Brent Leggs](#), received a \$20 million gift from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott in June 2021.²¹² In January 2022, [Latinos in Heritage Conservation](#) (LHC) was awarded a \$750,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation to expand its organizational capacity.²¹³ Thanks to this new funding, [Sehila Mota Casper](#) became LHC's first Executive Director in April 2022 and the organization has hired two additional staff with a new Development Manager on the way [Figure 52]. At the same time, the Action Fund opened eight new positions. Funding for inclusive preservation work may lead to additional survey, research, planning, advocacy, curatorial and construction positions at the public and private level. The Mellon Foundation additionally funded organizational capacity building for as Asian



Figure 52: [Sehila Mota Casper](#) became [Latinos in Heritage Conservation](#)'s first Executive Director in May 2022. Photo provided with permission by Sehila Mota Casper.

and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation's [APIAHiP] enabling the organization to hire its first Executive Director, Huy Pham, in September 2023.²¹⁴

As covered in the "Fighting Climate Change through Preservation" essay, the federal [Inflation Reduction Act](#) included substantial funding for tax credits and grants to help property owners with clean energy upgrades and energy efficiency retrofits. There is an entire preservation trades sector that could be created to specialize in clean energy, energy efficiency and decarbonization assistance for historic properties, as well as managing hazardous material mitigation and salvaging deconstructed materials from reuse job sites. These jobs would be in addition to those already needed in the traditional trades.

"[Preservation's] hard fought status as a profession prepared us for jobs, but also isolated us on 'preservation island.' [We need to] engage with other professions at every level."

Randall Mason
Professor, Historic Preservation / City & Regional Planning
University of Pennsylvania Weitzman School of Design
August 20, 2019
Philadelphia, PA

Undergraduate students often ask, "How can I work in preservation?" My response sometimes surprises them. Beyond the option of a graduate academic degree, or a vocational training program, I advise that they consider entering an adjunct field. My advice is to bring their passion to a community where their influence and persuasion can change minds about preservation. Integrating preservation into other disciplines has significant potential

to create more jobs. As our field's relevance to those communities grows, it opens up new employment arenas. You do not need to be employed in a traditional preservation job to do preservation work. In fact, more good may be done by integrating an ethic for preservation into other disciplines.

Here are some of the allied fields where preservationists could make internal change, resulting in future strategic impact:

- Archaeology
- Architecture and Landscape Architecture
- Banking and Finance (including thinking of new financial tools and making funding more accessible)
- Clean Energy Policy and Infrastructure
- Climate Change Resilience Work
- Communications and Marketing
- Community Organizing
- Community and Real Estate Development
- Computer Science (think new kinds of survey tools or virtual reality tours)
- Construction and the Trades
- Cultural Anthropology
- Deconstruction
- Disability Awareness and Design
- Education
- Elected Office
- Energy Efficiency Planning, Design and Implementation
- Engineering
- Environmental Design
- Estate Planning, Family Funds and Foundations
- Governmental Affairs and Lobbying
- Hazardous Material Identification and Abatement
- Health Care (healing through preservation)
- Housing Development and Policy (including homelessness resources)

and preserving naturally occurring affordable housing [NOAH])

- Human Services
- Interior Design
- Journalism
- Law
- Museum and Cultural Work
- Nonprofits
- Policy
- Property Management
- Public Administration and Public Finance
- Public Health
- Social Justice (economic, environmental and racial)
- Social Science
- Tourism
- Regional, Rural and Urban Planning

The Relevancy Project was launched with the challenge that if we don't change our work, someone will change it for us. We can start to change the field by changing our ideas about preservation knowledge and who has it. We can change preservation pedagogy, expand our ideas about who is doing related work, and introduce preservation's valuable approaches into numerous other fields of work and study. Who we work with in the future will determine the breadth of our field and our ability to make communities better places for all. Evolving preservation pedagogy and encouraging preservation-minded people to enter other fields may well result in more job opportunities and more places saved.

A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO JOB CREATION THROUGH PRESERVATION

10 REASONS WHY... PRESERVATION NEEDS TO FOCUS ON JOB CREATION

- **The workforce of preservation-minded people willing and able to do the work needs to grow** if we are going to have any impact in the areas that will make us more relevant to more people. Changing what we do, and how we do our work, requires more capacity – knowledge, funding and time, but people most of all.
- **So, too, does having a diverse workforce**, which creates stronger teams and ensures preservation tells a truthful and comprehensive history of our nation.
- **Funders have made large gifts to support programs and organizations focusing on underrepresented history.** Funding for inclusive preservation work may lead to additional survey, research, planning, advocacy, curatorial and construction positions at the public and private level.
- **Increasing our field's diversity depends, in part, on the accessibility and relevance of required education.** Both access to a preservation degree and the curriculum that underpins it need reform.
- **Many professional preservation jobs require a Master's degree.** The average Master of Arts degree in the U.S. costs \$72,800. Tuition is likely a barrier for low- to moderate-income students who want to enter the field.
- **More than half of all college students leave school with student loan debt.** Combine that with low pay for entry-level preservation jobs and the high cost of living in many communities and it is a recipe to ensure only high-income individuals, or those with supplemental incomes, work in preservation.
- **Preservation education focuses predominantly on philosophies developed over 40 years ago** and largely centers on administering preservation regulation. Educators and allies have called on the National Council for Preservation Education to reform and decolonize preservation pedagogy to support racial equity in the field.
- **Some people are interested in working directly with historic building materials.** The rehabilitation construction sector is expected to grow. However, not enough people are entering trades apprenticeship programs to replace the 40% of construction workers that are expected to retire. We have an opportunity to make it easier to enter the preservation trades.
- **The federal [Inflation Reduction Act](#) will prompt job creation in clean energy**, energy efficiency and decarbonization for historic properties, as well as managing hazardous material mitigation and salvaging deconstructed materials from reuse job sites.
- **You do not need to be employed in a traditional preservation job to do preservation work.** Integrating preservation into other disciplines has significant potential to create more jobs. As our field's relevance to those communities grows, it opens up new employment arenas.

10 IDEAS TO CREATE MORE JOBS THROUGH PRESERVATION

- **Engage with local trades and workforce development partners**, and/or in [the Campaign for Historic Trades](#), to find ways to engage people in your community to enter the preservation trades.
- **Celebrate craftworkers and heighten their profile as valued members of the preservation field.** Build relationships with trades training programs to have programs and mentors available. Name the workers as part of awards programs, provide features and stories in printed and social media, create positions on boards for craftworkers, encourage networking at events.
- **Ensure that scholarships are available** to enter the preservation trades or college programs.
- **Create more scholarship programs for students from underrepresented communities** in preservation to enter educational and training programs. Ensure that these scholarship programs are enough to provide meaningful support. Provide additional supports with the scholarship, including mentoring and help with internship and job placement, if requested.
- **Update preservation curriculum and reform and decolonize preservation pedagogy** to support racial equity in the field.
- **Search committees must be honest with candidates about performance expectations** including workload, expected time commitment and how, and on what metrics, the person will be evaluated.
- **Be people centric.** Ensure employees' wellbeing, health and safety by providing living-wage pay and benefits, a self-determined hybrid or remote work and schedule (if possible), reasonable work hours and workload, funding and time off for professional development, coaching and mentoring and an annual performance evaluation. Consider expansive benefits like housing assistance and repaying student loans.
- **Provide and engage in anti-racism, JEDIA, and unconscious bias training** in your workplace.
- **Encourage people interested in preservation work to consider multiple learning options**, including college and vocational training, as well as entering allied fields. Provide a list of these institutions and fields and engage in conversation to help engage the person in finding the right fit for their interests.
- **Make it a practice to conduct a Request for Proposals (RFP) process every certain number of years**, providing an opportunity for other contractors to bid beyond your existing relationships. Develop a rubric based on the RFP criteria that applies a logical, quantitative assessment in order to avoid unconscious bias being the reason for your decision.

SUPPORTING DATA

- The National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE) lists 63 historic preservation and allied academic programs with a cumulative enrollment of over 2,200 students. There may not be enough open positions in a given year to accommodate all of the graduating students.
- Research shows that men apply for jobs when they meet an average of 60% of the criteria. Yet, women and other people who are systematically marginalized tend to only apply if they meet every requirement.

- It is [illegal in 21 states to ask a job candidate about their pay history](#). Knowledge of pay rate can cause a supervisor to have unconscious bias in deciding whether to offer.
- As of August 2022, over half of U.S. workers reported their [wages are not keeping up with inflation](#). The [wage gap is widening](#) even further between higher and lower wage earners, including in the cultural resource management sector.
- The latest [Bureau of Labor Statistics nonprofit wage report](#) (2016) showed that nonprofit workers earn more than their for-profit counterparts do. The report recognizes that there is an inequity in this figure: nonprofit service workers receive a wage advantage, sales and office workers are at parity with their for-profit counterparts, and management and professional workers are at a pay disadvantage.
- Women not-for-profit workers are at an even greater disadvantage with [our pay still .83 to every dollar](#) a man earns.
- The pandemic changed worker expectations about the ability to choose their own workplace and work hours with 95% of knowledge workers wanting the [flexibility to make their own schedule and location decisions](#).
- Recent data from the July 2022 [“Status of Historic Trades in America”](#) report by PlaceEconomics, created for The Campaign for Historic Trades, quantifies that 1.3 million workers are now employed in building rehabilitation and that 165,000 new jobs are created annually in this sector. This number is expected to grow.
- According to 2021 data, the Associated General Contractors of America report that 89% of contractors are having difficulty finding craft workers.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- [“Academic Programs.”](#) National Council for Preservation Education, undated.
- [“ACHP Traditional Trades Training Policy Statement.”](#) Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, October 19, 2020.
- Aidoo, Fallon Samuels, PhD, Tejpaal Singh Bainiwal, Caroline S. Cheong, PhD, Laura A. Dominguez, MHP, Sarah Zenaida Gould, PhD, Michelle G. Magalong, PhD, Raymond W. Rast, PhD, Andrea Roberts, PhD, and Amber N. Wiley, PhD. [“Response to NCPE Open Letter.”](#) August 13, 2020.
- [“NCHP Mini-Con: Organizing Your History Workplace.”](#) National Council on Public History, August 26, 2022.
- PlaceEconomics. [“Status of Historic Trades in America.”](#) The Campaign for Historic Trades, July 2022.
- Smith, Kelly Anne. [“The Inflation Reduction Act Is Now Law – Here’s What It Means For You.”](#) Forbes Advisor, August 23, 2022.
- Wells, Jeremy C., Manish Chalana, Steven Hoffman and Barry Stiefe. [“A Summary of Preservation Education in Relation to Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Social Justice and Some Recommendations.”](#) Equity and Inclusion in Preservation Education Committee of the National Council for Preservation Education, February 2022.

EMPLOYMENT TOOLS

- [“Careers in Preservation.”](#) Advisory Council on Historic Preservation undated.
- [Histpres.com “is the best and only dedicated resource for young and emerging professionals.”](#)
*Note: this webpage may contains links to employment and internship opportunities that do not list compensation. Please see Sarahmarsom.com for strategies to advocate for pay transparency as part of labor equity.
- [JobLink: Historic Preservation & Public History Employment Sources.](#) *See note above, which may also apply to JobLink.
- [“Self-Advocacy in Employment Toolkit.”](#) National Federation of the Blind, undated. (An employment self-advocacy toolkit to protect the rights of employees and job applicants with disabilities.)

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Traditional Trades Training Initiative](#)
- [American College of the Building Arts](#) (Charleston, SC)
- [Auburn University’s Rural Studio](#) (Newbern, AL)
- [The Campaign for Historic Trades](#)
- [HistoriCorps](#)
- Marsom, Sarah. [“Call to Action: Labor Equity in Preservation,”](#) June 25, 2020, and [“Call to Action: Labor Equity Campaign Phase 2,”](#) August 1, 2021. Sarahmarsom.com.
- [National Park Service’s Traditional Trades Advancement Program](#)
- [National Trust for Historic Preservation HOPE Crew](#)
- [“Preservation Priority: Preservation Trades and Workforce Development.”](#) Preservation Priorities Task Force, National Preservation Partners Network and National Trust for Historic Preservation, Fall 2021.
- [Preservation Trades Network](#)
- [Revolution Workshop](#) (Chicago, IL)

PRESERVATIONISTS AS STORYTELLERS

PRESERVATIONISTS AS STORYTELLERS

ESSAY PROMPTS:

1. Do you feel that storytelling is how preservationists should convey the importance of place? Why or why not?
2. Think about a great storyteller in your life. What are some of their memorable stories? What made them memorable?
3. Would you consider yourself a good storyteller? How do you know? What would others say?
4. What training would you need to be a more confident storyteller?

A group of 30 third graders sat waiting for my tour to begin. Their heads swiveled back and forth excitedly as they took in the overwhelming interior of the [Minnesota State Capitol](#) [Figure 53]. It was my job as their tour guide to make sense of what they were seeing. I dutifully followed my script that peppered in dates of construction, architects,

materials, symbolism and facts about our past legislators. As our hour went on, the fidgeting increased as the listening decreased. I was discouraged when my amazing facts about the building's 20 kinds of marble did not excite them. Of course they didn't, because nine-year-olds don't have the life experience to provide the context for why facts like this have meaning. Though I was sharing my knowledge, they were no more knowledgeable at the tour's end. The facts I shared were meaningless without the context to understand the information. It is easy to ignore something you find meaningless. I had the opportunity to spark curiosity, and a love for historic places, in these kids. Instead, they may have grown into adults who find history and historic places boring.

Self-proclaimed history-hating adults that I have talked with, who went through the U.S.

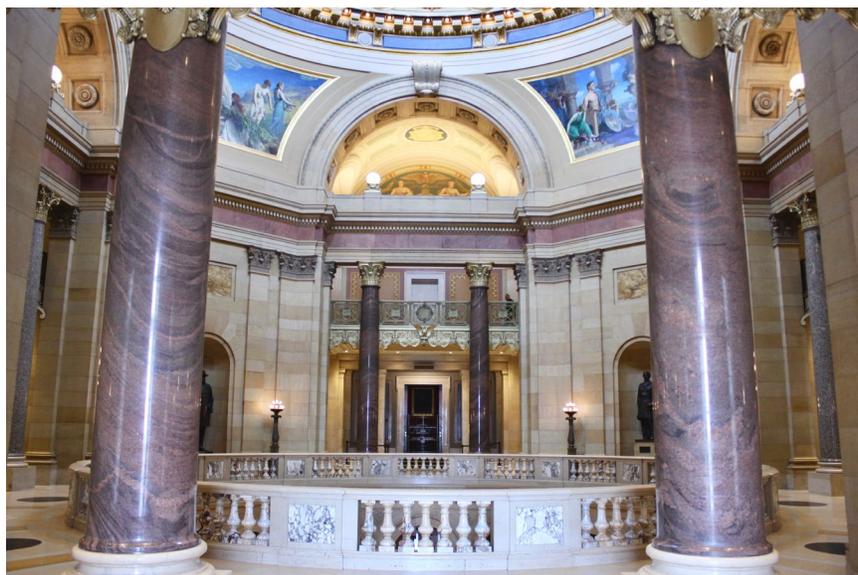


Figure 53: [Minnesota State Capitol](#) Rotunda, St. Paul. Photo by SarahLilja, February 25, 2018, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

“Our work needs to be less about architecture and more about the stories historic buildings tell.”

Jennifer Meisner

Historic Preservation Officer

King County Department of Natural

Resources and Parks – Historic

Preservation Program

November 14, 2019

Seattle, WA

K-12 school system, often blame their history teacher. The instruction method is more likely the culprit than the instructor. U.S. history pedagogy puts facts before meaning. Students memorize and regurgitate events, places, dates and names, or at least this is what many adults recollect from their history courses. How many retained the information that explains the systems that we live within or that we are fighting against? We do not remember what we did not understand and we cannot value what we have forgotten.²¹⁵ How do we make preservation more relevant to more people? We need to start with how we share our knowledge: tell a great story.

WHY IS STORYTELLING IMPORTANT?

Study the cognitive science of storytelling and it is a truly brilliant knowledge-sharing device. Storytelling has been a principal information delivery system for most of human history and, although methods differ, [storytelling is universal](#) to all of the world's cultures.²¹⁶ Why is storytelling brilliant? Because it stimulates long-term memory-making in several ways. First, a great story captivates and entertains us. [Neuroscience research shows](#) that when we are having fun, our brain “associates reward and pleasure with information, strengthen[s] and broaden[s] memory

networks” and taps into both our attention-focusing and mind-wandering neural modes.²¹⁷ Because having fun puts us in a good mood, this produces dopamine that enhances the brain's ability to focus on the information, “reinforces the memory and makes it easier to remember.”²¹⁸ Storytellers also employ mnemonic techniques that create associative pathways in the listener's brain to remember and recall information, including visualization, rhyme and rhythm.²¹⁹ Repetitive storytelling included in rituals and ceremonies enhances long-term storage and avoids [the brain's active dumping of useless information](#).²²⁰ Listening to stories as part of a shared social experience further reinforces feelings of happiness through the release of dopamine and humans' universal desire to belong to a group.²²¹ When we tell a story about people and historic places that is entertaining and introduces or reinforces knowledge, especially in a group setting, we create valuable, memorable and emotionally beneficial experiences.

“Storytelling is a part of human identity. It is about valuing the heritage that we collectively hold, that we all share, that connects us and gives our lives meaning.”

Chere Jiusto

Former Executive Director

Preserve Montana

September 18, 2020

Helena, MT (via video conference)

WHAT MAKES A GREAT STORY?

Historic places have incredible stories to tell, but we need to be their storytellers [Figure 54]. People cannot see stories by looking at a place. There are often layers of history, as

well, which make a place's stories more interesting, but perhaps more difficult to tell. Telling a great story takes work. It is far more than simply providing information. The American Press Institute tells journalists that a great story makes important news interesting and that the news' treatment trumps the topic.²²²

A great story has a number of vital components. In a 2012 [TED Talk](#), Pixar filmmaker Andrew Stanton shared his method for crafting a compelling, heartwarming story like "WALL-E" and "Finding Nemo."²²³

1. A compelling story makes you care.
2. A strong theme runs through the story.
3. The story promises to lead somewhere.
4. The storyline is not predictable. Change is fundamental in a story because life is always changing.
5. The audience has to work a little through deductive reasoning.
6. The story evokes wonder in the audience and holds them still.
7. The ending is uncertain.
8. Your main character is likable.
9. Characters have something that drives them.
10. A great story deepens our understanding of who we are as human beings.
11. Our stories should express our personal values.

Filmmakers at Stillmotion have a Vimeo series about storytelling's [four P's](#): places, people, plot and purpose, which may be easier to digest and remember than Stanton's list above.²²⁴ However, both are helpful when considering how to create and share your historic place's stories.

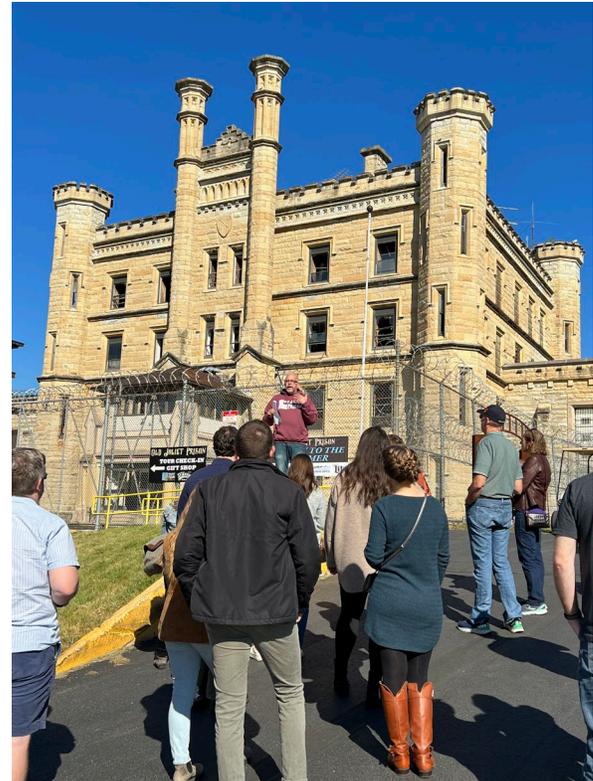


Figure 54: Landmarks Illinois' Regional Advocacy Manager Quinn Adamowski (center) begins a tour of the [Old Joliet Prison](#) in Joliet, Illinois, October 2022. Rather than focus on the buildings' architects, dates of construction or style, Adamowski's interpretation focuses on the prison as a site of conscience inspiring discussion about the harms of mass incarceration. Photo by Landmarks Illinois.

“Colloqate’s design justice process begins with honoring the [griots](#), the traveling storytellers in communities. There are griots in every community. We listen [and] find those lived experiences.”¹

Bryan Lee, Jr.
Design Principal
Colloqate
January 21, 2020
Chicago, IL

LEARN HOW TO TELL A GREAT STORY

Preservation training does not include storytelling. Professional degree programs train us to conduct archival research and to write historic significance case statements. Though we may read these as compelling stories, the public does not. Period of significance, architectural styles and character-defining features are preservation jargon. Basing a tour around these details is a surefire way to make people feel like outsiders.

Preparing a relevant story requires knowing your audience, their interests and their level of knowledge. For example, my third-grade tour goers knew little to nothing about how many kinds of marble are typically in a historic building. Twenty kinds of marble could be typical, for all they knew. However, a group of tourists who have visited many state capitols would understand that this fact is quite extraordinary. Knowing the audience will guide what information you include and exclude. Storytellers have to choose what they can and cannot share in the allotted time. What is enough information to provide context and meaning, and pique the audience's interest for more, but not overwhelm them?

How do you prepare if you do not know your audience? Prepare stories that have universal narratives that appeal to anyone. We can connect to our shared humanity through stories of family, home, food and drink, personal, cultural and artistic expression and larger concepts like heroism, fairness, ethics and grief [Figure 55]. These facets of life help to shape our identity and are deeply personal. Connect the humanity of people from the past with those in the present. Tell their stories of challenge and triumph, which we can all relate to. Memorable, relevant history is relatable



Figure 55: The room in [Paulo Agbayani Retirement Village](#), near Bakersfield, California, where [Cesar Chavez](#) fasted in 1988 to raise awareness about agricultural pesticide use poisoning farmworkers and their children. It is the setting to tell Chavez's story of heroism and sacrifice for workers' rights. Photo by NPS, January 27, 2020, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

and something a person can learn from to use in their own life.

MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

We can make historic places more meaningful to people if we tell better and more memorable stories about them. Remember that for preservation to be relevant to a person, it must be something that: 1) they care about; 2) is useful to them; and, 3) that they want to do something about [Figure 56]. Several interviewees for The Relevancy Project emphasized that preservationists need to communicate better about the work that we are already doing. As Nina Simon said in her [“Art of Relevance” TED Talk](#), we cannot be relevant by fiat.²²⁵ We must educate ourselves about and adopt the language and methods that reach, engage and resonate with new audiences. Preservationist and communications expert [Cindy Olnick](#), former



Figure 56: [The Skyline Council of Landmarks Illinois](#) and [People for Community Recovery](#) hosted a February 2022 heart bomb at Chicago's Altgeld Gardens and Philip Murray Homes to tell the story of public housing communities and the environmental justice movement. The site was added to the [National Register](#) in April 2022. Photo by Lewis Purdy.

Los Angeles Conservancy communications director, has written about this need to [reframe preservation](#). She cites the work of the American Association for State and Local History's "[Reframing History](#)" initiative as a relevant example for preservation. Once again, this is about preservation changing our practices to meet people where they are and not turning the volume up on what we are already doing.

"The greatest need in preservation is to have nonprofit organizations that help local advocates, to storytell and to make the case."

Emilio Padilla, AIA
Project Director
JGMA
March 13, 2020
Chicago, IL

My unremarkable performance as a historic site guide taught me the importance of storytelling. I took storytelling and improvisation classes at [The Second City](#) in Chicago and they have served me well as a frequent public speaker. If you are looking for storytelling resources, please reference the list below. Start with perfecting your own story of why you are a preservationist. Your entertaining and informative story might just change people's minds about history and build future advocates to sustain our historic places.

A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO PRESERVATIONISTS AS STORYTELLERS

10 REASONS WHY...

PRESERVATIONISTS NEED TO BECOME BETTER STORYTELLERS

- **We can make historic places more meaningful to people if we tell better and more memorable stories about them.** When we tell a story about people and historic places that is entertaining and introduces or reinforces knowledge, especially in a group setting, we create valuable, memorable and emotionally beneficial experiences.
- **Preparing a relevant story requires knowing your audience,** their interests and their level of knowledge. Knowing the audience will guide what information you include and exclude.
- **Telling a great story takes work** because a great story has a number of vital components: places, people, plot and purpose.
- **Prepare stories that have universal narratives that appeal to anyone.** We can connect to our shared humanity through stories of family, home, food and drink, personal, cultural and artistic expression and larger concepts like heroism, fairness, ethics and grief. These facets of life help to shape our identity and are deeply personal.
- **Period of significance, architectural styles and character-defining features are preservation jargon.** Basing a tour around these details is a surefire way to make people feel like outsiders because you have to have the context to understand why these facts are connected and purposeful.
- **Historic places have incredible stories to tell,** but we need to be their storytellers. People cannot see stories by looking at a place.
- **People are interested in the way that communities are changing. “Preservation” is foreign to people.** They want a connectedness to where they belong in the world. When preservation is inclusive and thoughtful, it can be very powerful.
- **Connect the humanity of people from the past with those in the present.** Memorable, relevant history is relatable and something a person can learn from to use in their own life.
- **Preservation cannot be relevant by fiat.** Several interviewees for The Relevancy Project emphasized that preservationists need to communicate better about the work that we are already doing. Just because we say we are relevant does not make this true.
- **We must educate ourselves about and adopt the language and methods that reach, engage and resonate with new audiences.** This is about preservation changing our practices to meet people where they are and not turning the volume up on what we are already doing.

10 IDEAS TO BECOME BETTER STORYTELLERS

- **Take classes in storytelling** to become better and more comfortable storytellers.
- **Start with perfecting your own story** of why you are a preservationist. Your entertaining and informative story might just change people’s minds about history and build future advocates to sustain our historic places.

- **Honor community storytellers** and their lived experiences by featuring their voices in research, documentation and programming.
- **Conduct more oral histories** to generate more archival documentation – do this in conjunction with partners in historical societies, genealogical societies, public history programs
- **Provide platforms to invite and engage young people as storytellers about their own communities** –build programming with them. Discuss and collaborate on who will make programmatic decisions and introduce or present the program. Sponsor a local school program for young people to talk about place that is important to them and why.
- **Nonprofit and governmental awards programs are a great place for storytelling** to engage people's emotions about place. They leave thinking, "I can do that."
- **Hire photographers and graphic designers to make things visually interesting.** The [Tucson Preservation Foundation](#) did this in preparation for the listing of Tucson's [Sunshine Mile](#) to the 11 Most Endangered in Tucson.
- **Create more digital media to make it easier to see, understand and share the story places tell.** See several of the models and examples below.
- **Learn to use social media platforms effectively to share our stories through visual and concise storytelling.** See this Constant Contact guide, "[Social Media for Nonprofits: A Comprehensive Guide](#)," which has basic tips that apply to governments, foundations and corporations, as well. Use social media to publish a few things that you are working on each week – a "Did you know?" post.
- **Think of different ways of storytelling that accommodate different learning styles or accommodating people with disabilities.** For example, create more temporary and permanent interpretive signage around communities, not historic markers.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

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- Bowles, Meg, Catherine Burns, Jenifer Hixson, Sarah Austin Jenness, and Kate Tellers. "[How to Tell a Story: The Essential Guide to Memorable Storytelling from The Moth](#)," Crown, April 26, 2022.
- Choi, Amy S. "[How stories are told around the world](#)." IDEAS.TED.COM, March 17, 2015.
- Hooper, Riley. "[Storytelling the stillmotion way: Part 1](#)." Vimeo, April 17, 2013. Filmmakers at Stillmotion have a Vimeo series about storytelling's **four P's**: places, people, plot and purpose.
- Preservationist and communications expert [Cindy Olnick](#), former Los Angeles Conservancy communications director, has written about this need to [reframe preservation](#). Olnick cites the work of the American Association for State and Local History's "[Reframing History](#)" initiative as a relevant example for preservation.
- Shukla, Aditya. "[Why Fun, Curiosity & Engagement Improves Learning: Mood, Senses, Neurons, Arousal, Cognition](#)." Cognition Today, August 23, 2020.

- [“Storytelling in Preservation.”](#) Panel Discussion Vimeo Recording, National Preservation Partners Network, undated.
- [“What makes a good story?”](#) American Press Institute, undated.

EDUCATIONAL TOOLS

- EdApp has a list of [“10 Free Storytelling Classes,”](#) though five of them charge a fee. Note: I have not used or reviewed any of these resources, but provide them as several free options.
- Georgetown University’s [certificate program in social impact storytelling.](#)
- Olnick, Cindy. [“Messaging Guide for Local Preservation Programs.”](#) National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, 2023.
- Stanton, Andrew. [“The clues to a great story.”](#) TED2012, undated.
- [“Storytelling Tips & Tricks” by The Moth.](#)

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- k. kennedy Whiter’s [\(un\)Redact the Facts™](#) and blog, [unredactthefacts](#), is a multifaceted call to action by a Black woman architect and preservationist to use active, accurate and complete language and grammar in all forms of storytelling about enslaved Black people and their White enslavers. Using passive voice is a way to perpetuate white supremacy. The call to action also brings needed attention to proper attribution. When activism influences your actions, as k. kennedy Whiter has done for my own blog post, properly attribute who influenced your thinking and behaviors – and tell them that it has done so. The following is how Vu Le of the [Nonprofit AF blog](#) attributed Whiter’s advocacy and intellectual property: “I want to give thanks and credit to k. kennedy Whiter, Architect and Founder of (un)Redact the Facts™, for giving me feedback and wording to revise the above two paragraphs.”
#CiteBlackWomen, #theActiveVoicelsMyLoveLanguage,
#theActiveVoicelsOurLoveLanguage, @unRedacTheFacts and @CiteBlackWomen

STORYTELLING MODELS

- [99% Invisible](#) and [The Moth](#)
- [Atlas Obscura](#)
- [Cheap Old Houses™](#)
- Christiana Limniatis’, Preservation Buffalo Niagara’s Director of Preservation Services, reels on [PBN’s YouTube page](#) and [Instagram reels](#).
- [PreserveCast](#) and [Save As: NextGen Heritage Conservation](#)
- Shermann “Dilla” Thomas’, a Chicago urban historian, [TikTok](#).
- [Urban Archive](#) is a digital storytelling app out of New York City, which has won a [2020 Webby Award](#). It includes historic photos along with the stories.
- Zines are short, self-published works to present one’s perspective on a topic. Indow Window hosted a “How to Make a Zine: Historic Preservation Stories,” panel discussion in May 2020. The panel discussion is available on [YouTube](#). Indow has an entire [resource page](#) on how to make zines for community communication.

FUNDING PRESERVATION'S EVOLUTION

FUNDING PRESERVATION'S EVOLUTION

ESSAY PROMPTS:

1. What is your vision for the future of your preservation organization? In what areas do you want to work to be a solution? What impact is your work having and where?
2. How confident or concerned are you that building a more relevant preservation movement will engage or alienate your donors?
3. Is this feeling borne out of evidence or is it a feeling? Have you begun to speak with your supporters about your vision for change?
4. Are your finances strong, stable, mediocre or dire? Do you have stronger areas of your finances that you can focus on to better balance the weaker points? Would you change any ways that you bring in revenue?
5. Have you sought advice to improve your finances? Can they assist with a financial and fundraising plan to build the foundation for incremental change?

After reading about the breadth of work being done to evolve preservation, I hope that you agree that change is necessary. The scale of change may feel overwhelming if you have taken in the many topics covered in The Relevancy Guidebook. Where to begin is one thing, especially when so many of us are experiencing burnout and/or lack capacity to add anything more to our plates. Add to that the risks that accompany change. One risk is that not every volunteer, employee, supporter,

commissioner, client or elected official will see this new work as “preservation.” Their support may end when the work no longer focuses on their values, beliefs and identities.

“Preservationists have to prepare themselves to lose donors. We have to be able to cultivate funds from non-white donors.”

Jeffrey (Free) Harris
Independent consultant
Former Member, Virginia Historic Resources Board
Former Director of Diversity, National Trust for Historic Preservation (2003-2008)
September 11, 2020
Hampton, VA (via video conference)

Many of us would say that there is no extra support to spare to make up for lost donors. There is already too little funding for our operational, programmatic and strategic needs. Some may see alienating existing supporters as irresponsible, foolish or dangerous. Yet, is it ethical to continue with the status quo just to secure funding?²²⁶ Are we essentially preserving the preservationists? An August 2021 blog post, [“The joy of fundraising.”](#) by Nonprofit AF author Vu Le encapsulates what is wrong with this transactional fundraising and what is right about fundraising for your values.²²⁷ That is where truly joyful, authentic fundraising begins.

“Funding is the biggest factor on everything.”

Tyrell Anderson and Lori Gonzalez
The Decay Devils
March 14, 2020
Gary, IN

GO AT YOUR OWN PACE

The Relevancy Guidebook includes a list of small-to-large actionable steps to enhance your organization's relevance. I hope that you are motivated, if not excited, to join in the movement to evolve the nearly 60-year-old preservation field.²²⁸ However, each organization is at its own state of readiness and there is no set of one-size-fits-all steps to take. Go at a sustainable pace for you and your organization.

“We’re trying to work for social justice, but most of our funders have benefited from exploitative corporations. So how do we take money from them? It’s hard to be picky. It’s hard to create a just world when you’re taking money from the unjust.”

Alissa Shelton

Former Executive Director

Brick + Beam Detroit

April 10, 2020

Hamtramck, MI (via video conference)

Knowing your organization's values and principles provides a strong foundation to guide change and to fundraise for your evolution. Landmarks Illinois began discussing how our organization needed to change in 2017 as we defined our [organizational values](#). Conversations continued as we explored how we wanted our work to be more relevant and impactful. Our preparations included hosting a critical cultural competency training (2020) and developing our [guiding principles](#) (2021). We spent five years talking with hundreds of people about our questions and ideas. Through these conversations, we learned where we already had support and we raised funds to develop evolutionary action plans.

A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan and organizational Transformational Plan are under development [Figure 57]. This is all to say that you can implement thoughtful, systemic and transformative change while pacing yourself. You do not want to invest people in transformational change and then have to put it on hold due to poor planning or burnout. This just engenders mistrust. Start at a pace that you can sustain, build excitement for your vision and begin garnering support through frequent communication to make the change you want to see in preservation.



Figure 57: An April 2023 Landmarks Illinois (LI) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan workshop to develop equitable, inclusive and accessible preservation strategies funded in part by a gift from The Alphawood Foundation. Pictured from front to back: LI Dir. of Corp. Giving & Events Tiffanie Williams, LI DEI Collaborative Co-Chairs Ciere Boatright and Smitha Vasan and Collaborative member Alex Wolking. Photo by Landmarks Illinois.

BEGIN BUILDING NEW FUNDER RELATIONSHIPS IN ADVANCE

As Landmarks Illinois has implemented its vision to move preservation forward and to build a relevant movement, a handful of major donors and major donor prospects have stopped supporting our work. The board and



Figure 58: Allison Toonen-Talamo (L), Landmarks Illinois (LI) former board Vice Chair, and Erika Block, current board Vice Chair (R), have been ambassadors attracting new audiences to the organization's events. They are pictured here with Tiffanie Williams, Director of Corporate Giving & Events, at LI's 2023 Preservation Forward fundraiser that Erika chaired. Photo by DKindler.

staff discussed and prepared for this risk by evaluating our reserves and reaffirming our commitment. To date, four major donors have left, but another four expanded their giving because they felt seen and welcomed in our preservation community. When we aligned our operations with our values, principles and vision, our team's fundraising passion, joy and success followed, as Vu Le expressed. There were certainly moments when success seemed precarious. We invest our time and a bit of ourselves in building donor relationships. Seeing longtime supporters walk away felt terrible. What kept us going was the knowledge that we were building an inclusive and welcoming environment for others who had not seen themselves represented in preservation. It is never too early to begin building meaningful relationships with those who value our work.

IDENTIFY AND CULTIVATE YOUR AMBASSADORS

Yes, but how do you do this – especially if you have a small (or no) staff? The first place to

start is with your organization's ambassadors. They may be your volunteers, board and committee members, staff and their family and friends, funders, event goers, contractors and consultants, partner organizations and people who have benefitted from your work [Figure 58].

How do you deploy your ambassadors? You may be surprised how willing people are to engage their network when they are excited about your vision and they are asked to help in a specific way. Ask your ambassadors to talk about your organization with others, volunteer and bring people to events, sign colleagues up for your newsletter or support your fundraising. Ask your ambassadors for introductions to foundation and donor-advised fund board members, corporate marketing and charitable giving staff that they know.

Your ambassadors can also be a lifeline of strength, courage and reassurance as challenges to your vision arise, and they can encourage the staff and each other and be a cheerleader when needed. They can make public statements on your behalf, lend their expertise or reputation to a new project or serve as thought leaders as you implement change. You may need to ask that they increase their giving to offset any losses. Thus, it is very important to ensure that you have their participation and commitment early in the process.

IDEAS FOR SPECIFIC DONOR CATEGORIES

Lack of adequate funding was one of the top concerns for The Relevancy Project interviewees. There is not enough funding to expand needed capacity to manage our existing workload, let alone conceptualizing and implementing organizational

transformation. The pervasive resource desert that we work in is a relevance bellwether. Inspiring exceptions to this rule include the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund at the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Latinos in Heritage Conservation, both of which have received substantial funding. As you work with your organizational ambassadors and build meaningful relationships with prospective funders, consider the following funding statistics and ideas to capture new and expanded revenue.

INDIVIDUAL

Individuals continue to provide the vast majority of U.S. philanthropic giving at 77% of total giving (bequests included). They far outpace foundation giving at 19% and corporations at just 4% of overall charitable giving [Figure 59].²²⁹ From 2020 to 2021, giving to arts, culture and humanities organizations saw an estimated increase of 27.5%. Donors are also giving significantly more to public-society benefit organizations like civil rights advocates, environmental and

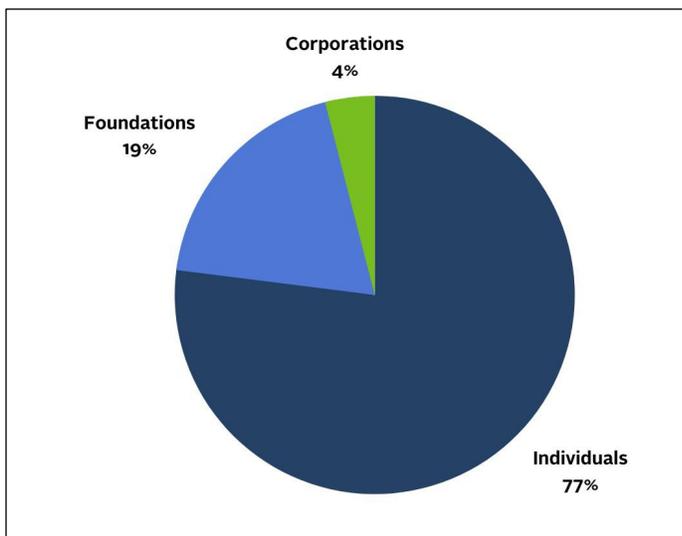


Figure 59: Overall Charitable Giving in the U.S., 2021 [Giving USA Report](#).

animal organizations, health and human services, which are areas that intersect with preservation.²³⁰ Here are ideas to identify and cultivate individual donors:

- Review the IRS Form 990's of partner organizations doing the work that you are interested in moving into. See if you have any donors in common who would support both organizations' work. Show this list to your ambassadors to see if they know any of these donors. NOTE: We are not looking to plunder donors, but to align with existing donors where our work intersects.
- Attend these organization's events and meet others interested in this work. Talk about how preservation intersects. Look at the program supporters to see if you have donors in common who may not know you are working in this space.
- Talk with the people your ambassadors bring to your events. Find out about their interests. Later, explore if they have donor advised funds or if they have connections to foundations.
- Put on programs where you begin to talk about your interest in this work, bring in experts and/or focus on success stories to present about impact.
- Find and publish data about this kind of work in your community to frame the opportunity and scale of the issue. Share this information with your members and invite their engagement. See who follows up with you and begin cultivating them as a volunteer and/or donor.



Figure 60: [Cristo Rey St. Martin College Prep](#) in Waukegan, Illinois, received a 2021 Landmarks Illinois Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Award, Legacy Award for Innovation. Project architects JGMA adaptively reused a vacant K-Mart store for the high school exemplifying Landmarks Illinois' efforts to redefine what is considered preservation. Photos provided by JGMA.

- Honor projects in this program area to introduce case studies and concepts to your members and donors. Note and cultivate the donors who come for those projects [Figure 60].
- Hold tours at sites where you want to work with the approval of, and in collaboration with, local partners.
- Send articles about the work to interested donors.
- Invite donors to attend conferences about this work with you.
- Though this may be obvious, remember to ask your prospective donors for financial support. People do not typically donate unless they are asked.

FOUNDATIONS

The good news is that foundation giving has increased in 10 of the last 11 years to 19% of total philanthropic giving. Yet, investing in building foundation relationships and applying for grants takes considerable time with uncertain results. Weigh the prospective return-on-investment of applying for grants carefully. Consider an incremental plan to add

foundation funding and look for signals, such as invitations to apply, that your application will be successful. Here are ideas to cultivate foundation donors:

- Look at which foundations are funding partner organizations that are doing the work that you want to initiate or expand. Ask your existing foundation partners if they would introduce you to these foundations.
- When attending partner events, look for foundations supporting the event that have program giving areas that align with your work. Follow-up with them after the event.
- Research the foundations' giving areas, develop a set of talking points about how your work aligns with their priorities and then ask for an introductory meeting.
- Prepare information about the scale of the opportunity or issue and how your project or services will provide a solution.

- Share relevant data and articles about your aspirational work with foundation partners.
- Offer to take funders on a tour of prospective projects and meet with partners and advocates.
- Some foundations disallow including staff time in grant application leaving the organization to raise separate funds for program administration. Discuss why overhead is a necessary part of the program expenses, because we need to have the staff to manage a program.

CORPORATIONS

Corporate charitable giving is the smallest giving sector at just 4%, inclusive of cash and in-kind giving. Consider this 4% compared to individuals' 77% giving when allocating your fundraising capacity. I am confident that preservation organizations can raise greater than 4% of our charitable giving from corporate partners. At Landmarks Illinois, our [Annual Corporate Sponsor Program](#), and corporate in-kind giving, accounts for over 25% of our charitable giving. Here are a few ideas to cultivate corporate donors:

- Design a corporate sponsor program to outline benefits and expectations. It is important to have clear parameters to ensure consistent treatment. Again, you can start small, with only one or two corporate partners.
- Identify the corporations (design, professional services, contractors and subcontractors) involved with preservation projects or on projects relating to your organization' vision. We make it a practice to build a long-term, and not transactional, relationship with our corporate sponsors, as they enjoy providing more than just dollars. Our corporate partners also donate expertise, ideas, feedback, services and contacts [Figure 61].
- Ask your existing corporate partners to identify others that might want to become corporate sponsors. They are unlikely to identify their competitors, but they may introduce you to providers in other areas of the field.
- Talk with the corporate partners that attend your, or partner organizations', events. Find out about their interests.



Figure 61: Landmarks Illinois board member Joshua Freedland (center), then with the design firm WJE, an Annual Corporate Sponsor, provides a pro bono condition assessment of the Rear Erecting Shops at Pullman National Monument, Chicago, Illinois, February 2017. Photo by Landmarks Illinois.

Later, explore if there is alignment with your work.

- A corporate sponsorship does not equate to endorsing the corporation's product or services. However, you should feel comfortable having your organization's name affiliated with their company. Do you condone their business practices and believe their product is helping or doing no harm?

GOVERNMENT

The National Park Service offers [18 grant and subgrant programs](#) available to Native Hawai'iian, Tribal, local and state governments, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and nonprofits for historic preservation, traditional cultural heritage preservation and repatriation. Opportunities for change-making partnerships to qualify for these programs are substantial and exciting, as grant awards can be significant. The Council of the Cherokee Nation signed the Cherokee Nation Historic Places Preservation Fund Act on March 14, 2023, creating a new, \$1 million fund to preserve the tribe's historic sites, as well as underwrite authorized biographies of past leaders.²³¹ The funds are generated through agricultural and business leases.



NATIONAL FUND FOR CHANGE IN PRESERVATION

We need more, and more accessible, funding to support nonprofits working to make preservation more relevant. Providing general operating support, if donors do leave an organization, could keep the doors open until other donors step up. There are far too few grants and program-related investments available to support the scale of preservation's necessary change. The following funding sources provide operating and program support to implement organizational or agency change:

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation's (NTHP) [African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund](#) provides grants for organizational capacity building, programming and interpretation, project planning and capital projects to preserve African American Cultural Heritage. Depending on the request, grants range from up to \$50,000 to up to \$150,000 [Figure 62].
- The [Moe Family Fund for Statewide and Local Partners](#) at the NTHP is

Figure 62: [The Blue Bird Inn](#) in Detroit, Michigan, birthplace of bebop jazz, was awarded a 2022 [African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund](#) capital grant for rehabilitation of its interior systems. Photo by Carleton Gholz, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

available to dues-paying organizational members of the National Preservation Partners Network. Grants of up to \$10,000 are awarded to support embarking on new work or improving existing programs, in one or more of the four preservation priority areas.

- Though it is not positioned as an innovation grant, the [National Fund for Sacred Places](#), a partnership of Partners for Sacred Places and NTHP, provides substantial capital grants to religious congregations and nonprofits [Figure 63].
- Grants through the Historic Preservation Fund are available to [Certified Local Governments](#) through State Historic Preservation Offices. Projects can include surveys, National Register of Historic Places nominations and listing revisions, community planning, feasibility studies and structural assessments, public education projects and material reprinting. Projects in each one of these categories can support a more relevant preservation movement.

“Is preservation currently serving where there is the greatest need? I don’t know if we can answer that question. We [foundation program officers] have to be opportunistic to triangulate need and what the board will fund. We don’t have the luxury of asking, as the board has given us a lane of funding.”

Anonymous Program Officer
Large Family Foundation

This is a call to our major individual and foundation funders nationwide to convene a conversation about creating a fund to accelerate relevant change in preservation. An accessible national innovation fund available to any group, nonprofit or governmental agency, including projects that engage for-profit consultants, could accelerate change by providing a funding safety net as some supporters leave before others take their place. With such a fund, the preservation field would be more likely to take courageous steps toward building an inclusive, equitable and solutions-oriented movement.



Figure 63: San Xavier del Bac Mission in Tucson, Arizona, was awarded a National Fund for Sacred Places Grant as part of their 2018 Cohort. Mds08011, March 17, 2019 CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Photo unchanged.

RESOURCE SHARING

Our fundraising philosophy is that “a rising tide lifts all boats.” I enjoy helping donors find the preservation project that sparks their interest, whether it is a Landmarks Illinois or a partner’s, project. Building thoughtful, authentic relationships that center the donor’s interests fans the flame for preservation work as a whole, and may increase their philanthropy. To some, introducing a donor to another organization may make you nervous. Fundraising practices in the U.S. often create an us vs. them mentality based on a resource scarcity philosophy. The belief that we are competing for a limited pool of charitable giving drives us to guard our donor relationships and to appear desperate. This results in counterproductive philanthropic turf battles that drive a wedge between would-be partners and forces some donors to feel that they are choosing sides. How would our fundraising practices change if we believed in abundant resources – that there is enough for us all? This may seem like a Pollyanna approach, and I admit that abundance philosophy requires optimism. However, charitable giving is increasing. The pool of funds is growing. As our work becomes more relevant to more people, preservation philanthropy will increase.

Resource sharing also includes mentoring organizations that want to grow their fundraising skills. Consider providing

“Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation, Latinos in Heritage Conservation, Rainbow Heritage are all volunteer based. They have no funding. What would it look like for them to have staff? What could preservation be if that multiplicity of voices were funded?”

Michelle Magalong, PhD

President

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation (APIAHiP)

October 9, 2020

College Park, MD (via video conference)

fundraising trainings to other nonprofit organizations. The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation hosts a “Fundraising 101” course for nonprofit organizations and their “Places in Peril” sites.²³² The National Trust for Historic Preservation has provided similar major gift fundraising training to preservation nonprofits. The National Main Street Center, African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund and Partners for Sacred Places have all included fundraising skills in their technical assistance.

Ensuring your donors’ satisfaction and increasing your partners’ abilities is an investment in preservation’s future. It requires a belief in abundance. Try this approach and see how it affects, and improves, your fundraising joy and your success.

A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO FUNDING PRESERVATION'S EVOLUTION

10 REASONS WHY... PRESERVATION FUNDING NEEDS TO EVOLVE

- **The pervasive resource desert that preservationists work within is a relevance bellwether.** Lack of adequate funding was one of the top concerns for The Relevancy Project interviewees.
- **We need more, and more accessible, funding** to support nonprofits working to make preservation more relevant.
- **The scale of needed change in preservation may feel overwhelming,** including the risk that some supporters will walk away as preservation evolves. Many of us would say that there is no extra support to spare to make up for lost donors. Yet, is it ethical to continue with the status quo just to secure funding?
- **When we move away from this type of transactional fundraising to fundraising for our values** that is where truly joyful, authentic fundraising begins according to Vu Le of [Nonprofit AF](#).
- **Staff and volunteers have renewed energy and motivation when they are engaged in creating a shared vision for relevant impact.** They get excited about the future, especially when planning moves into implementation and they can see results.
- **Though some donors may walk away, others will take their place** when they see preservation as relevant to them.
- **You may be surprised how willing people are to engage their network** when they are excited about your vision and they are asked to help in a specific way.
- **Fundraising practices in the U.S. often create an “us vs. them” mentality** based on a resource scarcity philosophy. This results in counterproductive philanthropic turf battles that drive a wedge between would-be partners and forces some donors to feel that they are choosing sides.
- **How would our fundraising practices change if we believed in abundant resources** – that there is enough for us all? An abundance-based fundraising philosophy requires optimism. However, charitable giving is increasing. The pool of funds is growing.
- **As our work becomes more relevant to more people, preservation philanthropy will increase.**

10 IDEAS TO EVOLVE PRESERVATION FUNDING

- **Prepare materials in advance that frames the problem you are tackling**, how you know this is a problem and how you will affect the issue. What are your intended outcomes, and who will benefit? Whom are you engaging in the process? Work with a graphic designer and editor to ensure the material is clear and compelling.
- **Invest the time in educating donors (individuals, foundations, corporations and government)**. Try to use existing programmatic and event platforms to add components of your relevant vision. Hold tours at sites where you want to work with the approval of, and in collaboration with, local partners. Honor projects in this program area to introduce case studies and concepts. Promote articles about the work through your newsletter or social media channels. Invite interested donors to attend seminars and conferences about this work with you. Ask your ambassadors to engage new people. Cultivate the new attendees who come to programs or are representing the projects.
- **Identify the corporations (design, professional services, contractors and subcontractors) involved with preservation projects** or on projects relating to your organization's vision. We make it a practice to build a long-term, and not transactional, relationship with our corporate sponsors, as they enjoy providing more than just dollars. Our corporate partners also donate expertise, ideas, feedback, services and contacts.
- **A corporate sponsorship does not equate to endorsing the corporation's product or services**. However, you should feel comfortable having your organization's name affiliated with their company. Do you condone their business practices and believe their product is helping or doing no harm?
- **Ask your existing corporate partners to identify others** that might want to become corporate sponsors. They are unlikely to identify their competitors, but they may introduce you to providers in other areas of the field.
- **Look at which foundations are funding partner organizations** that are doing the work that you want to initiate or expand. Ask your existing foundation partners if they would introduce you to these foundations.
- **This is a call to our major individual and foundation funders nationwide** to convene a conversation about creating a fund to accelerate relevant change in preservation. An accessible national innovation fund available to any group, nonprofit or governmental agency, including projects that engage for-profit consultants, could accelerate change by providing a funding safety net as some supporters leave before others take their place.
- **Governments and foundations need to come to accept a high degree of failure** and shift away from the success/innovation/scalability model, also needing extensive metric data. Also be patient, as these projects take time (years).
- **Engage the larger preservation community in fundraising skills training**. Share the cost of training. Consider partners outside of traditional preservation organizations.
- **Share grant opportunities with your preservation community**.

SUPPORTING DATA

- From 2020 to 2021, giving to arts, culture and humanities organizations saw an estimated increase of 27.5%.
- Donors are also giving significantly more to public-society benefit organizations like civil rights advocates, environmental and animal organizations, health and human services, which are areas that intersect with preservation.
- Individuals continue to provide the vast majority of U.S. philanthropic giving at 77% of total giving (bequests included). They far outpace foundation giving at 19% and corporations at just 4% of overall charitable giving.
- The good news is that foundation giving has increased in 10 of the last 11 years to 19% of total philanthropic giving. Yet, investing in building foundation relationships and applying for grants takes considerable time with uncertain results.
- Corporate charitable giving is the smallest giving sector at just 4%, inclusive of cash and in-kind giving. Consider this 4% compared to individuals' 77% giving when allocating your fundraising capacity.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- [“CN leaders expand history registry act with \\$1M fund.”](#) Tahlequah Daily Press, March 18, 2023.
- [“Giving USA: Total U.S. charitable giving remained strong in 2021, reaching \\$484.85 billion.”](#) Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, Indiana University - Perdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), June 21, 2022.
- Ibrisevic, Ilma. [“How to Craft Your Nonprofit Organizational Values: The Complete Process.”](#) Donorbox blog, updated May 11, 2022.
- Le, Vu. [“The joy of fundraising: How fundraising can be truly, authentically joyful.”](#) Nonprofit AF, August 21, 2022.

FUNDERS

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation's (NTHP) [African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund](#) provides grants for organizational capacity building, programming and interpretation, project planning and capital projects to preserve African American Cultural Heritage.
- Grants through the Historic Preservation Fund are available to [Certified Local Governments](#) through State Historic Preservation Offices. Projects can include surveys, National Register of Historic Places nominations and listing revisions, community planning, feasibility studies and structural assessments, public education projects and material reprinting. Projects in each one of these categories can support a more relevant preservation movement.
- The Council of the Cherokee Nation signed the [Cherokee Nation Historic Places Preservation Fund Act](#) on March 14, 2023, creating a new, \$1 million fund to preserve the tribe's historic sites, as well as underwrite authorized biographies of past leaders.

- The [Moe Family Fund for Statewide and Local Partners](#) at the NTHP is available to dues-paying organizational members of the National Preservation Partners Network. Grants of up to \$10,000 are awarded to support embarking on new work or improving existing programs, in one or more of the four preservation priority areas.
- Though it is not positioned as an innovation grant, the [National Fund for Sacred Places](#), a partnership of Partners for Sacred Places and NTHP, provides substantial capital grants to religious congregations and nonprofits.
- The National Park Service offers [18 grant and subgrant programs](#) available to Native Hawai'ian, Tribal, local and state governments, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and nonprofits for historic preservation, traditional cultural heritage preservation and repatriation.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation hosts a “Fundraising 101” course for nonprofit organizations and their “Places in Peril” sites through their [Historic Preservation Institute](#).
- At Landmarks Illinois, our [Annual Corporate Sponsor Program](#), and corporate in-kind giving, accounts for over 25% of our charitable giving.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Preservationists overwhelmingly want the field to change to be more inclusive, of people and stories, and to do solutions-oriented work for the problems affecting people's lives [Figure 64]. The previous essays delved into the opportunity areas project interviewees raised most urgently. Despite our lack of consensus on the degree to which, and how, we respond to these opportunities, agreement is not a prerequisite for taking action. Many paths lead to the same destination. Each of us can pursue the ideas that are most meaningful and feasible to us and still advance toward the convergent goal of a relevant preservation movement. The more of us fostering relevant change, the more preservation will start to matter to a wider audience [Figure 65].

Again, if we don't do this challenging work, changes will be made for us and not by us.

Let me share a bit more about my own journey. Spending over 1,000 hours talking, thinking and writing about the current state of preservation, its challenges and opportunities, over the past four years has been a privilege and a burden. The Relevancy Project provided me with perspective at a breadth and depth that I could never have anticipated, but deeply value. This perspective brought many prospective futures for preservation into view and the pitfalls of inaction. It lit a fire inside



Figure 64: Many preservationists across the nation have been working to build a more relevant preservation movement. The author was proud to stand amongst several of them at an October 2022 public hearing at [Roberts Temple Church of God in Christ](#) in Chicago. Dept. of the Interior Secretary Deb Haaland held a hearing to invite public comment about the [proposal to designate](#) Roberts Temple a [National Monument](#) as the site of Emmett Till's 1955 open-casket funeral. Pictured L-R: Paula Robinson (Bronzville/Black Metropolis National Heritage Area), Corlis Moody (Quinn Chapel AME Church/National Trust for Historic Preservation [NTHP] Advisor), Ward Miller (Preservation Chicago), Brent Leggs (NTHP African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund), Bonnie McDonald (Landmarks Illinois), Commissioner Maurice Cox (City of Chicago Dept. of Planning & Development), and Christi Love (With an Eye PR). Not pictured: Elizabeth Blasius (Preservation Futures), Frank Butterfield and Kendra Parzen (Landmarks Illinois). Photo by Landmarks Illinois.



Figure 65: Read about the [The Decay Devils](#)' inspiring work. This all-volunteer-led nonprofit is working tirelessly to preserve Gary, Indiana's Union Station and promote the city's revitalization through preservation. (L-R) Lori Gonzalez, Tyrell Anderson, Carl Weatherspoon, Jr., and Andrea Ledbetter. Photo by Landmarks Illinois.

me and I pursue this change making work with a sense of urgency that others may not understand or agree with. Exploring and exposing the problems that lie beneath the surface has risks, including disagreement, being discounted or even discredited for revealing inconvenient and uncomfortable truths. The work of making preservation more relevant can be fraught and uncertain, but it is imperative to ensure needed tools and knowledge are accessible to everyone interested in the future.

Now, it is up to you. Having made it this far into this publication, you are clearly curious about, and/or committed to, exploring change. The hoped-for outcome of writing this publication is to inspire and motivate you, as well as resource you as you pursue actions toward relevance, however low- or high-risk. I will continue to share ideas and resources with the field and encourage others to do the same. Additionally, providing a supportive community is vital, which may be virtual or in-person at preservation gatherings. Finally, we can all work to break down preservation's silos and encourage partnership and cross-communication between the advocacy, construction, consulting, design and regulatory areas.

“Preservationists should know where we’re going and why. We should have a growth mindset, and be brave enough to work in tandem with adjacent fields to achieve mutual goals.”

Mary Anthony
Former Executive Director
The 1772 Foundation
April 13, 2020
Pomfret Center, CT (via video conference)

Relevance is not something that we can achieve and then call the work “done.” Remaining relevant is a dynamic practice that will see us continually engaging with stakeholders, learning about their needs and delivering accessible and applicable solutions. People’s interests change over time. What matters to us today may not be our priority in the future. What will always matter, however, is our commitment to evolve as problem solvers addressing the profound changes people and the built environment will face as our future unfolds.

APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1.

IDEAS TO BUILD A RELEVANT HISTORIC PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

PREFACE

One often-cited reason preventing preservation's evolution is that because the task is so overwhelming, we don't know where to begin. Preservationists had been asking for ideas, solutions, models and resources to help guide them. The wisdom to evolve the preservation movement already exists in our field. Preservationists across the nation, in its territories and this land's indigenous nations are testing ideas and making changes that are enhancing preservation's relevance in their communities. Their ingenuity, creativity and courage are charting a path forward. The Relevancy Project collected and presents below ideas from over 125 of the field's innovators. Each essay topic has a list of subcategorized ideas for easy reference.

Is the reader expected to implement all of these ideas?

The number of ideas below, nearly 500, is daunting if considered a checklist. The Relevancy Guidebook is a resource, not a "to do" list. As with this entire guidebook, pursue the ideas that are most meaningful and feasible for you. Implement ideas that move you closer to your vision for relevant preservation. Use this list to seed additional ideas of your own.

Who generated these ideas?

The ideas presented here came out of over 250 hours of conversation with The Relevancy Project interviewees, presentations and additional research. There are no attributions, as they may be an aggregate of several comments. Some interviewees requested no attribution so that they could speak freely. Consider these ideas as the collective wisdom of people both in, and adjacent to, the preservation field.

How did you determine which ideas to include?

Staying true to the goal to reflect the field's collective wisdom, this list includes most of the interviewees' ideas. Ideas that were overly vague, such as "we need to address climate change," or very specific, like "repeal X law in X state," were aggregated into other ideas when feasible. Being included on this list is not an endorsement that the idea pertains to, or will work for, every organization, agency or community. Landmarks Illinois makes no claim that the ideas have been tested or validated, nor that it has evaluated these statements against tribal, territorial, local, state, regional, national and international laws to ensure their legality. Seek professional advice regarding legality and compliance before acting.

Is this list comprehensive?

No. These are some of the ideas, from general to specific, to evolve preservation generated by a representative, yet small, group of people working in and adjacent to the preservation field. The list

will never be finite with circumstances constantly changing. Preservationists can continue to generate and share ideas through articles, papers, presentations, social media and more.

Where do I find more information about implementation?

Consult the resources in Appendix 2 for additional information and models.

IDEAS TO CHANGE PRESERVATION'S CULTURE OF PRECIOUSNESS

PUT PEOPLE BEFORE BUILDINGS

- We don't understand the gravity of what we do. Open ourselves up to a worldview that our actions have implications for people's lives, both positive and negative. Think about what is beyond the "save." What are the short- and long-term consequences of our actions on people and the community?
- It is irresponsible to designate a resource and then walk away to leave the community to deal with the impacts.
- Look beyond just one building to the community as a whole.
- We celebrate big preservation wins as our successes. Make sure to highlight smaller victories, vernacular and cultural history, to tell the full picture of what preservation is doing.
- Show people how preservation relates to, or impacts, their day-to-day lives.
- In a group conversation convened by [the 1772 Foundation](#), community asset mapping was identified as a way to address the tensions in preservation. Community asset mapping is proactive, for everyone, collaborative, people-centered, used for the future, and can address climate change. Could preservation have a fee-for-service Geographic Information System (GIS) asset mapping service, or offer a facilitator and GIS mapper?

DE-SILO PRESERVATION

- Make preservation multi-dimensional. Preservation can't be its own thing any longer. We need to align with and join with other professions that are shaping places, including government, to tackle challenges – divisiveness won't heal our industry.
- Preservation needs to be in better alignment with other movements, like environmental justice and labor.
- Collaboration needs to be centered as a value for the movement.
- Partnership building needs to be sustained through leadership transitions. Put in an insurance policy so that you don't have to start over when there is new leadership and possibly lose that connection. Cultivate relationships with multiple people within your agency / organization and that partner. Make sure to continue that relationship when the partner has new leadership, as well.
- De-silo preservation at universities. One interviewee mentioned that their preservation studies program was a mystery to the other disciplines including architecture, cultural studies, history, planning and real estate.

- Preservationists can work in other fields besides preservation and bring our mentality to that industry.

LANGUAGE

- Preservationists approach people as experts, but the way we describe place is often hard for others to understand. Ask people how they experience place. How do they define it? It's a very effective tool to build common ground.
- Words matter. We need to meet people where they are by making our language more accessible and with less jargon. For example, don't use the words conserve or preserve, use reuse.
- Members of the public have found the words "integrity" and "adverse effect" to be offensive when talking about places in their community or regarding a project that the community needs and/or wants.
- An interviewee commented that how the preservation field is approaching the conversation about designation and incentives has used inflammatory language and that it puts regulatory reviewers on the defensive. The reviewers feel that this antagonistic approach ignores the good work that they have done. No one is an intentional bad actor. Regulatory reviewers are willing to consider change and process improvements, but want to explore the implications on a policy level.

FLEXIBILITY, AUTHORITY AND EVOLUTION

- We need to be more strategic. We are too reactive. Advocacy is a loaded word seen as being about reactivity, but advocacy can also be proactive. We have to make choices about what, how and how much we work on.
- Preservation needs to be more grey and not black-and-white.
- Preservation, in its talk, has brought a museumology thinking, making buildings into museums. Stop thinking as if buildings are museums.
- There is too much rigidity in preservation. Our policies need to allow for the non-binary – the conversation shouldn't be about whether a place is, or is not, eligible for designation. There are dimensions of power and agency in the broader practice of preservation. Be intentional about who is acting.
- The work that we do is inherently subjective. We're focusing on the wrong thing. People at the commission level need more training so that they are focusing on the big picture and not the minutia. That's often the public's first interaction with preservation and we meet them with a culture of "no".
- Preservation is inherently based in negativity – we have to find the positive. Position ourselves not to always oppose. Make decisions based on abundance and not scarcity or fear. Be comfortable being uncomfortable.
- Stop getting in the way of people reusing buildings. It is not written in law – it is about interpretation. Be lenient and consistent.
- We should not tie all of our incentives to a preservation framework, it should be a conservation framework.

- Could we change building and zoning codes to allow reconstruction as a part of new construction?

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

- When we evaluate significance, that conversation has to get much larger. What is the historic, social, environmental and economic significance? What does this place mean and to whom? Who says? What is this place in the context of the living community around it today? What is its carbon footprint? What could it be used for? Reevaluate the National Register of Historic Places criteria to ensure that the program is just, equitable and inclusive.
- The culture of preciousness values integrity over significance, which flies in the face of preservation's framing document, "With Heritage So Rich." If our charge is to preserve "the total heritage of the nation," identified as preservation's purpose, then significance criteria must be inclusive of all people who are, and have been, on this land.
- An interviewee representing regulatory review staff commented that they are people, and where there is flexibility in interpreting criteria, guidelines and standards, there is room for inconsistency and the impact of unconscious bias. They wanted to point out that regulatory staff generally start from a point of "yes," and try to make a nomination or project work. This needs to be considered in the conversation about preservation's evolution.
- We need tiers of significance, as they have in the United Kingdom. Read more about this idea in Patrice Frey's "[Why Preservation Needs a New Approach](#)" in Bloomberg [CityLab](#), February 8, 2019. She references [Historic England's gradient designation system](#) as an example.
- Study heritage conservation designation criteria across the globe to identify and assess other methods.
 - Consult the [1994 International Council on Monuments and Sites \(ICOMOS\) Nara Document on Authenticity](#). The document affirms, "All judgements about values attributed to cultural properties as well as the credibility of related information sources may differ from culture to culture, and even within the same culture. It is thus not possible to base judgements of values and authenticity within fixed criteria. On the contrary, the respect due to all cultures requires that heritage properties must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts in which they belong."
 - The [Canada Register of Historic Places](#) designation process requires that a [Commemorative Integrity Statement](#) (CIS) be completed as part of the nomination process. The CIS helps to establish the listing criteria, that requires the resource and its respective associated values to be "respected." This criterion appears to provide awareness around the need for flexibility on the issue of integrity for properties not in good condition. "In the case of resources not in good condition, respect means efforts to enhance the condition of the resources and associated values are based on the historic values of the resources. This outcome places attention on the state of the resource itself." Canada also includes in its "[Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Sites in Canada](#)," a conservation decision-making process that includes developing an understanding of the site that includes its "evolution over time," "past and current importance to its community," "traditional practices associated with the historic places" and "the interrelationship between the historic place, its environment and its communities should also be considered." This dedication to looking at the place could be a relevant model.
- If we are truly about saving places and their stories, significance must be considered independent of integrity. Material changes that happen over time are a part of the story. The

presence of changes that reflect a building's evolution should not prevent its historic designation; in fact, they enrich the building's story. Places are living things. Respect the layers. Look at 1,000-year-old cities around the world to see how they have adapted over time. Learn from them.

- The idea that we have to save only the “best” example of someone’s story or work sets up the idea of exceptionalism. Why would we only save “the best”? Why must there be only one of something for someone? Isn’t it better to show how something or someone evolved to tell a more complete story?
- Address the challenge that the integrity criteria presents to designating resources from underrepresented communities. Reevaluate the assessment measurements for the integrity criteria using a justice-based design framework such as the [Just City Index](#), designed by the Harvard University Graduate School of Design.
- Not everyone has the financial resources to restore things to a certain appearance, if the material and local craftspeople are available in the first place. This would pertain more to local designation and evaluation of financial hardship for permit applications.
- Follow the work of [Beyond Integrity](#), a coalition of advocates in Seattle and King County, Washington, looking for more equitable preservation practices.
- Create a sliding integrity scale, especially for properties listed under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A and B, and require an interpretive plan.
- Reevaluate the need for, and value of, an integrity standard for local, state and national designation. As a subjective measure of significance, retaining integrity as a criterion requires educating reviewers about unconscious bias and putting procedures in place to prevent bias-based decision-making.
- [Preserve Montana](#) moved a bank building 50 miles to a community that had enough population to use it. Rural communities are losing population. We need to recognize that communities may not have enough people to use these historic places. Become more flexible about buildings moved for necessity, whether depopulation or as a result of climate change impacts, retaining their historic designation.
- The National Park Service needs to better define what “feeling” and “setting” mean in the National Register of Historic Places criteria.
- Examine all of the National Register nominations that failed over the past five years to see what failed and why. Include the State Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices in the process. We need to approach regulatory staff with better data about patterns.
- If we think of the National Historic Preservation Act like the Constitution, then we need the ability to make amendments and to have a Supreme Court that can decide between parties. There needs to be a process where nominations that failed can be appealed and reviewed by an advisory body made up of outside professionals and the public.
- Put greater power in the hands of the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPO) to administer and make decisions about nominations and incentives. The National Park Service could focus on auditing the SHPOs and creating policy or procedural guidance to distribute to the SHPO/THPO network. They have better knowledge of local context to inform their decisions than National Park Service reviewers.

- Disentangle the federal regulations from local regulations. The local governments are the key, as they are often the public's first introduction to preservation and can take local circumstances into consideration.
- Fix the disconnect between the regulators who maintain the design standards and those in the public or private sector who have to implement them. Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Reviewers are afraid of the slippery slope if they make concessions. However, the greater the rehabilitation cost, the more likely that a developer has to charge market or luxury rates to finance the project. As housing unit rehabilitation costs increase to meet the incentive's design requirements, the fewer affordable units are created. The cost of construction and operation do not live in a vacuum. We need to balance the economic outcome with the preservation outcome.
- We need to balance the effort to protect natural resources and historic details with the economic burden it can create for low- to moderate-income property owners. Stop treating the material, such as windows, as what is most important. See the big picture about the challenges this raises when there are questions of affordability, availability and energy efficiency. Study and develop a more flexible approach to achieve a preservation outcome.
- The National Register of Historic Places criteria, Standards and Guidelines need to be continually questioned and reconsidered. The community of people who are engaged in this questioning and conversation needs to include people who have used, and been impacted by, this tool.
- Make it easier for a person to nominate a property for historic designation by providing easy process guides and Nomination 101 videos.

IDEAS TO PROMOTE A JUST PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

ACTIVISM

- Show that people with disabilities are welcome, and deserve to access, older and historic places. Advocate to make accommodations like ramps, handrails and elevators easy to find and use. By minimizing the placement of these accessibility tools, we put the building's visual appearance/integrity above the user.
- Sign the National Trust for Historic Preservation's [African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund](#) pledge to add your voice in support of protecting and restoring places where significant Black history happened.
- Join in advocacy campaigns for equitable broadband access in small and rural communities.
- Consult Columbia University Professor Erica Avrami's, "[Building a Foundation for Action: Anti-Racist Historic Preservation Resources](#)" guide.
- Take actions included in the [Living Heritage Action Plan](#), an outcome of the [Living Heritage Symposium](#) organized by the San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation.
- Look to the [Sacred Ground Historical Reclamation Project](#) in Richmond, Virginia, a project of the Defenders for Freedom, Justice and Equality, as an example of activism by descendants of the enslaved incarcerated at Lumpkin's Jail in what was known as the Devil's Half-Acre. Project leaders are interested in how the site interpretation plans and recognition at the site will benefit local, Black business owners and build generational wealth.

CULTURAL HERITAGE / TRADITIONAL CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

- Respect Native Americans' traditional knowledge. The approach should be that traditional knowledge is the same as scientific knowledge. They should have the same level of respect and acknowledgement. Native Americans have difficulty with a tangible demonstration of historic significance. The tribes are part of the landscape – seasons, ceremonies, language, and songs. It's unquantifiable – that's one of the challenges. Measuring cultural connections is difficult. Traditional cultural knowledge is not a degree-oriented field.
- Ensure oral histories are sought out and respected.
 - Oral histories are being collected around the U.S. and territories, but they don't live in one place for researchers to be able to find them. Can there be a finding aid created?
- Preservation criteria needs to be expanded so that Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs) can enforce the protection of traditional cultural properties. Preserve the right for THPOs to enforce and protect.
- Read the [Final Declaration](#) from the [UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – MONDIACULT 2022](#), held in Mexico City in September 2022.
- Rebrand what we do as cultural preservation.

EDUCATION

- If preservation led more truth telling, more people would be interested.
- The first step toward breaking down systems of injustice is to expose how we are building and perpetuating these systems. Talk about the history of historic preservation, what has been saved, what has been lost and why.
- Historic preservation can help address the miseducation of America by telling true stories about people of color. Historic preservation can be a cultural competency tool.
- For any educational program involving places associated with enslaved people and their descendants, train with educators that utilize curriculum teaching about the history of slavery and its generational impacts.
- On July 17, 2020, [the National Council for Preservation Education](#) (NCPE) published an [open letter](#) regarding systemic racism and structural changes needed in preservation education.
- Preservation educators and allies supporting racial equity and systemic reform in preservation education responded to the NCPE open letter on August 13, 2020. The following excerpted recommendations were made in "[A response to the National Council for Preservation Education's open letter on racial diversity \(August 2020\)](#)" by Fallon Samuels Aidoo, PhD, Tejpal Singh Bainiwal, Caroline S. Cheong, PhD, Laura A. Dominguez, MHP, Sarah Zenaída Gould, PhD, Michelle G. Magalong, PhD, Raymond W. Rast, PhD, Andrea Roberts, PhD, and Amber N. Wiley, PhD. Please read the letter in full for additional points, questions and actions.
 - Point 1. "The historic preservation field perpetuates the erasure of BIPOC and maintains racist and White supremacist institutional power dynamics."
 - Point 2. "The Need for Preservation Education Reform."
 - Point 3. "Access, outreach, and membership as exclusionary acts (and tokenized at best)"

- Point 4. “NCPE’s objectives and activities in relation to support/elevate BIPOC preservation education and scholarship”
- Point 5. “Invest” in BIPOC Preservationists and Communities”
- Point 6. “Prioritize BIPOC preservation research and practice in NCPE’s activities”
- Attend conferences and convenings:
 - Participate in the [#DismantlePreservation \(un\)conference](#) and be inspired to act.
 - [Latinos in Heritage Conservation](#) (LHC) [Congreso](#) 2024 in Miami, Florida.
 - The biannual [National Asian and Pacific Islander American Historic Preservation Forum](#) hosted by the [Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation](#).
 - Attend the [Sacred Sites Summit](#) held by the [National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers](#) (NATHPO).
 - Participate in the annual [Slave Dwelling Project Conference](#).
 - For interests in world heritage, engage in the US/ICOMOS [World Heritage USA Symposium and Celebration of World Heritage](#).
- There should be an intentional day, or series of tracks, at every preservation-related conference, about justice, equity, inclusion, diversity, accessibility and belonging. These conversations should also be embedded and discussed throughout the conference sessions, not saved for one day or one session. Ensure that there is time and space made at convenings for affinity groups to meet.
- Submit session proposals about preservation at other industry conferences, like the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA).
- Partner with other organizations doing related education programs to ask to add information about historic preservation. For example, NOMA has [Project Pipeline](#), “to empower young people to affect change in their community through design.”
- At Columbia University, the historic preservation students engage in internal review board training on ethical practices in working with people as research subjects.
- Examples of educational programs:
 - Follow the projects and programs of the [African American Heritage Preservation Foundation](#) and [Black in Historic Preservation](#).
 - [Revisiting Washington](#) is a series of heritage driving tours centered around the state’s African American, Japanese American and Latino heritage.

EMPLOYMENT

- Hire an appropriate number of researchers to do full histories when surveys are being done.
- Hire surveyors, researchers and consultants who identify with, or as part of, the community that is being considered.
- Hiring a person from an underrepresented community is only going halfway. You also need an organizational strategy, internal and external, about justice, equity, inclusion, diversity and accessibility.
- Employ tribal members to conduct fieldwork because these are their ancestral homelands.

- Support workers that are community liaisons for preservation since they are out front. Make sure that their efforts are properly resourced. Go to meetings with them, not putting them out there by themselves to represent the organization or agency. Just because an employee or volunteer may have a shared heritage with a community does not mean that they are automatically trusted. Trust takes time to develop. Don't expect instant success.

ENGAGEMENT

- Learn how to listen. Explore methodologies to practice mindful listening.
- Do the work to create inclusive spaces, which are environments where people are respected and valued, treated with fairness and dignity, and participate in decision-making. Inclusive spaces are welcoming, safe, and provide a sense of community and belonging. How do you learn about what people need to feel comfortable? What are the methods to help ensure that people are heard?
- Evaluate how we can apply tools to engage communities in defining shared values to lead into an engagement process. The Harvard Graduate School of Design's [Just City Index](#) is one such tool.
- Respecting and accommodating differences is a baseline just practice. How do you learn if there are differences? How do you acknowledge differences? How do you accommodate differences?
- People want to be supported and informed. They want to know what's going on. Think about putting together an annual cohort and bring them together four times per year to go through their progress to answer questions and support each other. We would go from a gatekeeper to a host role.
- Use multiple communication methods to inform communities about preservation efforts being considered and how they can engage.
 - NOTE - Remember that renters, students and the unhoused are also a part of the community.
- Respect people's lived experience and local knowledge as expertise and treat them as respected partners with an equal seat at the table.
- We are not engaging Indigenous people / American Indians / Native Americans and Pacific Islanders so that they can become like preservation professionals in the field. The field needs to learn from their inherent knowledge and how they have been able to get things done. There are many ways to do things. Stop. Look. Listen.
- With tribal governments, recognize that it is a government-to-government relationship for U.S. governmental agencies.
- Just because a tribe doesn't pick up the phone or answer an email does not mean that they do not want to consult on a project. A true intention to consult is not about checking a box that you tried to contact them. Continue to reach out.
- If you want to work with tribal representatives, agencies have to get to know them. Build social relationships. Come to an event. Agency professionals don't spend the time building meaningful relationships – not just checking boxes. Listen and learn about the Indigenous peoples' perspective, approach and lifeways as a means to see cultural and natural resources from a holistic viewpoint.

- Also, think about how you present yourself at meetings, including what you wear. At a meeting with the Blackfeet in Montana, the Army Corps of Engineers attended wearing camouflage. This was the first engagement that they had with the army since the war and brought up unreconciled things.
- People's practices are engrained through their culture. In Latin culture, it is about interaction between big families. You go to a person or a business that someone in your family trusts. Referrals are word of mouth. In immigrant families, kids bring information back to parents. Build trust with someone that other people trust. Preservationists need to take cultural norms into consideration to build trust.
- Engage more young people in preservation. One example is the [Preserve America Youth Summit](#), which has been held 50 times since 2007.
 - NOTE - Be careful about calling people at a certain age an "emerging" professional. They could have been a professional in the field for more years than you may imagine. How long does it take for someone to have "emerged"? Ask how they want to be referred to.
- Colorado preservationists were able to make progress with preservation in rural areas by not forcing the process. Projects didn't have to be reviewed. They gave advice and people used their examples.
- Be a connector of people who may have similar projects, interests, research areas, using similar resources. Also, connect people directly with the resource. By connecting people, we also help to build supportive communities and let others know that they are not alone.
- Don't stand in cliques at meetings and conferences. It is intimidating to new attendees. Open up your circles of conversation.

FUNDING

- Compensate people for their information, stories and time.
- Pay speakers.
- Provide not only conference scholarships, but pay the scholarship recipients to attend the conference. They are often taking off work to attend.
- Put funders directly in touch with organizations doing the work – don't be the gatekeeper.
- Increase funding to organizations led by, and with a mission dedicated to amplify the work of, underrepresented communities in the preservation field.
- Audit to whom you have allocated the agency's or organization's resources – who was involved, where did the resources go, what is your balance, are you deploying resources equitably?
- If you make grants, considering requiring grantees to go through diversity, equity and inclusion and anti-racism training that you provide.
- Evaluate where the organization is spending its money through a spend diagnostic. Identify your goals in increasing diversity amongst the organization's contractors, suppliers.
 - Evaluate your organization's procurement practices to ensure equity in where your dollars are spent

- Intentionally seek out and hire contractors that are minority business enterprises or women business enterprises.
- In RFPs, make it a requirement that companies that bid must identify their racial and gender composition, especially in decision-making positions.
- Help to cultivate programs/projects that further cultivate and support construction contractors and consultants of color.
- Make a pledge to spend a certain percentage of your resources to support sharing and preserving underrepresented histories.
- Pick event locations around your community to help fund these spaces and to introduce people to other community members and places.
- Can we locate our offices or services to places that support developers or property owners that are underrepresented in preservation without leading to community gentrification and displacement?
- When working with community organizations, subgrant to them so that there is no culture of philanthropic dependency on the larger organization and they own the research when the larger organization moves on to another neighborhood. The subgrant allows the community organization to set its own preservation agenda and grow their skills and capacity.
- Communicate about who our funders are for transparency. It's hard to create a just world when you are taking money from the unjust. These are the embedded conflicts. Is even discussing the option of turning away funding a position of privilege because others don't have the choice, don't have options for other funding?)
- Raise a fund to update surveys and complete the research portion first so that the survey is not based on the architecture, but is based in the historical research.
- Funds should be made available for oral histories and tapping other information sources. Primary sources may be limited or may not exist at all for the stories of underrepresented groups that were, intentionally or unintentionally, not documented. It has not always been, and is still not, safe to document all stories. History is not neutral. Even primary sources come with a point of view.
- Promote the National Park Service's [Cultural Resources Grants](#) and [Underrepresented Communities Grants Opportunity](#).

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY

- Make resources available in the multiple languages spoken in your community and design them in ways that are accessible to people with sight impairments or various learning styles. Ask your local or state government for language translation resources. Remove jargon to make the materials more understandable.
 - The [Neighborhood Preservation Toolkit](#) by PennPraxis for Philadelphia, is available in Chinese, English and Spanish.
- Make information easily accessible. Make sure the knowledge that we have is publicly accessible on websites so that people can find that themselves.
- Provide programs in multiple languages.
- Solicit help from board and staff members, or volunteers, to attend public meetings and provide information in other languages spoken in your community.

- Use the words “repair” and “reuse” more often because they are more accessible.
- There is a myth that there is one narrative of a single culture in the United States when we have polyculturalism. One interviewee referenced American historian [Robin D.G. Kelley](#), who describes our “polyvalent history,” or that we are a nation with multiple cultural narratives.
- Develop and publish a set of definitions for the field of preservation. What does it mean to “diversify the field”? What does “social justice” mean for preservation? Preservationists need a general definition as a starting point. How would the preservation field define accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion and justice for itself and its work?
 - Understanding the difference between equality and equity are important. Equality is about equal opportunity, whereas equity is about fairness, that is, providing people with the support they need to achieve outcomes that are more equal. Assess what the differences are for your organization regarding mission and service delivery.
- Recognize that people are preserving and reusing historic places with few incentives and resources. Much like “outsider art” has replaced the term “folk” in the art world, this needs to be recognized as preservation.
- Stories about people underrepresented are often told through a negative lens of pain and trauma, that is, putting the focus on the power imbalance in favor of those who were causing the pain. Shift the perspective to tell stories through a positive lens of resistance and love. Shift our mindset.
- Do not look at people with a scarcity mentality, such as defining a person by their income. Money is not the only resource. A person can have many resources and have fewer financial tools. That is putting a narrative of scarcity on a community. Alternatively, ask which resources are abundant and which are needed?
- Don’t go into a community with a view that “you should be protecting this and you aren’t.” Resource scarcity is the oft-assumed culprit and not that it was a choice. People have decision-making of their own. The narrative of scarcity sets up the need for an outside “savior”.
- Also, don’t assume that by demolishing something that people are losing something. Did you ask how they feel?
- Preservationists need to understand [settler-colonialism](#) in order to decolonize preservation practice.
- Several organizations have turned to land acknowledgements to promote truth. However, land acknowledgements are increasingly seen as reflexive and missing the larger responsibility to build genuine partnerships, allyship or co-conspiratorship that support Indigenous people and initiatives.
- If you choose to create a land acknowledgement, ask Indigenous-led organizations if they want to and would provide the information and pay them for this gift. This is transactional. How has the organization worked to build a relationship/partnership before asking for this gift?
- Biological anthropologist Alan Goodman’s piece in [Discover Magazine](#) [presents the research and ongoing scientific dialogue](#) about race as a social, and not biological, construct. The article includes information about historic concepts of race and its deleterious and generational impacts on people and society. The built environment is part of the cultural memory of racism. Therefore, understanding the history of the construct of race itself is imperative to engaging in racial justice and equity initiatives. Here are additional articles by

[Scientific American](#) and [Harvard University](#), and the [American Medical Association's 2020 policy statement](#) that it recognizes race as a social construct.

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

- Diversify board, commission, and staff leadership, especially with representation of the communities served by the organization or agency.
- Revise organizational Bylaws to support equity goals around board development and power balancing. Reserve seats on nonprofit boards for people underrepresented in preservation and representing the communities that are doing the work, but not being served by the industry/tools to inform the future.
- The [Washington Trust for Historic Preservation](#) holds two board seats open for a student and a young professional and provides them with \$500 for meeting travel.

PARTNERSHIP

- Don't work in a community unless you have a community partner.
- Tribal representatives are asked to come to many things and their capacity to do so is limited. How do we understand the capacity of our partners? Ask.
- Sign a Community Benefits Agreement when we begin a project.
- Look for organizations that have expertise in the areas where we want to grow and discuss what partnership would look like. How can it be mutually beneficial and not extractive?

PLANNING AND REGULATORY PROCESS

- Ensure that THPOs and traditional cultural properties, respect for oral histories are incorporated into state preservation plans and planning.
- Write context studies to provide greater understanding about the histories, cultural perspectives and traditions, and lifeways of the diversity of communities in a geographic area.
 - Publish more context statements about LGBTQAI+ history and places in communities. An example is "[Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco](#)," by Donna J. Graves and Shayne E. Watson, October 2015. See [additional publications](#) on interpreting and preserving diverse history by Donna Graves.
- If students write nomination, context statement or other document, keep their names on that document.
- The [Hispanic Access Foundation](#) establishes bridges of access that provide a path for the development and rise of Latino leaders and elevates their voices in areas where they are underrepresented. From the Hispanic Access Foundation's "[Place, Story and Culture: An Inclusive Approach to Protecting Latino Heritage Sites](#)" Report:
 - "Recommendations for inclusively protecting Latino heritage sites:
 - 1 Update the Criteria for Evaluation into the National Register of Historic Places.

- 2 Provide institutional support in the form of community liaisons at the state level to facilitate and sustain community relationships with minoritized communities through the nomination process.
- 3 Develop a permanent committee or advisory group that sustains efforts to integrate Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion frameworks into Historic Preservation nominations and designations.
- 4 Provide solutions outside of the National Register process that promote and enable communities to protect places of significance, directly combating gentrification and other threats brought about from re-development.
- 5 Develop a professional pipeline in Historic Preservation for individuals from minoritized communities to obtain career opportunities that lead to decision-making roles.
- 6 Develop a theme study that specifically focuses on the U.S. Northeast and the Latino diaspora's histories in the region."

PREPAREDNESS / THOUGHTFULNESS / INTENTIONS / ACCOUNTABILITY

- Preservationists have to reckon with, and be accountable to, the truth that we have excluded people, intentionally and unintentionally, through our policies and practices.
 - “The places that are gone tell more of a story.” There is no national narrative about what’s been lost. How are we evaluating what was lost and why it wasn’t saved? What fades from the collective memory when we don’t have that place to tell the story? What was saved and why?
 - NOTE – Be aware of using language that implies places are missing or were taken through demolition, as this can perpetuate narratives of deficit and scarcity often assigned to communities of color.
 - Go back and look at the properties that have been passed over for designation, demolished. What was your role? What was the issue?
 - Develop a rubric to help assess how to apply an equity lens to decision-making.
- Help your organization and others you work with understand that places have power. The power to tell stories and whether those stories are accurate and from who’s perspective? Who gets to use that power and decide what is done with those places in the future? Who has the right?
- Work to understand the generational repercussions of unjust land use policies and practices in your area of work.
- Understand that people know what's going on in their community. They are very educated about the place where they live, but may not use the same language to describe it as preservationists do. Don't pretend to be a community expert. At public meetings, don't go in with the attitude of “you don't know and once you do, you'll agree with us.” That has racist and classist undertones.
- Preservation field needs a clear set of ethics. Communicate the core of why and how we work and what is acceptable and what is not. To the outside, it appears that preservation practice helps people make money through adaptive reuse. What drives decision-making? It appears to be money and elitism to people outside the field. In this way, preservation is only

thinking of the object and not as a community resource. The worldview about what is valued needs to change.

- As one interviewee put it, “Oppression is the foundation of our land use system. History is ugly – the history of redlining and displacement. Are preservationists actually preserving anything? Who are we preserving for? Who would want to preserve redlining? People are trying to survive – they don’t have time to think about preservation. We’re trying to be alive. When all people are liberated, [preservation] may become more valuable. Preservation is a luxury.”
- Adopt and publish a Code of Conduct for your organization, agency or company so that the people with whom you work know what to expect and can hold you accountable.
- As we approach any preservation project, we should think about our framework being the impact/furthering of social equity, health, resilience and climate change.
 - The [City of Austin African American Resource Advisory Commission](#) ensures local government accountability.
- Practice deep engagement – talk with a community for a year before proposing a project.
- Be truthful and don’t make promises that you cannot keep. Understand that people put their livelihoods, and sometimes their lives, on the line for their community and for justice. If your commitment to working with them, you must come through otherwise you could put them at risk and further jeopardize your and other’s trust with those you’re working.
- You don’t just have trust because you show up. You earn it. You’re there at the invitation of a community. A core value of the nonprofit organization [BlackSpace](#) is to “move at the speed of trust.” Adopt this as a core value for your efforts. An organic way to build trust is to do little things that add value, rather than bureaucratic ways.
- Create a social-justice based checklist for preservation to help make organizations anti-racist.
- Think about and thoughtfully prepare for community conversations. What do meeting participants need to feel welcome and comfortable? Work to diminish your presence as one of authority and instead serve as convener.
 - Who hosts a meeting or conference, and where it is hosted, is important.
 - Host conversations and meetings on multiple days and at different times of the day, not just on weekday evenings, so that people working in other fields, or who can’t get out of work, can attend. Doors open at these meetings and people don’t want to miss them.
 - Make the conversation accessible to people with differing needs.
 - Think about how to provide child care.
 - In many cultures, sharing food is important at a gathering. Considering bringing food to meetings.

SELF-DETERMINATION

- Preservation has to reconsider its entire process, ensuring that people connected with that place are represented every step of the way. This includes making sure the survey, research, evaluation and nomination process, and the decision-making are all-inclusive and accessible.

Who makes the decision about what is important in a community? To promote inclusion and equity, the power to decide should be with the people most connected to the place.

- Preservation needs to do an assessment of the concepts and structures of ownership and control – of process and decision-making. Who has ownership of the way things happen and change? Conduct anti-racism training first and then do an assessment of who has the resources. Who benefits from these resources? What is the ratio? We have to look at these components to have a true shift.
 - The government of Guam has an [Ancestral Lands Commission](#) for Guam citizens to make proposals for excess land that Guam recaptured from the U.S. military through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process (the U.S. military owns 1/3 of the island of Guam.)
- Just because historians have free (or, relatively free) access to sources, enabling us to create a narrative about another person's identity does not give us the right to do so without permission. Are we entitled to another person's story just because we have access to the records? Should we be asking for permission to tell another person's story?
- A person of color interviewed for this project framed self-determination in this way: "People of color can liberate themselves without white allies. White allies ask what they can do to help. Beyond amplifying the message, give money, show up at protests, you can bring other white people along. People of color can tell their own stories. White people don't need to tell the narrative of others. We can do this work without white people, but white people get all of the money. It is a struggle for people of color in preservation to find the balance since the structures of gatekeeping hold the power to let people in and they need to be let in to do their work. They may not have the time to apply for grants or scholarships. Allies can connect funders directly with preservationists of color and help to write grants as unpaid labor."
- Leave space for the complicated narrative. Provide space for multiple voices. Victims often feel left out of that conversation.

SITES OF CONSCIENCE

- Any place is a place of conscience.
 - The [Eastern State Penitentiary](#) historic site in Philadelphia started as a preservation project, but has evolved to change the criminal justice system and prison reform.
- If you are at an historic site, tell the story so that you are connecting it to people living in the community today. Indigenous people still live on the land. Black Americans' stories continued after enslavement ended.

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

- Build an emergent, divergent preservation field that philosophically shifts to radically seek reparations for past harms and to gear the platform toward changing systems.
- Work with the Appraisal Institute, social scientists, economists and assessors to begin to address the appraisal system that continually disadvantages communities of color and those at the low end of the socioeconomic spectrum. This is a social justice and built environment issue.

TRAINING

- Preservation is not neutral. Own up to our biases and engage in implicit bias training.
- Engage in anti-racism and justice, equity, inclusion, diversity and accessibility training for nonprofits, commissioners, government staff and consultants.
- Professionals that are writing and reviewing historic designation nominations need to go through implicit bias training and diversity, equity and inclusion training that includes ways to identify unconscious bias.
- Ensure that there are people who have context, knowledge, representation of the places/projects to provide perspective, experience and information sitting on grants review panels. Grants review panelists should also engage in implicit bias training.
- Train local commissions on cultural and intangible heritage.
- For larger organizations, can you partner with smaller organizations to share the cost of implicit bias and anti-racism training and implementation to make it accessible and affordable to more organizations?
- Think about your recognition programs – what are questions you can ask, filters to apply to giving honors that would emphasize your ideas for the future of preservation?
 - For [Landmarks Illinois Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Awards](#) program, nomination questions are based on the organization's [guiding principles](#). For example, applicants are asked to describe who benefits from the project.

IDEAS TO PRESERVE AND CREATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH PRESERVATION

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACTIVISM

- Become public and vocal advocates for fair and supportive housing in all the communities we work with (on reservations, rural, suburban and urban – housing access and affordability is an issue in every community).
- Be an advocate with your local housing and development authority for preservation of affordable housing and adaptive reuse to create new affordable housing units. Invite them to see successful preservation housing projects. Talk about how office-building conversion is providing for affordable housing.
- Support locally led housing initiatives like the fight for rent control.
- Join with public and subsidized housing residents to advocate for the maintenance and reinvestment in public housing in your community.
- Support affordable housing developers through public statements about the need for, and community benefits of, affordable housing and how historic properties provide a win-win.
- Talk up the benefits of adaptive reuse to developers. Reusing existing buildings reuses existing infrastructure, thereby cutting down on the time and cost for municipal approvals and permitting. The construction process can begin and end more quickly than new construction.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESOURCES

- Become familiar with the housing data in your community to understand the scale of need for affordable housing and how many people are unhoused.
- Talk to developers about what is making it challenging to create affordable housing in your community. Understand what needs to change and seek out partnerships to dismantle these barriers.
- Put a focus group together on how we get more affordable housing developers to think about preservation. Ask about needed resources and misconceptions.
- There needs to be broader education of the development community about the resources that could be available for adaptive reuse as affordable housing. Pull together an Affordable Housing and Preservation 101 book with practices and case studies in partnership with the Urban Land Institute. Ensure the book has resources for both small and large developers.
- Historic buildings of all types can be successful housing conversions: schools, warehouses, large office buildings, storefront retail, sacred places, fraternal buildings, hospitals and more. Keep tabs on these kinds of buildings to be aware if they are going up for sale, being disposed of as surplus property, or are proposed for demolition. Make affordable housing developers aware of them. Annual awards program regularly introduce preservationists to housing developers who adaptively reuse existing buildings, oftentimes for affordable apartments.
- To have more affordable housing through preservation, developers need cost relief – from the building department, philanthropy, it's not just preservation that has to figure this out. Each affordable housing unit was \$450,000 to construct for one Chicago project mentioned in an interview. Adaptive reuse affordable housing projects require complicated, over-layered financials.
- Affordable housing developers doing preservation work need pre-development funding and patient capital.
- Owners and renters need more financial resources to purchase, maintain, mitigate hazardous materials, improve energy performance and improve naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) buildings.
- Explore creating, sustaining and/or expanding affordable housing policies and incentives that encourage building reuse. Examples include:
 - Accessory dwelling unit (ADU) legislation to increase density in single-family zoning neighborhoods and provide rental income for homeowners in areas with rising housing costs.
 - Adaptive reuse ordinance (ARO).
 - Affordable requirements ordinance (ARO).
 - Affordability real estate investment trusts (REITs).
 - For the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (FHTC):
 - Make it easier to get the FHTC to twin with the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). Evaluate compromises between the two incentives to reduce the cost per unit.
 - Pass the [Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act of 2023 \(HTC-GO\)](#) [S.639 in the 118th Congress] that helps to alleviate issues related to pairing the FHTC and LIHTC.

- Add a 10% incentive boost to the [Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit \(FHTC\)](#) for affordable housing.
 - Impact funds.
 - Can community development corporations (CDC) supporting adaptive reuse for affordable housing create a [Joint Operating Entity \(JOE\)](#)? The model is JOE NYC, “a joint ownership and management structure for property owned by nonprofit CDCs, leverages the mission-driven community-based knowhow of CDCs and brings it to a citywide scale.” Could a JOE be developed that was not geographically bound?
 - Read “[Changing the Paradigm: Creating Scale and Keeping Local Expertise in Nonprofit Affordable Housing Development— How to Stop Competing with Fellow CDCs and Embrace a Joint Ownership Structure.](#)” in the January 2019 issue of the Journal of Affordable Housing, by David A. Goldstein, Jason Labate, and Nadya Salcedo.
 - Support the creation of land trusts and co-ops to preserve housing and affordability. Recognize that there needs to be a lengthy investment of time to explore creating a land trust as residents may not be comfortable with the idea of not owning the land because they feel vulnerable.
 - The [Grounded Solutions Network](#) offers tools to maintain affordability, including model ground lease agreements for land trusts.
 - Revise zoning and building codes to make it easier to convert historic buildings to housing.
 - Tenant protection ordinances.
- Help homeowners who have asked for assistance in accessing home buying resources, down payment assistance, homeownership preservation programs and first-time homebuyer programs.
- Work with the National Park Service to find an accurate system to track the number of affordable and public housing units preserved or created through the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit.

COMMERCIAL BUILDING CONVERSION

- With the fact that 85% of the world's population will live in urban areas by 2100, it is imperative that we convert buildings from commercial to housing. Take empty office buildings and to convert them to housing. The life of cities depends on this.
- Make our zoning and building codes more flexible so that office and commercial spaces can be converted to housing.
- Double the density allowance to allow housing in commercial districts.
- Look at vacant retail space for housing, including [former malls](#) and big box retail stores.
- Pass ordinances to allow for housing conversion of vacant retail or second stories. Use models like “[Upstairs Downtown](#)” to create more affordable housing in small commercial buildings with vacant upper stories. Construction a catwalk on the back of a string of these buildings to connect them. Try to consolidate ownership into one owner and not five or the zoning and building code treat them differently.

DENSITY

- Continue to follow research about the correlation or causation between density and housing affordability. Does density itself increase affordability? Is it the type of housing unit created that impacts affordability in an area overall? How does density impact naturally occurring affordable housing?
- When density increases overall affordability, embrace participating in the process to add density to historic commercial areas and neighborhoods. Historic neighborhoods often offer existing civic, institutional and retail infrastructure. According to one interviewee, the most successful preservation advocates can talk about density. What do you want to give and save? There are tradeoffs. Preservation will continue to be considered reactionary and out-of-touch if it is all-or-nothing.
- Work with/join housing justice advocates to call for affordable and denser housing on infill lots, density on transit routes and in transit-oriented development (TOD) districts, along arterials that are pedestrian friendly.

EDUCATION

- Preservation education needs to take up the overlap between preservation and development. Have to connect the dots. We need to change preservation education so that students know how to do development.

EQUITY AND JUSTICE IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Talk with affordable housing residents, and those waiting for housing, about what they want and engage them in decision-making about the future of housing in their community. Engage in these conversations with an authentic commitment to follow the outcomes, even if they are not what the preservation community would choose.
- If we are working on an affordable housing project in a community, commit for the long-term, not one deal and it's done. That's how you build trust. When you go into a community, it's a partnership.
- Engage a diversity consultant to identify design, construction and real estate services Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Women Business Enterprise (WBE) firms to work on an affordable housing project.
- Continue to study the impacts / or lack thereof of preservation practices on displacement and gentrification.

NATURALLY OCCURRING AFFORDABLE HOUSING (NOAH)

- Read the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) [Missing Middle Housing](#) webpage with reports including [Discovering and Developing Missing Middle Housing Report](#) and the legislative guide to [Re-Legalizing Middle Housing: A Model Act and Guide to Statewide Legislation](#).
- Talk with local housing officials about land use policies to preserving existing buildings in order to retain Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) in existing buildings.

- Home maintenance and repairs are financially burdensome for low-income homeowners. We need to work with partners to create accessible, affordable maintenance and repair funds for low-to-middle income property owners. Example include:
 - [Home Preservation](#), Habitat for Humanity’s home repair program.
 - [Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans Revival Grants](#) provide funding for minor repairs on eligible homes that have been cited for code violations by the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission. The program’s purpose is to help preserve the city’s affordable housing by helping low- to moderate-income homeowners. The organization provides wrap-around services with the grant like termite remediation.
 - [Rebuilding Together New Orleans](#) provides free critical home repairs for vulnerable neighbors.
- Create financial resources for building maintenance for low-to-moderate income property owners.
- Older forms of living arrangements have relevance in providing NOAH. Don’t discredit the role that Single Room Occupancy (SRO) and cubicle hotels used to provide. We have an image of these types of hotels as poorly managed, but they were meeting a critical affordable housing need. They were engineered out of existence and took a rung out of the housing ladder with them. Rehabilitate existing buildings for SRO or micro-unit residency hotels.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Establish partnerships with affordable housing organizations, agencies and developers to help them find properties that could be adapted for housing.
 - Look to housing partners and share their effective practices, like [Chicanos Por La Causa](#) located in Phoenix, Arizona, but works in Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Texas and California. The Arizona SHPO has reviewed their projects.

PEOPLE WHO ARE UNHOUSED

- Meet with local advocacy organizations that work with unhoused people to better understand their needs. Work to align preservation resources and developers looking for projects to meet the need.
 - Watch the 2013 TEDx talk by Rosanne Haggerty, President & CEO of nonprofit housing developer Community Solutions on “How to solve a social problem.” Haggerty, who was interviewed for The Relevancy Project, provides a building reuse case study.

RURAL HOUSING NEEDS

- The [Rural Ulster Preservation Company](#) (RUPCO) in Kingston, New York, works in the Catskills to provide rural affordable housing – see their [great infographic](#) about what they do. Preservation is included in their toolbox.

IDEAS TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH PRESERVATION

CLIMATE ACTIVISM

- Architecture firms can join the American Institute of Architects [2030 Commitment](#), a plan to achieve the goal of net zero emissions in the built environment by 2030.
- Join the [Climate Heritage Network](#).
 - Sign on to take action on the Climate Heritage Network's "[A Manifesto on Keeping 1.5° Alive](#)."
 - Read the Climate Heritage Network [2022-24 Action Plan](#).
- Read "[Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming](#)." Edited by Paul Hawken. Published in 2017 by [Project Drawdown](#). Strategy #80 is the reuse and adaptation of existing buildings.
- Look at the [Living Building Challenge](#) as a model for how to disrupt the preservation industry. The Living Building Challenge is taking on the supply chain as a way to reduce carbon by not allowing use of certain building materials ([red list](#)).
- Reframe preservation as a renewable resource. When the [Historic Preservation Fund](#) was established in 1977, it was funded through the federal government's offshore oil lease revenues. The philosophy was that by generating income from the extraction of one non-renewable resource, another non-renewable resource could be preserved (historic places). We need to reframe preservation as an inherently renewable resource through reinvestment and reuse rather than continuing to association preservation with fossil fuels.

PLANNING

- Become familiar with predictions of climate change impacts in your area and what weather-related impacts may occur in order to plan ahead. Talk with your state climatologist.
- Conduct more research on how preservation can be a solution to climate change.
- Pass local deconstruction ordinances and integrate demolition impact fees.
- We have an opportunity to go through our cities, define building typologies (curtain wall, masonry) and then come up with a treatment plan to keep material, modify material or adapt with new material to make them more energy efficient and resilient. Develop a tiered treatment approach based on the significance of the design – only a small number.
- The National Park Service Technical Preservation Services provides [sustainability standards and guidelines](#), but our field would benefit from training courses covering the following topics in greater depth.
- Find a new funding source for the [Historic Preservation Fund](#) that is not tied to offshore oil leases.
- [Smart Growth Maryland](#), a campaign of [Preservation Maryland](#), is a coalition of "advocates for a more environmentally sustainable future that creates opportunities for all Marylanders through better development patterns." Through this coalition, Preservation Maryland is integrated into the state's conservation movement and is able to do climate mitigation planning.

CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- We need better case studies of historic properties that have been retrofitted for climate resilience.
- The Washington Trust for Historic Preservation worked on legislation regarding [seismic retrofitting of unreinforced masonry](#) (URM), coupling seismic retrofitting with affordable housing in vacant second stories. Historic preservation is an outcome, but wasn't the driving force. Developers have created their own URM program where they repair an URM building and can use the air rights to transfer elsewhere, like a transferable development rights program.
- Create more case studies about how preservation can mitigate climate change and adapt to climate change.
- The Trustees of Reservations in Massachusetts has prepared a broad [coastal strategy](#) to prepare for sea level rise, intensified storms and shoreline erosion that will impact its historic and natural sites.
- Engage communities in describing and documenting places that will be lost to climate change impacts, interpret these places if the harm cannot be mitigated. How to tell this story? How to describe what is lost? Zulmilena Then of Preserving East New York (PENY) had a funeral for the bank building that she was trying to save when it was demolished. Is there a public grieving process for places that will be impacted by climate change?
- Are your own internal practices promoting climate change mitigation, such as using ethically sourced materials or reducing waste at events? Speak to these publicly as a way to educate others and demonstrate your values.
- Partnering with architects, aging and disability advocates to design affordable accessibility measures can help adults who want to age in place in their historic homes.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY – PASSIVE STRATEGIES

- Sustainability is a repackaging of Indigenous principles. Look to the practices of Indigenous people to learn more about adaption to climate change.
- Invite indigenous people to be a part of sustainability panel discussions.
- Look to historic buildings built in warm climates to see how they were built for sustainability, like [Barrio Viejo](#) in Tucson, Arizona. A note pertaining to the topic of housing displacement in The Relevancy Guidebook – as of August 2019, there were reportedly only five Latino families still living in Barrio Viejo because of gentrification. Homes there now cost over \$1 million.
- Make energy efficiency more accessible for everyone.
 - Offer funding and programs that make weatherization and climate change resilience more accessible and affordable.
 - Do-it-yourself training models to look at include [Brick + Beam Detroit](#), the [Chicago Bungalow Association](#), the [San Antonio Rehabber Club](#) and Durham's [Home Repair Lab](#). These programs include construction skills mentoring, proper remediation techniques, reduced-cost or free weatherization products and model climate resilience projects adapted to local weather events.

- Create a tool library to make necessary, yet expensive hand and power tools accessible to those wanting to do their own work (find tool libraries at www.localtools.org.)
- Home users may not understand how their home's/apartment's historic ventilation systems work. We can help extend the time that the air conditioning stays off by showing how to use the original cooling features, such as:
 - Demonstrating the operation of a transom window, or both sashes of a double-hung window, to circulate warm and cool air.
 - Something as simple as closing blinds or curtains during the day, and opening doors and windows for cross ventilation, may help.
 - Though they require electricity, whole house fans can also reduce the use of chemical-based air conditioning.
 - Adding interior or exterior storm windows and insulating sash-weight pockets can reduce thermal transfer.
 - Though they may seem antiquated, window awnings can cool with little to no electricity and shutters can help guard against storm damage.
- Historic places exist in a broader natural landscape. Growing and preserving food on a property reduces the carbon needed to cultivate, prepare and transport food from elsewhere. Planting trees and green roofs reduces the heat island effect. In wildfire prone areas, clearing trees and brush away from buildings may be necessary. Using native plantings or plants needing less water, as well as incorporating storm water retention and pollinator gardens, can repair ecosystems.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY – ACTIVE STRATEGIES

- Teach people how to use the [Carbon Avoided: Retrofit Estimator](#) (CARE) Tool or offer to facilitate its use on projects. The tool helps to understand the total carbon impact of reusing an existing building versus replacement with new construction. Provide people with the data to make an educated decision on the most climate-friendly choices.
- We need to evaluate each building with a climate action mindset to determine the balance of how much of the historic material can be kept while integrating active energy-reducing measures.
- Sustainable designers look at [Energy Use Intensity](#) (EUI), which is the [British thermal unit](#) (BTU) cost per square foot per person. For landmarks, this can be a challenge based on necessary retrofits. See how to reduce the EUI for reuse.
- We can advise building owners to gather data through an energy audit and a building systems evaluation to know which energy saving features will result in the greatest energy reduction with the least impact on the building for an acceptable cost. This is an opportunity to partner with architects and energy companies to provide no- or low-cost services.
 - The Chicago Bungalow Association's [Home Energy Savings Program](#) is one model where the local electric and natural gas companies conduct assessments and homeowners may qualify for free energy saving products and weatherization services.
 - [Passive House](#) is a 30-year-old, German concept, gaining traction in the U.S., to build or refurbish homes that use little energy, but are also comfortable and affordable.

The Passive House Institute has [a guide to refurbishing existing homes](#) using this concept focusing on thermal insulation, airtightness and renewable energy sources.

- Insulating attics can dramatically reduce up to 25% of heat loss through a building's roof. Wall insulation can reduce that up to 35% more.
- Preservationists can advise those living in historic buildings about deep energy retrofits (DER) as a choice and ensuring safe indoor air quality. Unless a trained professional who understands existing buildings completes the DER, the process can result in detrimental outcomes like dangerous indoor air quality and moisture problems.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- Think about the greening of historic sites. [The Trustees](#) (formerly The Trustees of Reservations) uses geothermal well systems, cisterns, greenhouses, solar panels in the fields, compostable toilets. They evaluate their sites on 100 points at a good, fair and poor level, including key performance indicators for sustainability. Sustainability is a strategic priority for the organization to mitigate the harms of climate change, including beach erosion and sea level rise.
- If we have historic sites that generated hydropower, evaluate using that power again, like the National Trust in the UK. The [National Trust in the UK](#) uses [hydropower](#), [biomass](#), [solar photovoltaics](#), ground-source and marine-source [heat pumps](#). They have made a commitment to stop using fossil fuels, generate and use renewable energy, and reduce energy consumption by 50%.
- Scotland has set a target to have zero emissions by 2045. Historic Environment Scotland has put a plan in place, "[Out Past. Our Future](#)," to contribute to these targets, as well as prioritizing inclusion, accessibility, resilience and a wellbeing economy .
- Air source heat pumps transfer heat drawn from outside air into indoor spaces. Ground source heat pumps harness the heat energy stored in the ground. Air source heat pumps are becoming more common than ground source because they are less expensive to install and maintain.
- Allow, embrace and promote solar panels and other green technology in historic districts and on historic properties – embrace and demonstrate that – not hide it. Solar panels are reversible. (this may require a deeper conversation about the false premise that we can recreate the feeling of an historic neighborhood). Note that they were not designed to be oriented to solar, so may need compromise to get maximum energy output.
- This could include local governments or preservation organizations sending solar array guidelines to the owners of designated properties, hosting solar educational seminars, and collecting and distributing case studies such as those found on the [Historecycle](#) website.
- Consider buying into offsite renewable energy.
- Promote district energy for many projects to tie into and share the cost, especially looking at putting solar fields onto brownfields.
- We can discuss the opportunity around local nonprofit community solar programs. Energy utilities may offer consumers the option of purchasing their power from renewable sources, or the purchase of carbon offset credits to spur investment in sustainable power generation.
 - The United States Environmental Protection Agency offers a helpful [guide to purchasing green power](#).

CLIMATE DISPLACEMENT

- Be aware of the [Federal Emergency Management Association Heritage Emergency National Taskforce](#), “a partnership of 42 national service organizations and federal agencies created to protect cultural heritage from the damaging effects of natural disasters and other emergencies.”
- By 2050, our neighbors may be some of the over one billion people expected to be threatened with climate displacement. People escaping climate disasters will look for communities near family and friends, as well as access to social services, health care, job retraining, employment and housing. Preservation can contribute by increasing the supply of affordable, energy efficient housing and helping to grow the rehabilitation and weatherization job sectors.
- Until then, we can leverage our limited resources through proactive planning, including updating asset surveys (including below-ground resources), integrating weather modeling data, developing new mitigation and adaptive solutions and interpretive methods and creating a thoughtful, inclusive and equitable rubric to make the difficult choices ahead.
- In regions with plentiful fresh water access and not near the coasts, talk with local governments about long-term land use policies that will make the community welcoming to those displaced by climate change

IDEAS TO MAKE PRESERVATION A MATTER OF HEALTH

RESOURCES

- We need a better toolkit for how to defining the value of preservation beyond the economic argument. We are too influenced by the prism of real estate. Test messages about preservation and health informally and formally. How do people respond? How can you continue to shape your message?
- Engage with social scientists, public health professionals and other social services organizations to do more research to understand the beneficial and detrimental health impacts related to the preservation and destruction of place. Publish this research data and examples for others to use.
- Expand and cite research about the health benefits of preservation to call for more investment in places and public spaces.
 - Read more about research conducted by the Layton Aging and Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center in Portland, Oregon. They developed the [Sharing History through Active Reminiscence and Photo-Imagery \(SHARP\) walking study](#) using historical asset mapping data created by Portland’s [Architectural Heritage Center](#). “Cognitive decline, including Alzheimer’s disease, disproportionately affects Older African Americans; so does gentrification. SHARP strives to honor Black health and history. The SHARP study is a six-month program in Portland, Oregon’s historically Black neighborhoods that are undergoing rapid change. SHARP participants walk one-mile themed routes, equipped with a tablet and a digital recorder. Our aims are to maintain or improve cognitive health among older African Americans through physical activity and social engagement in a culturally celebratory way that captures the oral history of Portland’s historically Black neighborhoods.”

PUBLIC HEALTH

- Work with local or state public health professionals to encourage that they include cultural places as part of their public health framework to protect and improve the health and well-being of individuals and their communities. Integrate culture and preservation as part of public health plans.
- As part of public health plans, preservationists also have a responsibility to identify the negative health impacts of older buildings. People are exposed to lead and asbestos and poor indoor air quality in some older buildings. The preservation field must join with partners like city health departments to prioritize programs to address hazardous materials and environments.

A PERSON'S RIGHT TO THEIR HISTORY

- Legal scholars can continue to do research on historic places as a human and civil right, as well as historic places' right to legal personhood. Work on policies or legal precedent that gives people a right to the places of memory, history and culture, even if they do not own them.
 - For a related movement on the rights of environmental personhood, watch Kelsey Leonard's TEDWomen 2019 talk, "[Why lakes and rivers should have the same rights as humans](#)," about the legal personhood of water.
- Talk with your Congressional representatives to advocate for ratification of the [United Nation's International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) (ICESCR), signed in 1977 by President Jimmy Carter.

SITES OF CONSCIENCE

- Use historic places as sites, and the subject of, reconciliation and reparations conversations and processes. Consult the National Trust for Historic Preservation's publication as a resource, "[Engaging Descendant Communities in the Interpretation of Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites: A Rubric of Best Practices Established by the National Summit on Teaching Slavery](#)."
- Connect with local counselors to provide service referrals if and when special places are demolished, and/or if people are displaced from these places, to address the negative mental and physical health impacts of [solastalgia](#).

WORKERS' WELLBEING

- Read the [Uplifting Preservation](#) and [Uplifting Preservation Archive](#) blogs by Raina Regan on how to address burnout.
- Read about the humorous trials of leading a nonprofit, including burnout, in Vu Le's [Nonprofit AF](#) blog. Le names steps that boards and staff members can take to promote equitable and healthy work environments.
- The problem of burnout must be addressed systematically and programmatically. Fair wages and competitive (or better) benefits are a start, but we also need to provide the following to retain our preservation talent:
 - Training and accountability in making a welcoming and supportive workplace for all

- Workload reduction and time to take vacation
- Professional development, mentoring and sabbaticals
- Paid-time-off for caregiving
- Trusted management of one's own programs and projects
- Ample resources and tools
- Promotional and leadership opportunities
- Engaging everyone in an organization in deciding on the future
- Staff members may want to organize and/or form a union for collective action (take a look at the [Art + Museum Transparency Instagram](#) feed for information about unionization efforts in these fields – source from Sarah Marsom)
- Listening, engaging and acting with the voices calling for change. The field needs to support those coming in with fresh ideas. They quickly are broken down and just realize that they have to make a living.
- Ensure people at all levels within the organization have agency to self-select projects and drive their own agenda for the future, as well as shape the culture and vision.
- People who have been in positions of authority / power need to mentor, open doors, make introductions and step aside to make room for younger people and perspectives
- Collaboration and partnership building can be a burnout prevention strategy. Can organizations work collaboratively on strategic planning to solicit helpful feedback relevant to both organizations and develop solutions where they can share resources? Rather than having organizations working separately on the same problem, can they build several programmatic models as a coalition? If preservation organizations collaborated at the local, regional, statewide and/or national level, we would avoid each organization devoting the resources to develop likely similar solutions.

IDEAS TO CREATE JOBS THROUGH PRESERVATION

JOBS IN THE TRADES

- Preservation is, in part, valuing people's past labor. Talk about this as a reason that saving places is important.
- Celebrate craftworkers and heighten their profile as valued members of the preservation field. Name the workers as part of awards programs, provide features and stories in printed and social media, create positions on boards for craftworkers, encourage networking at events.
- Build relationships with trades training programs to have programs and mentors available.
 - Get involved in the [Campaign for Historic Trades](#), a program of the [National Park Service](#) and [Preservation Maryland](#).
 - Look into the [Uncommon Construction](#) program based in New Orleans.
- Read the Preservation Priorities Task Force historic trades [issue brief](#).

- See if the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Habitat for Humanity would start a home repair trades training program.

EDUCATION

- Encourage people interested in preservation work to consider multiple learning options, including college and vocational training, as well as entering allied fields. Provide a list of these institutions and fields and engage in conversation to help engage the person in finding the right fit for their interests.
- Create more scholarship programs for students from underrepresented communities in preservation to enter educational and training programs. Ensure that these scholarship programs are enough to provide meaningful support. Provide additional supports with the scholarship, including mentoring and help with internship and job placement, if requested.
- Ensure that scholarships are available to enter the preservation trades or college programs.
- Reform and decolonize preservation pedagogy to support racial equity in the field.
- Develop a comprehensive job-retraining program for preservation professionals if the field's evolution leads to job losses. Consider retraining in sustainability, social justice work, public health, real estate and community development, policy, design and other allied fields

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

- Take action to support the [Labor Equity in Preservation Initiative](#), organized by heritage resource consultant and cultural resource advocate, [Sarah Marsom](#). Sarah calls for:
 - Listing salaries on job postings.
 - Paying interns.
- Assess what experience is really needed and list this on the job description rather than assuming what kind of training and experience a person has from a prior job.
- Start including life experience on job postings, and time working in allied fields, in addition to an educational background.
- Search committees must be honest with candidates about performance expectations including workload, expected time commitment and how, and on what metrics, the person will be evaluated. Is there an employment contract or is the position at will? There should be full transparency about the organization's or agency's staffing levels and financial position. For nonprofit boards, it is unreasonable to expect an executive or development professional to raise their own salary in their first year.
- Do not ask a job candidate's salary history. Pay what the position merits. As of April 2023, [asking about salary history is banned](#) in 21 states and 22 local governments.
- Evaluate your pay and benefits packages to ensure that you are providing for employee's needs and living wages in your area.
- Be people centric. Ensure employees' wellbeing, health and safety by providing:
 - Living-wage pay and benefits, including paid vacation, sick and caregiver/parental leave. If you are not required to comply with the federal [Family and Medical Leave Act](#), strive to meet the requirements of at least 12 weeks of unpaid leave and, even better, 12 weeks of paid caregiving leave.

- Reasonable work hours and workload, including setting reasonable hours, and agreeing on a reasonable schedule for when staff are expected to be on call and look at and respond to calls, emails or text messages.
- Encouraging staff to take their paid breaks and lunchtime and not work through these mental rest periods and to prioritize self-care.
- Provide funding and time off for professional development for every person on staff, not just those in managerial or executive positions.
- Create a sabbatical policy to allow extended leave for staff who have worked for a defined period.
- Consider expansive benefits like housing assistance and repaying student loans.
- Conduct an annual performance evaluation.
- Provide ongoing mentoring and coaching.
- If in a position that can accommodate hybrid or remote work, enable workers to determine their work environment and schedule.
- Evaluate workplace health and culture on a quarterly basis to communicate about workload, engagement, and decision-making.
- Provide and engage in training to eliminating unconscious bias in your workplace.

CONTRACTORS

- Review your list of vendors, consultants and contractors and note how long you have worked with them and any other characteristics that support your equity goals, such as supporting women-owned (WBE) or minority-owned business enterprises (MBE).
- Make it a practice to conduct a Request for Proposals (RFP) process every certain number of years, providing an opportunity for others to bid.
- Ask WBE and MBE contracts that you work with to help distribute RFPs to their network. This is one way to expand beyond your existing contractor relationships.
- Develop a rubric based on the RFP parameters that applies a logical, quantitative point system to assess each proposal in order to avoid unconscious bias being the reason for your decision.

IDEAS TO MAKE PRESERVATIONISTS BETTER STORYTELLERS

MEANINGFUL STORIES

- People are interested in the way that communities are changing. “Preservation” is foreign to people. They want a connectedness to where they belong in the world. You can see where you fit – your story. When preservation is inclusive and thoughtful, it can be very powerful.
- Begin conversations with the narratives that all people have in common to draw them in to the story of place, like family, food, work and aspiration. Bring the heart into the story. Don’t lead out with the building facts.

- Assess who preservationists need to build relationships with to understand how others see us, messages that resonate and how we can communicate more effectively. The interviewee mentioned media and local banks.

DEVELOP YOUR STORY

- Start with perfecting your own story of why you are a preservationist. Your entertaining and informative story might just change people’s minds about history and build future advocates to sustain our historic places.

EDUCATION

- Take classes in storytelling to become better and more comfortable storytellers.
- Pick a project, go to a local school and do a writing contest about why that place is important. Young people are also storytellers.

HONOR STORYTELLERS

- Honor community storytellers and their lived experiences by featuring their voices in research, documentation and programming.
- Conduct more oral histories to generate more archival documentation – do this in conjunction with partners in historical societies, genealogical societies, public history programs
- Invite and engage young people as storytellers about their own communities –build programming with them. Discuss and collaborate on who will make programmatic decisions and introduce or present the program.
- Nonprofit and governmental awards programs are a great place to engage in storytelling and to engage people’s emotions about place. They leave thinking, “I can do that.” Don’t make the awards programs feel too corporate.

DIGITAL / VISUAL STORYTELLING

- Hire photographers and graphic designers to make things visually interesting. The [Tucson Preservation Foundation](#) did this in preparation for the listing of Tucson’s [Sunshine Mile](#) to the 11 Most Endangered in Tucson.
- Create more digital media to make it easier to see, understand and share the story places tell.
 - See the digital storytelling app, [Urban Archive](#), out of New York City, which has won a [2020 Webby Award](#). It includes historic photos along with the stories.
- Learn to use social media platforms effectively to share our stories through visual and concise storytelling. See this Constant Contact guide, “[Social Media for Nonprofits: A Comprehensive Guide](#),” which has basic tips that apply to governments, foundations and corporations, as well.
 - Use LinkedIn to publish a few things that you are working on each week – a “Did you know?” post.

- Think of different ways of storytelling, such as creating more temporary and permanent interpretive signage around communities, not historic markers. It is time to experiment with self-made historic markers (see Tonika Lewis Johnson's [Inequity for Sale landmarks](#).) A Kansas-based historic preservation commission did \$3 window clings for signage instead of bronze markers (noted by Sarah Marsom).

IDEAS TO FUND PRESERVATION'S EVOLUTION

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- Share grant opportunities with your preservation community.
- Create a platform for regular community for nonprofits and for-profits that have resources to talk with each other. Where do we complement one another? Are there areas of overlap?
- If you do not have them already, develop your organization's values and principles to provide a strong foundation to guide change and to fundraise for your evolution.
- Begin talking with your volunteers, members, contributors and partners about your vision and ideas for your organization's future. Through these conversations, you will learn where you already have support and where you can anticipate potential pushback or loss of support. Changing what you do will engage new supporters and may even garner new energy from existing networks, but some constituents may resist or fight change, or may walk away entirely. The earlier that you talk about this possibility, the more that you can plan for it in advance.
- Engage your ambassadors in your vision for change. They may be your colleagues, volunteers, board and committee members, family and friends, funders, event goers, contractors and consultants, partner organizations and people who have benefitted from your work. Develop plans with volunteers, staff and partners to create a shared vision, direction and to engage future ambassadors for this change. It is very important to ensure that you have their participation and commitment early in the process.
- Ask your ambassadors to:
 - Talk about your organization with others, volunteer and bring people to events, sign colleagues up for your newsletter or support your fundraising.
 - Make introductions to foundation and donor-advised fund board members, corporate marketing and charitable giving staff that they know.
 - Make public statements on your behalf, lend their expertise or reputation to a new project or serve as thought leaders as you implement change.
 - Increase their giving to offset any losses, if necessary.
- Prepare a case statement about the future you envision and how you will achieve that vision. You can draw from this case statement for individual, foundation and corporate donor requests instead of having to write a new proposal each time.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

- Here are ideas to identify and cultivate individual donors:

- Review the IRS Form 990's of partner organizations doing the work that you are interested in moving into. See if you have any donors in common who would support both organizations' work. Show this list to your ambassadors to see if they know any of these donors. NOTE: We are not looking to plunder donors, but to align with existing donors where our work intersects.
- Attend these organization's events and meet others interested in this work. Talk about how preservation intersects. Look at the program supporters to see if you have donors in common who may not know you are working in this space.
- Talk with the people your ambassadors bring to your events. Find out about their interests. Later, explore if they have donor advised funds or if they have connections to foundations.
- Put on programs where you begin to talk about your interest in this work, bring in experts and/or focus on success stories to present about impact.
- Find and publish data about this kind of work in your community to frame the opportunity and scale of the issue. Share this information with your members and invite their engagement. See who follows up with you and begin cultivating them as a volunteer and/or donor.
- Honor projects in this program area to introduce case studies and concepts to your members and donors. Note and cultivate the donors who come for those projects.
- Hold tours at sites where you want to work with the approval of, and in collaboration with, local partners.
- Send articles about the work to interested donors.
- Invite donors to attend conferences about this work with you.
- Though this may be obvious, remember to ask your prospective donors for financial support. People do not typically donate unless they are asked.

CORPORATE DONORS

- Here are a few ideas to cultivate corporate donors:
 - Design a corporate sponsor program to outline benefits and expectations. It is important to have clear parameters to ensure consistent treatment. Again, you can start small, with only one or two corporate partners.
 - Identify the corporations (design, professional services, contractors and subcontractors) involved with preservation projects or on projects relating to your organization' vision. We make it a practice to build a long-term, and not transactional, relationship with our corporate sponsors, as they enjoy providing more than just dollars. Our corporate partners also donate expertise, ideas, feedback, services and contacts.
 - Ask your existing corporate partners to identify others that might want to become corporate sponsors. They are unlikely to identify their competitors, but they may introduce you to providers in other areas of the field.
 - Talk with the corporate partners that attend your, or partner organizations', events. Find out about their interests. Later, explore if there is alignment with your work.

- A corporate sponsorship does not equate to endorsing the corporation's product or services. However, you should feel comfortable having your organization's name affiliated with their company. Do you condone their business practices and believe their product is helping or doing no harm?

FOUNDATION DONORS

- Here are ideas to identify and cultivate foundation donors:
 - Investing in building foundation relationships and applying for grants takes considerable time with uncertain results. Weigh the prospective return-on-investment of applying for grants carefully.
 - Consider an incremental plan to add foundation funding and look for signals, such as invitations to apply, that your application will be successful.
 - Look at which foundations are funding partner organizations that are doing the work that you want to initiate or expand. Ask your existing foundation partners if they would introduce you to these foundations.
 - When attending partner events, look for foundations supporting the event that have program giving areas that align with your work. Follow-up with them after the event.
 - Research the foundations' giving areas, develop a set of talking points about how your work aligns with their priorities and then ask for an introductory meeting.
 - Prepare information about the scale of the opportunity or issue and how your project or services will provide a solution.
 - Share relevant data and articles about your aspirational work with foundation partners.
 - Offer to take funders on a tour of prospective projects and meet with partners and advocates.
 - Some foundations disallow including staff time in grant application leaving the organization to raise separate funds for program administration. Discuss why overhead is a necessary part of the program expenses, because we need to have the staff to manage a program.
- It is easier to get a foundation grant to start a pilot program than it is to sustain funding for an existing program. Foundations can help grantees by not expecting too much too soon by way of reporting metrics and "success."
- For foundations, consider getting rid of a required grant match. It is especially difficult for small nonprofits.
- This is a call to our major individual and foundation funders nationwide to convene a conversation about creating a fund to accelerate relevant change in preservation. An accessible national innovation fund available to any group, nonprofit or governmental agency, including projects that engage for-profit consultants, could accelerate change by providing a funding safety net as some supporters leave before others take their place.

GOVERNMENT DONORS

- Governments and foundations need to come to accept a high degree of failure and shift away from the success/innovation/scalability model, also needing extensive metric data. Also be patient, as these projects take time (years).
- Local governments should consider creating a fund to help small preservation nonprofits.

IDEAS BEYOND THESE TOPICS

COMMUNICATIONS

- We need national messaging for preservation and its relevance.
 - Reference the National Trust for Historic Preservation's [National Impact Agenda](#) for how they describe the seven action goals.
 - Communications strategist Cindy Olnick has been working with the [National Alliance of Preservation Commissions](#) on a messaging guide.
 - Some people want to have one national charismatic voice for preservation to set a national agenda that states and locals can follow. That person would be responsible for getting preservation a seat at different tables.
 - Others want the movement to be decentralized and grassroots.
- We need a better cross-pollinating tool to share resources, models and ideas amongst the field.
- Check out [Instagram](#), [blog](#) and [LinkedIn](#) posts by [Monica Rhodes](#), an American Academy in Rome Fellow, Loeb Fellow, and former Founding Director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation HOPE Crew. Monica posts frequently with links to history- and preservation-related stories and provides short, interesting introductions with accessible language.
- [Roadside America](#) and [Atlas Obscura](#) are examples of accessible storytelling for people traveling someplace
- Follow the [Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans](#) social media channels. Between 2018-2019, they more than tripled their followers from 5,000 to 17,000. They also put their free magazines in coffee shops around the city.

EDUCATION

- There is widespread belief that we need to start with early education, and advance continuing education, about the stories of place, identification of important places in a community, and begin conversations about why and how they can be reused.
- There needs to be a common core curriculum for preservation education. The [National Council for Preservation Education](#) (NCPE) fills in the gaps.
- Continue learning about these topics and sharing ideas, resources and models with others inside and outside the preservation field via listserves, social media, at conferences and in your own print publications.

- Make statements about the changes that you are making in preservation through your own channels. Remember to do so in comment letters, public testimony, letters to the editor or editorials.
- Attend local, state and national webinars, seminars and conferences in preservation and adjacent fields to bring preservation into the conversations.
- Familiarize yourself with the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s crowdsourced action framework, [Leading the Change: A National Impact Agenda for the Preservation Movement](#).
- Refer to and support the outcomes of preservation organizations’ strategic plans, such as the [HistoriCorps Strategic Plan](#) and [National Alliance of Preservation Commissions \(NAPC\) Strategic Plan](#).

INCENTIVES

TRIBAL INCENTIVES

- Tribal governments could utilize the incentive model created by The Council of the Cherokee Nation that signed the [Cherokee Nation Historic Places Preservation Fund Act](#) in March 2023. The new, \$1 million fund helps to preserve the tribe’s historic sites, as well as underwrite authorized biographies of past leaders. The funds are generated through agricultural and business leases.

FEDERAL INCENTIVES

- Pass the [Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act of 2023 \(HTC-GO\)](#) [S.639 in the 118th Congress] that boosts the FHTC to 30% for small projects.
- Add a 10% incentive boost to the [Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit \(FHTC\)](#) for affordable housing.
- If there is a sliding integrity scale established for the National Register of Historic Places criteria, could we develop a FHTC sliding scale? Could we add points for projects that demonstrate community engagement or that have signed a Community Benefits Agreement?
- Make the [New Markets Tax Credit](#) permanent.
- Resurrect the 10% federal non-historic tax credit. If you are unfamiliar with this program that was repealed in 2017, read this [undated document](#) summarizing the program from the Village of River Forest, Illinois.

STATE AND TERRITORIAL INCENTIVES

- Look at state historic tax credit programs that are working to create or improve one in your own state. [Texas’ state credit](#) has been brought up as a model by an equity investor. Reference the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s [state historic tax credit webpage](#) for information and resources.
- Could we create a low-interest loan program where homeowners in states with available residential historic tax credits could pool together to use the historic tax credit?

- [Government Property Lease Excise Tax](#) (GPLET) in Arizona, a financing tool where the city owns the lot for a specific time to avoid tax (changing it from a property tax to excise tax)
- [State Historic Property Tax Program](#), Arizona – Property tax reduction of between 35-45% for properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places either individually or as a contributor to a historic district.
- The [Mills Act Program](#), a tax abatement program between owners and local governments in California. However, the Mills Act has a history of only being for elite people. Benefits like tax abatement continue to accrue to that population.

LOCAL INCENTIVES

- Explore land trust models.
- Look into receivership programs, such as the Preservation Buffalo Niagara [Preservation Receivership Program](#).
- [4Culture](#) in King County, Washington, has bonding authority as a quasi-governmental agency. They bonded to create the [Preservation Action Fund](#), a revolving fund for historic properties in King County outside of Seattle. They have arts, heritage, preservation and public art under their purview. They provide grants as incentives in a community with few preservation incentives. [Beyond Integrity](#) is working to address that 4Culture's larger grants are tied to designation, which has been inequitable. They funded internships to dig into the data on the association with underrepresented history. Read the result of the [Equity in Historic Preservation Internship](#), the [2022 Equity in Preservation Report](#).
- Use the property tax system to incent investment by owners and renters in under-resourced communities that does not penalize investment – that freezes or reduces property taxes to mitigate displacement.
- Consider a property tax freeze program for long-term owners / renters in properties long term so that they are not displaced

INCENTIVES AT ANY LEVEL

- Examine all funding programs and assess and address barriers to use.
- When possible, nonprofit funders should consider removing the requirement to be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Evaluate organizational structure and capacity in another way.
- Ensure that reviews of funding applications have been trained in implicit bias and that they have clear scoring guidelines. To promote funding equity, provide additional points for people and/or projects that support your organizational commitments and goals.
- Remove unnecessary or overzealous reporting requirements from funding programs.
- Develop incentives and financial tools that are not tied to the tax structure (as not everyone has the tax liability to need a credit or reduction).
- Look into the use of social impact mutual funds.
- Create a preservation pre-development fund with affordable capital.
- Create a small deals fund for small project, like the [Cleveland Restoration Society](#) or the [Main Street America Small Deal Initiative](#).

- Preservation revolving funds can partner with other local community development financial institutions (CDFIs) to leverage funds.
- Remove requirements for upfront equity from our loan programs – make them more risk tolerant.
- Our most effective tool is when we have skin in the game – putting our own money into a project.
- An organization or agency doesn't have to own a place to ensure its preservation. You can divest of resources and still layer on protections before selling.
- Have a local business school do an evaluation of your finances, conduct market studies and develop a business plan for your organization.
- There needs to be more funding set aside for continued training and for succession planning, especially for organizations focusing on underrepresented history to ensure the effort continues to ensure representation. One interviewee talked about real succession planning, which would be planning for seven generations ahead.
- Solutions don't always have to be big and fancy. There is usually not one big fix.

REGULATORY AND PLANNING

- Look at your state's and/or local preservation enabling legislation. Is it too specific and preventing barriers to entry?
 - One example is the [Philadelphia Historic Preservation Task Force](#) created to review the policies that support historic preservation in the city and to make recommendations to strengthen those policies. Put out change that was hard to implement, but aspirational.
- Look at the [Minnesota Environmental Rights Act](#) (MERA) where it makes cultural heritage a civil right. The default is for sustainability and the burden of proof is on developers to show what there is no other alternative than destroying the resource.
- The preservation field needs a cadre of social scientists, data analysts, economists and mapping specialists to expand the research available about preservation's impacts nationwide. Representatives of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the University of Pennsylvania have considered developing a cabinet of researchers.
 - We need continued data that demonstrates when preservation costs less than new construction, as well as first-person testimonials from developers and community development corporations.
 - We will need to collect and analyze data and develop case studies in order to change policy at the federal, state and local levels to create financial tools and integrate preservation into other federal programs.
- It starts with policy – run for public office.
- Ask people with whom you are working if they feel comfortable with their level of understanding of regulations and regulatory processes. If they want to learn more, help make the laws and processes more accessible and to navigate with them, if asked.
 - Watch the December 2013 [TEDx Talk](#) by Rosanne Haggerty, President & CEO of supportive housing organization Community Solutions, about “How to solve a social

problem,” for their process of going to people affected by a problem to define and solve the problem.

- We need code wraparound services to help people understand and navigate the multiple codes, since there are building, electrical, fire, health and other municipal codes.
- When doing planning, plan for the people living in a community now and not the mythical population of the future.
- Go back and re-survey cities and states with cultural historians, intentionally look for underrepresented stories.
- Local preservation ordinances need to be updated to integrate community engagement into the identification, evaluation, designation and review process.
- We need more tools like character districts that are not tied to local landmarking.
- Decouple the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit from the National Register of Historic Places and reform both programs.
- When conducting strategic planning, include internal evaluation in addition to future-thinking goals and metrics. There is value in self-reflection.
- If you want to affect preservation policy, including advocating for changes and expansion of the Historic Preservation Fund, plan to participate in [Advocacy Week](#), our national lobbying event held at the beginning of March and hosted by [Preservation Action](#) and the [National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers](#) (NCSHPO).
 - Recalculate the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPO)/State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) allocation formula. It should no longer be based on the number of National Register nominations since there is inconsistency in nomination review and designation between states. Nominating traditional cultural properties can also be challenging for THPOs due to lack of accepted documentation.
 - We want to see NCSHPO increase funding for the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs) in the Historic Preservation Fund.

APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 2.

LIST OF RESOURCES

PREFACE

Developing The Relevancy Guidebook essays, Quick Reference Guides and the list of ideas in Appendix 1 required consulting a substantial number of resources. Many of those resources are included here for further reference and consideration. Listed by essay topic, the resources are further subcategorized by the following resource types:

- Articles and Publications
- Context Studies and Documentation
- Educational Tools
- Evaluative Tools
- Financial Tools
- Initiatives and Organizations
- Policy and Regulatory Tools
- Reports and Studies
- Topic Overviews

ESSAY RESOURCES - WHY IS PRESERVATION STILL SO DIFFICULT?

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- Case, Jean. [Be Fearless: 5 Principles for a Life of Breakthroughs and Purpose](#). New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, January 8, 2019.
- [Nina Simon's TrustLive presentation](#) at the PastForward 2016 Conference in Houston, Texas, 16 November, 2016, or her "[The Art of Relevance](#)" presentation at TEDxPalo Alto, May 4, 2017.
- Page, Max, and Marla R. Miller, editors. [Bending the Future: Fifty Ideas for the Next Fifty Years of Historic Preservation in the United States](#). University of Massachusetts Press, July 2016.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Historic Preservation Contacts and Resources](#)
- [Historic Preservation Professionals](#) on Facebook.
- [Main Street America Main Street Resource Center](#)
- [National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Resources](#)
- [National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers Resources](#)
- [National Preservation Partners Network Resource Library](#)

- [“Preservation Priorities Task Force.”](#) National Preservation Partners Network, National Trust for Historic Preservation, undated.

POLICY AND REGULATORY TOOLS

- [“Leading the Change: A National Impact Agenda for the Preservation Movement.”](#) National Trust for Historic Preservation, undated.

REPORTS AND STUDIES

- Kuhlman, Renee, Jim Lindberg and Amy Webb. “Building Relevance: A Snapshot of the Preservation Movement” Series: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation, October 8, 2020.
- Mason, Randall and Kaitlyn Levesque. [“Preservation and Change: Survey of Attitudes and Opinions in the Historic Preservation Field.”](#) Urban Heritage Project/Penn Praxis, March 2022.

TOPIC OVERVIEWS

- Beyer, Scott. [“Historic Preservation Is Great, Except When It Isn’t”](#), Governing: The Future of States and Localities website, 28 September 2020.
- Frey, Patrice. [“Why Preservation Needs a New Approach,”](#) Bloomberg CityLab, February 8, 2019.
- Mayes, Thompson M. [Why Old Places Matter: How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-Being.](#) Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.
- Page, Max. [Why Preservation Matters.](#) Yale University Press, 2016.

ESSAY RESOURCES - THE CULTURE OF PRECIOUSNESS

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- Case, Jean. [Be Fearless: 5 Principles for a Life of Breakthroughs and Purpose](#). New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, January 8, 2019.
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- [National Preservation Partners Network Resource Library](#)
- "[Preservation Priorities Task Force](#)." National Preservation Partners Network, National Trust for Historic Preservation, undated.

POLICY AND REGULATORY TOOLS

- "[Leading the Change: A National Impact Agenda for the Preservation Movement](#)." National Trust for Historic Preservation, undated.

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- Kuhlman, Renee, Jim Lindberg and Amy Webb. "Building Relevance: A Snapshot of the Preservation Movement" Series: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation, October 8, 2020.
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ESSAY RESOURCES - PROMOTING A JUST PRESERVATION MOVEMENT

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- [“Underrepresented Communities Historic Context Statements.”](#) Office of Historic Preservation, California State Parks.

EDUCATIONAL TOOLS

- Aidoo, Fallon Samuels, PhD, Tejpaal Singh Bainiwal, Caroline S. Cheong, PhD, Laura A. Dominguez, MHP, Sarah Zenaida Gould, PhD, Michelle G. Magalong, PhD, Raymond W. Rast, PhD, Andrea Roberts, PhD, and Amber N. Wiley, PhD. [“Response to NCPE Open Letter.”](#) August 13, 2020.
- [“Free Tutorial: Learn 35 American Sign Language Museum Signs.”](#) Deaffriendlylearning.com. Undated.
- Read the work of the nonprofit organization Utah Diné Bikéyah, and Angelo Baca, its Cultural Resources Coordinator, who prepared a [“Media Orientation and Cultural Sensitivity Sheet for the Bears Ears National Monument.”](#) In what way can this resource help you to ask important questions about cultural sensitivity when working with tribal members and indigenous resources? (Special thanks to Angelo Baca for guiding me to this resource and providing ideas for this project.)
- [Preservation in Practice Program](#), “a program developed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the National Park Service (NPS), and the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s HOPE Crew, which connects historic preservation and conservation through a joint project with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).”

EVALUATIVE TOOLS

- [Just](#). A Program of the International Living Future Institute. The Just Program is an assessment tool and scorecard to evaluate an organization's support for social justice.
- Check out the free assessment tools at [OF/BY/FOR ALL](#).

FINANCIAL TOOLS

- [African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund](#), National Trust for Historic Preservation
- [“African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund Receives \\$20 Million MacKenzie Scott Grant.”](#) National Trust for Historic Preservation, June 16, 2021.
- Look at the ArtPlace America [Community Development Investments Program](#) with outcomes studied and reported by [PolicyLink](#) and the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco (an [extensive list of articles](#) related to the outcomes of integrating arts and culture to transform community development practice.) Read the PolicyLink 2021 Report, [Working With Artists to Deepen Impact: Lessons from ArtPlace America's Community Development Investments](#). [CultureBank](#), an initiative by the [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts](#) came out of this initiative in 2017, envisioned as a “new paradigm for arts and community investment.” (An example of the arts and placemaking in rural context is Patrick Dougherty's [“Cursive Takes a Holiday,”](#) and [“Daydreams,”](#) using a vacant one-room schoolhouse at Tippet Rise Art Center, Fishtail, Montana.)
- Read through the [CultureBank vision statement](#) for their “Three Streams of Returns” answering the question, “Have We Made a Culture of Equity Central to Our Investment System?”
- [Cultural Resources Grants](#). National Park Service.
- Frey, Patrice. [“Main Spotlight: Beyond Passing the Plate, The Main Street Small Deal Initiative.”](#) Main Street America, September 27, 2022.
- Iyengar, Nikishka, Avery Ebron and Lyneir Richardson. [“Building Community Wealth: Shifting Power and Capital in Real Estate Finance.”](#) Black Paper 1.1, Zebras Unite on behalf of the Inclusive Capital Collective, May 12, 2021.
- The New York Landmarks Conservancy's [Sacred Sites Grants Program](#) has been a way that the organization has connected with diverse communities, including immigrant communities.
- [Open Access](#) is a nonprofit providing the [Open Access Fellowship](#) to increase Black and Latinx representation in community development finance.
- [Real Rent Duwamish](#) initiative. “Real Rent calls on people who live and work in Seattle to make rent payments to the Duwamish Tribe. Though the city named for the Duwamish leader Chief Seattle thrives: **The Tribe has yet to be justly compensated for their land, resources, and livelihood.**” As of April 29, 2023, there are 22,901 people paying the Duwamish Tribe Real Rent. As of that same date, you can sign a [Change.org petition](#) for the U.S. government to restore Federal recognition to the Duwamish Tribe.
- [Underrepresented Communities Grants Opportunity](#). National Park Service.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- [A Night in Old San Antonio](#) festival celebrates the city’s cultural diversity, a program of The Conservation Society of San Antonio.
- Abello, Oscar Perry. “[Can A Filipino Cultural District Revive San Francisco’s Downtown?](#)” Next City, April 25, 2023.
- “[Applications open for summer seminar on ‘Racialized Spaces on Route 66.’](#)” The NAU Review, February 15, 2023.
- [Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation](#) (APIA-HiP)
- [Black in Historic Preservation](#)
- Chhaya, Priya. “[Looking to the Future with Latinos in Heritage Conservation.](#)” National Trust for Historic Preservation, May 25, 2022.
- [DC Neighborhood Heritage Trail](#)
- [The Descendants Project](#)
- Look to the [Equal Justice Initiative](#) as a model for intersectionality – ending mass incarceration, criminal justice reform, challenging racial and economic injustice, protecting basic human rights.
- [Facing History & Ourselves](#) educational organization.
- [Fractured Atlas](#) – a nonprofit that is trying the shared leadership model.
- Landmarks Illinois’ [Guiding Principles](#), adopted April 2021.
- Introduce people to the [Incremental Development Alliance](#), helping train local developers to manage small-scale real estate projects.
- [Latinos in Heritage Conservation. Latinos in Heritage Conservation’s Abuelas Project](#) is an alternative method to identify and preserve stories and places as an alternative to the National Register of Historic Places.
- [Monument Lab](#)
- See campaigns like [Museums are Not Neutral](#). If we are not actively disrupting narratives that perpetuate themselves, then we are building and supporting them.
- [NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project](#)
- National Humanities Alliance [Humanities for All Project](#) profiling over 2,000 changemaking humanities projects nationwide.
- Preservation North Carolina [We Built This: Profiles of Black Architects and Builders in North Carolina](#) program.
- [Rebuilding Together New Orleans](#)
- [Rural Indexing Project](#)
- SEED Network, a project of Kultivate Labs, created the “[Vacant to Vibrant](#)” in San Francisco’s South of Market (SoMa) Pilipinas community. The program provides flexible storefront leases in currently vacant spaces, \$5,000 in seed capital, a \$1,000 learning stipend, free training and one-on-one consulting to entrepreneurs and artists. [Kultivate Labs](#) is a Filipino-led nonprofit organization supporting Filipino entrepreneurs and artists in SoMa Pilipinas.

Read more in Oscar Perry Abello's April 25, 2023, Next City article, "[Can A Filipino Cultural District Revive San Francisco's Downtown?](#)"

- [Today's Urban Renewal Network](#) (TURN), Los Angeles - TURN leads, connects, empowers and supports faith, governmental and non-profit communities both locally and internationally so that they can love their neighbors and neighborhoods through collaboration and unity.
- Tucson Anti-Gentrification Task Force (see [article about gentrification in Tucson](#)), [Tucson Displacement Study](#) (May 2020) Prepared by Univ. of Arizona Urban Planning Master's Students in collaboration with the City of Tucson

POLICY AND REGULATORY TOOLS

- American Institute of Architects (AIA) "[Guides for Equitable Practice.](#)"
- American Planning Association (APA) "[Equity Policy Guide.](#)"
- Bartram, Robin. "[Stacked Decks: Building Inspectors and the Reproduction of Urban Inequality.](#)" Presentation for the [Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies](#), YouTube, November 4, 2022.
- Biden, Jr., President Joseph R. "[Executive Order on Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through The Federal Government.](#)" The White House, February 16, 2023.
- Bloom, Mina. "[Logan Square's Milwaukee Avenue In Line For Special Zoning Designation To Preserve 'Unique Character'.](#)" Block Club Chicago, January 9, 2023.
- The City of Seattle's [Seattle Restored](#) program activates vacant storefronts by providing space to local artists and businesses, particularly Black, Indigenous and other artists and entrepreneurs of color.
- DeSantis, Mark K. "[The Federal Role in Historic Preservation: An Overview.](#)" Congressional Research Service, R45800. Updated April 7, 2020. CRS-27.
- "[Engaging Descendant Communities in the Interpretation of Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites: A Rubric of Best Practices Established by the National Summit on Teaching Slavery.](#)" National Trust for Historic Preservation African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund. V1.0, October 25, 2018.
- "[ETOD Calculator.](#)" [Equitable Transit-Oriented Development.](#) A project by the Center for Neighborhood Technology and the Metropolitan Planning Council. 2022.
- "[For Love of Country: A Path for the Federal Government to Advance Racial Equity.](#)" PolicyLink, July 2021.
- Gray, M. Nolan. "[Apartheid by Another Name: How Zoning Regulations Perpetuate Segregation.](#)" Next City: July 4, 2022.
- [Hawai'i Land Trust](#), (HILT) "is Hawai'i's islands-wide land trust that protects lands that are integral to Hawai'i's well-being and character, upholding our kuleana to these lands, and the communities they are in, through thoughtful stewardship that deepens community connection to, and builds reciprocal relationships with 'aina."
- [Illinois Cultural Districts](#) state legislation
- [Kensington Corridor Trust](#) (Philadelphia-based land trust)

- Lohrentz, Tim. “[Contracting for Equity: Best Local Government Practices that Advance Racial Equity in Government Contracting and Procurement.](#)” Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity, Insight Center for Community Economic Development, undated.
- Louisville Metro Planning & Design Services. “[Confronting Racism in City Planning and Zoning.](#)” September 1, 2021. “The Louisville Metro Office of Planning & Design Services...is in the process of reviewing the Land Development Code (LDC) to identify and address land use regulations and policies that have inequitable impacts on Louisville residents. This interactive exhibit begins with a basic introduction to zoning and land use regulations, and then dives deeper into the specific policies, people and regulations that have shaped the City of Louisville.”
- “[Mapping Inequality,](#)” a University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab project showing previous redlining maps over a current map of U.S. cities.
- “[Mapping Prejudice,](#)” a project of the University of Minnesota Libraries to visualize “the hidden histories of race and privilege in the built environment.”
- [National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers](#) (NATHPO)
- “[Roots of Structural Racism Project,](#)” by the Othering and Belonging Institute. The link takes you to an interactive map of racial segregation in the United States.
- Other resource from the San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation:
 - [Legacy Businesses Program](#) and [Living Heritage Symposium](#)
 - The San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation does participatory budgeted using an equity lens. Staff also went through transgender sensitivity training as part of its anti-bullying work (also known as Gender Sensitivity Training or Diversity Training on Gender Identity and Gender Expression).
- “[SurveyLA, the Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey, is the first-ever comprehensive program to identify significant historic resources throughout the City of Los Angeles.](#)” Los Angeles City Planning, accessed July 15, 2022.
- [Texas Cultural Districts Map](#)

REPORTS AND STUDIES

- Avrami, Erica. “[Building a Foundation for Action: Anti-Racist Historic Preservation Resources.](#)” Columbia Center for Archaeology. December 22, 2020.
- [Census of Places that Matter](#) (NY), CityLore – participatory asset mapping
- “[Puerto Rico Town, Chicago, Illinois: Datebook February 2023.](#)” UIC Great Cities Institute, February 2023.
- “[Racial and Social Equity Resource List,](#)” Weitzman School of Design, University of Pennsylvania.

ESSAY RESOURCES - PRESERVING AND CREATING AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH PRESERVATION

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

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- Bertolet, Dan. "[Displacement: The Gnawing Injustice At The Heart Of Housing Crises.](#)" Sightline Institute, August 10, 2016.
- Bertolet, Dan. "[When Historic Preservation Clashes With Housing Affordability.](#)" Sightline Institute, December 19, 2017.
- Bliss, Laura. "[The NIMBY Principle.](#)" Bloomberg CityLab, July 26, 2019.
- Bloom, Mina. "[This Couple Bought An Affordable Home Near The Bloomingdale Trail Thanks To Logan Square's New Community Land Trust.](#)" Block Club Chicago, July 28, 2022.
- Ciuntu, Alexandra. "[Yesterday's Factories, Today's Apartments: Adaptive Reuse Projects at All-Time High in the U.S.](#)" RentCafe, September 30, 2020.
- Dougherty, Conor. "[Twilight of the NIMBY.](#)" The New York Times, June 5, 2022.
- "[Editorial: Pilsen has found a way to help counter gentrification. City Hall should support it.](#)" The Chicago Tribune, May 30, 2022.
- Eley, Carlton. "[Heritage and Sustainability: The Role of Equitable Development in Preservation.](#)" Smart Growth Voice, June 28, 2017. Originally published by Preservation Leadership Forum, National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- Gallagher, Margaret. "[No Vacancies: Affordable Housing Growing Scarce in Rural Communities.](#)" Camoin Associates, April 12, 2022.
- Grevstad-Nordbrock, Ted and Igor Vojnovic. "[Heritage-fueled gentrification: A cautionary tale from Chicago.](#)" Journal of Cultural Heritage, Vol. 38, July – August 2019, pages 261-270.
- Kling, Steve, Shannon Peloquin, Charles Riesenbergen and Jonathan Woetzel. "[Preserving the largest and most at-risk supply of affordable housing.](#)" McKinsey & Company, February 23, 2021.
- Malone-France, Katherine. "[Old Homes: A Solution, Not a Fetish.](#)" The National Trust for Historic Preservation, February 8, 2022.
- Meskill, Lynn. "[Heritage, gentrification, participation: Remaking urban landscapes in the name of culture and historic preservation.](#)" International Journal of Heritage Studies, 25(9), 2018. 996-998.
- Miller, Michael. "[Adaptive reuse and apartment conversations rethink, revitalize rental housing industry.](#)" National Apartment Association, March 25, 2022.
- Mock, Brentin. "[The Cityhood Movement Is Defeated in Metro Atlanta.](#)" Bloomberg CityLab, May 25, 2022.
- Noonan, D. S., & Krupka, D. J. "[Making—Or picking—Winners: Evidence of internal and external price effects in historic preservation policies.](#)" Real Estate Economics, 39(2), 2011. 379-407.

- Ogilvie, Jessica P. "[Why Underused Hotels, Motels Could Be The Faster Path To Easing L.A.'s Affordable Housing Gap.](#)" LAist, April 6, 2022.
- Peace, Katy. "[Land Banks, Preservation & Affordable Housing.](#)" Preservation League of New York State, May 22, 2021.
- Presa, Laura Rodríguez. "[To combat gentrification in Pilsen and keep Latinos in the area, a co-op has 'regular people' creating their own affordable housing.](#)" The Chicago Tribune, May 24, 2022.
- "[Public Housing: Image Versus Facts.](#)" Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Spring 1995.
- Rotenstein, David S. "[Our Missing Middle Housing Didn't Just Go Missing. It Was Torn Down.](#)" Next City, April 24, 2023.
- Rothstein, Richard. "[The Neighborhoods We Will Not Share.](#)" The New York Times, January 20, 2020.
- "[Rural Studio Immersion Program Enriching Students, Reviving West Alabama's Black Belt.](#)" Shaw Industries, February 1, 2022.
- Schaeffer, Katherine. "[A growing share of Americans say affordable housing is a major problem where they live.](#)" Pew Research Center, January 18, 2022.
- [Segregated By Design](#), a film by Mark Lopez and Richard Rothstein. You can request to host a screening.
- Simons, Sasha-Ann. "[What does 'affordable' even mean in the Washington area?](#)" WAMU: American University Radio, September 20, 2020.
- Sisson, Patrick. "[Sleeping Beauties: Chicago's Adaptive Reuse.](#)" AIA Architect, June 3, 2022.
- Sweeney, Erica. "[Small-Town America Needs Affordable Housing, Too.](#)" Next City, April 19, 2023.
- Von Hoffman, Alexander. "[Single-Family Zoning: Can History Be Reversed?](#)" Housing Perspectives, Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, October 5, 2021.
- Walk-Morris, Tatiana. "[How Adaptive Reuse Can Help Solve the Housing Crisis.](#)" American Planning Association, May 1, 2021.
- Walker, Allssa. "[A new approach to housing Las Vegas's homeless.](#)" Curbed, April 12, 2017.
- Ward, Jason M. and Daniel Schwam. "[Can Adaptive Reuse of Commercial Real Estate Address the Housing Crisis in Los Angeles?](#)" RAND Corporation, 2022.
- Wedeen, Sophia. "[Home Repairs and Updates Pose Considerable Burdens For Low-Income Homeowners.](#)" Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, June 16, 2022.
- Weiner, Vicki. "[Historic preservation and community development: past and future synergies.](#)" In E. Avrami (ed.), *Preservation and Social Inclusion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020. 175-190.
- Willis, Haisten. "[Preserving Affordable Housing.](#)" The Washington Post, March 19, 2020.

FINANCIAL TOOLS

- [Economic Justice Partnership Fund](#) (EJP Fund), is a community development financial institution (CDFI) fund created by two CDFIs, Partners for Common Good and Opportunity Finance Network, to provide up to \$6 million in capital to smaller CDFIs that have difficulty accessing sufficient capital for larger projects. The EJP Fund provided capital for an [affordable housing project](#) in the small community of Trinidad, Colorado.
- Funding to purchase Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) – [An article evaluating three funds](#): The NOAH Impact Fund; The Housing Partnership Equity Trust; and The Washington Housing Initiative Impact Pool.
- [Mezzanine Debt Loan Program](#) (Chicago, IL) – A Community Investment Corporation (CIC) program offering low-cost, flexible financing options for developers looking to purchase or refinance existing rental properties in higher-cost markets.
- [Neighborhood Homes Investment Act Proposal](#) - The Neighborhood Homes Investment Act would offer federal tax credits to attract private investment for building and rehabilitating owner-occupied homes, creating a pathway to neighborhood stability through sustainable homeownership.
- [The Neighborhood Investment Company](#) (Los Angeles, CA) – Nico is a neighborhood investment company that makes it possible for people who love their neighborhood to build a long-term financial stake in their community by investing in local real estate through a low-investment real estate investment trust (REIT).
- [Small Building Program](#) (Washington, D.C.) - Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Small Buildings Program (SBP) will provide funds for limited systems replacement and other key repairs to eligible property owners of affordable housing of five (5) to twenty (20) units. Repairs are expected to improve sub-standard housing conditions, including safety and environmental hazards in the District.
- [TIF Multifamily Purchase Rehab Program \(Chicago, IL\) – A Community Investment Corporation \(CIC\) grant program, administered for the City of Chicago](#), to stabilize blocks by assisting private developers with the purchase and improvement of vacant and occupied rental buildings within designated tax increment financing (TIF) districts.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- [Desegregate Connecticut](#) – “our work is about first imagining and then enacting a new vision for local and state land use policies that promotes economic growth, racial inclusivity, and environmental sustainability.”
- [Pilsen Housing Cooperative](#), Chicago, IL
- [The Redress Project](#) - New movement to redress racial segregation
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) Chicago [Residential Conversions Initiative](#). “ULI Chicago’s Residential Conversions Initiative provides a framework to help communities navigate the opportunities and challenges associated with converting underutilized commercial spaces into residential units.”
- [Yes In My Back Yard](#) (YIMBY)

POLICY AND REGULATORY TOOLS

- 117th Congress (2021-2022), H.R.6589, [“Historic Preservation Enhancement Act.”](#)
- 117th Congress (2021-2022), S. 1614, [“Yes In My Backyard Act.”](#)
- 118th Congress (2023-2024), S. 639, [“Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act of 2023.”](#) (Find a [legislative fact sheet here](#) published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.)
- 118th Congress (2023-2024), S. 657, [“Neighborhood Homes Investment Act.”](#)
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) Ordinances
 - (Chicago, IL) - The [Additional Dwelling Units](#) (ADU) Ordinance pilot expands housing access across Chicago by allowing ADUs in attics, basements, and accessory buildings.
 - (Sacramento, CA) – [Accessory Dwelling Units](#) (ADU)
- [Adaptive Reuse Ordinance](#) (Los Angeles, CA) – The purpose of this Ordinance is to revitalize the Greater Downtown Los Angeles Area and implement the General Plan by facilitating the conversion of older, economically distressed or historically significant buildings to apartments, live/work units or visitor-serving facilities.
- [Anti-Deconversion Ordinance](#) (Chicago, IL) - Designed to reduce displacement of low- to moderate-income residents and maintain the existing character and housing stock, specifically two- to eight-unit buildings that often provide naturally occurring affordable housing units in the Pilsen neighborhood and around The 606 pedestrian trail.
- [“Defining Housing Affordability.”](#) U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, August 14, 2017.
- [Demolition Permit Surcharge Ordinance](#) (Chicago, IL) – Through April 1, 2024, the City of Chicago is now charging a \$5,000 - \$15,000 demolition fee in the Pilsen neighborhood and around The 606 pedestrian trail to reduce housing unit reduction and corresponding displacement.
- [Density in historic environments](#) (U.K.) – A study on adding density in historic environments by Historic England and ARUP.
- Detroit Land Bank Authority [Rehabbed & Ready Program](#) (Detroit, MI) – In Detroit, where home values are less than the cost of required rehab work, it can be difficult to finance repairs. The Rehabbed & Ready program was developed to renovate and sell homes for market value in order to bridge the gap between home value and repair expenses.
- [Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network](#) (Boston, MA) - The Greater Boston Community Land Trust Network supports current and emerging community land trusts (CLTs) for resident-led planning and long-term, collective control of land in and around Boston. The Network is committed to removing land from the speculative market and putting it into the hands of the community for use in permanently affordable housing, economic development, urban agriculture, and open space.
- [Here to Stay Community Land Trust](#) (Chicago, IL) - Here to Stay is a homeownership model for moderate-income, long time Logan Square/Avondale/Hermosa residents who want to stay in their community. It is an anti-displacement effort created by neighbors. Your purchase price is more affordable because the land trust is deeply discounting the sales price of the property.

- [HUD's Public Housing Program](#). U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, undated.
- [Mandatory Housing Affordability Program](#) (Seattle, WA) - Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) is a developer contribution. Developer contributions are either a payment or provided benefit in consideration of a proposed project. The City of Seattle requires MHA developer contributions to mitigate the impacts of new development.
- [National Zoning Atlas](#) – “The National Zoning Atlas is a collaborative of researchers digitizing, demystifying, & democratizing ~30,000 U.S. zoning codes. It is housed at the Cornell University Legal Constructs Lab, led by Professor Sara Bronin, and has [team](#) members working on regional and statewide atlases around the country.”
- [Owe'neh Bupingeh Pueblo Restoration Project](#) by the Ohkay Owingeh Housing Authority (Ohkay Owingeh, NM) - The housing authority is restoring the 700-year-old historic Pueblo, which is the tribe's spiritual center and is of vital importance to the preservation of the Ohkay Owingeh cultural heritage. Through the Owe'neh Bupingeh Rehabilitation Program, the Pueblo is once again a vibrant, thriving residential area. Ohkay Owingeh is proud of the Pueblo's history and heritage, and is committed to revitalizing its sacred core through knowledge, conservation, rehabilitation and, as appropriate, new construction. The rebirth of the plazas honors traditional community values and identity while linking the past to the present.
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- EdApp has a list of “[10 Free Storytelling Classes](#),” though five of them charge a fee. Note: I have not used or reviewed any of these resources, but provide them as several free options.
- Georgetown University’s [certificate program in social impact storytelling](#).
- Simon, Nina. “[The Art of Relevance](#).” TEDXPaloAlto, May 4, 2017.
- “[Storytelling Tips & Tricks](#)” by The Moth.

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- The [Chicago Bungalow Association](#) launched in 2000 as a delegate agency of the City of Chicago to help preserve historic Chicago bungalows, the city’s most prevalent housing built at the start of the 20th Century. The organization dropped “Historic” from their name over the years and focuses its narratives on homeownership, maintenance and renovations and not preservation. They now have 25,000 members.
- The [Last Remaining Seats](#) program by the [Los Angeles Conservancy](#) brings together classic films played in historic theaters for a fun connection between storytelling and preservation.
- “[Reframing History](#)”, American Association for State and Local History.
- Preservationist and communications expert [Cindy Olnick](#), former Los Angeles Conservancy communications director, has written about this need to [reframe preservation](#).
- [Tucson Modernism Week](#) was created to fight the re-widening of Broadway Avenue, but became a way to highlight Tucson’s rich design tradition, including textiles and car design. The [Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation](#) also did a pop-up takeover of 10 Mid-Century buildings in partnership with AIA and exhibited HABS drawings of the buildings.
- k. Kennedy Whitters’ [\(un\)Redact the Facts™](#) and blog, [unredactthefacts](#), is a multifaceted call to action by a Black woman architect and preservationist to use active, accurate and complete language and grammar in all forms of storytelling about enslaved Black people and

their White enslavers. Using passive voice is a way to perpetuate white supremacy. The call to action also brings needed attention to proper attribution. When activism influences your actions, as k. kennedy Wheters has done for my own blog post, properly attribute who influenced your thinking and behaviors – and tell them that it has done so. The following is how Vu Le of the [Nonprofit AF blog](#) attributed Wheters' advocacy and intellectual property: "I want to give thanks and credit to k. kennedy Wheters, Architect and Founder of (un)Redact the Facts™, for giving me feedback and wording to revise the above two paragraphs."
#CiteBlackWomen, #theActiveVoicelsMyLoveLanguage,
#theActiveVoicelsOurLoveLanguage, @unRedacTheFacts and @CiteBlackWomen

STORYTELLING MODELS

- [99% Invisible podcast](#)
- [Atlas Obscura](#) promotes curious and wondrous travel destinations that are not typically in the guidebooks. Atlas Obscura's contributors write interesting stories about the listed sites to compel you to check them out.
- [Cheap Old Houses](#)™ on Instagram tells the story of, and promotes, old house real estate listings at "cheap" prices. Cheap Old Houses has 2 million followers and has a corresponding HGTV series featuring founders Elizabeth and Ethan Finkelstein.
- Hooper, Riley. "[Storytelling the stillmotion way: Part 1.](#)" Vimeo, April 17, 2013.
- [Kitchen Sisters](#) history storytelling podcast
- [The Moth storytelling podcast](#)
- [Preservation Buffalo Niagara](#) (PBN) are some of the best preservation storytellers that I have seen. Their well-curated social media platforms focus on making their work accessible to others. For example, during the pandemic, Christiana Limniatis, PBN's Director of Preservation Services, developed a series of short, virtual [Instagram reels](#) about historic architectural styles and her favorite walking tours. Christiana's fun, approachable storytelling method focused on providing meaningful context and not simply the facts (dates and architects). You can still find these reels on [PBN's YouTube page](#).
- [PreserveCast](#), a long-running, preservation-focused podcast by Preservation Maryland and hosted by President & CEO Nicholas Redding.
- [Save As: NextGen Heritage Conservation](#)
- Shermann "Dilla" Thomas, a Chicago urban historian uses [TikTok](#) as his storytelling platform and has over 104,000 followers.
- Zines are short, self-published works to present one's perspective on a topic. Indow Window hosted a "How to Make a Zine: Historic Preservation Stories," panel discussion in May 2020. The panel discussion is available on [YouTube](#). Indow has an entire [resource page](#) on how to make zines for community communication.

TOPIC OVERVIEWS

- Abdul-Fattah, Hakimah. "[How Griots Tell Legendary Epics through Stories and Songs in West Africa.](#)" The Met, April 20, 2020.
- Choi, Amy S. "[How stories are told around the world.](#)" IDEAS.TED.COM, March 17, 2015.
- "[Social Science 101: This is Your Brain on Social.](#)" Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness, May 17, 2017.
- Stanton, Andrew. "[The clues to a great story.](#)" TED2012, undated.
- "[Storytelling.](#)" Wikipedia, last edited September 2, 2022.
- "[Storytelling in Preservation.](#)" Panel Discussion Vimeo Recording, National Preservation Partners Network, undated.
- "[What makes a good story?](#)" American Press Institute, undated.

ESSAY RESOURCES - FUNDING PRESERVATION'S EVOLUTION

ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

- Le, Vu. "[The joy of fundraising: How fundraising can be truly, authentically joyful.](#)" Nonprofit AF, August 21, 2022.

EDUCATIONAL TOOLS

- Ibrisevic, Ilma. "[How to Craft Your Nonprofit Organizational Values: The Complete Process.](#)" Donorbox blog, updated May 11, 2022.

FINANCIAL TOOLS

- The National Trust for Historic Preservation's (NTHP) [African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund](#) provides grants for organizational capacity building, programming and interpretation, project planning and capital projects to preserve African American Cultural Heritage.
- Grants through the Historic Preservation Fund are available to [Certified Local Governments](#) through State Historic Preservation Offices. Projects can include surveys, National Register of Historic Places nominations and listing revisions, community planning, feasibility studies and structural assessments, public education projects and material reprinting. Projects in each one of these categories can support a more relevant preservation movement.
- "[CN leaders expand history registry act with \\$1M fund.](#)" Tahlequah Daily Press, March 18, 2023. The Council of the Cherokee Nation signed the [Cherokee Nation Historic Places Preservation Fund Act](#) on March 14, 2023, creating a new, \$1 million fund to preserve the tribe's historic sites, as well as underwrite authorized biographies of past leaders.
- Look at [ioby.org](#), a crowdfunding platform that comes with a personal coach, fiscal sponsorship for community projects.
- If you are in Virginia, Delaware or Florida, consider applying for funding from the [Jessie Ball DuPont Fund](#) for equity and placemaking.
- The [Moe Family Fund for Statewide and Local Partners](#) at the NTHP is available to dues-paying organizational members of the National Preservation Partners Network. Grants of up to \$10,000 are awarded to support embarking on new work or improving existing programs, in one or more of the four preservation priority areas.
- There are capacity building grants through the [National Association of Latino Arts and Culture](#) supporting US and Puerto Rico-based Latino artists and arts organizations in the development, creation, presentation and sustainability of artistic excellence.
- Though it is not positioned as an innovation grant, the [National Fund for Sacred Places](#), a partnership of Partners for Sacred Places and NTHP, provides substantial capital grants to religious congregations and nonprofits.
- The National Park Service offers [18 grant and subgrant programs](#) available to Native Hawai'ian, Tribal, local and state governments, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and nonprofits for historic preservation, traditional cultural heritage preservation and repatriation.

- Applicants in the United States and Canada can apply for a [Partners for Places](#) grant from The Funders Network, “a matching grant program that improves U.S. and Canadian communities by building partnership between local government leaders, frontline communities, and place-based funders. National funders invest in local projects developed through these partnerships to advance efforts to create communities that are sustainable, prosperous and just.”

INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation hosts a “Fundraising 101” course for nonprofit organizations and their “Places in Peril” sites through their [Historic Preservation Institute](#).
- At Landmarks Illinois, our [Annual Corporate Sponsor Program](#), and corporate in-kind giving, accounts for over 25% of our charitable giving.
- Landmarks Illinois’ [organizational values](#).

POLICY AND REGULATORY TOOLS

- [National Historic Preservation Act](#)

REPORTS AND STUDIES

- [“Giving USA: Total U.S. charitable giving remained strong in 2021, reaching \\$484.85 billion.”](#) Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, Indiana University - Perdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), June 21, 2022.

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LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

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LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

The Relevancy Project's initial purpose was to explore and identify perceptions of the preservation field's relevance. The project evolved into an in-depth exploration of the complicated feelings people have about our work and our collective wisdom about solutions to the challenges we face. The following 130 interviewees shared their experiences, time and encouragement for this project. Some interviewees were compensated for, while others donated, their valuable perspectives and time.

Significant efforts were made to prioritize inclusion of the preservation field's diversity in all its forms, including affiliation and skill set, perspectives on preservation's problems, duration of time working with historic places, race and ethnicity, colleagues who identify as LGBTQIA2S+, gender identity, and geography. However, no demographic information was requested to foster an environment for honest conversations.

Interviewees' affiliations at the time of the interview are listed. Many interviewees' affiliations have changed since these interviews were conducted between August 2019 and February 2021. As in any research project, the process had a beginning and end and the results provide a snapshot of this moment in time.

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I am saving the most significant and special supporter for the end as this publication's final punctuation. To my husband, **Michael Johnson**, who deserves immeasurable appreciation for encouraging and making The Relevancy Project possible, you have my deepest gratitude. Thank you for your patience, wise counsel, endless support, moral and otherwise, and unwavering belief in this project's importance to our shared value for historic places and their vital role in people's lives.

ABOUT LANDMARKS ILLINOIS

We are People Saving Places for People. Landmarks Illinois is a membership-based historic preservation nonprofit organization serving the people of Illinois. We inspire and empower stakeholders to save places that matter to them by providing free guidance, practical and financial resources and access to strategic partnerships. For more information, visit www.Landmarks.org.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As President & CEO of Landmarks Illinois since 2012, **Bonnie McDonald** has led the organization's evolution to focus its work on the people of Illinois and their important connection to historic places. She is working to influence and shape the preservation field into a more relevant, just, equitable and inclusive practice. From 2018-2021, Bonnie served as board chair of the National Preservation Partners Network, the national nonprofit representing preservation organizations, and she was awarded the James Marston Fitch Charitable Foundation Mid-Career Fellowship in 2020. Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot appointed Bonnie co-chair of the Chicago Monuments Project in 2020 to help lead a truth and racial reckoning process in the city around problematic artworks. AIA Chicago recently honored Landmarks Illinois and Bonnie with its 2022 AIA Chicago Distinguished Service Award. Bonnie received a Bachelor's Degree in Art History (Summa Cum Laude) from the University of Minnesota and a Master's Degree in Historic Preservation Planning from Cornell University.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Jean Follett is an editor and historic preservation consultant based in Wheaton, Illinois. She formerly was an elected Village Trustee for Hinsdale and chair of its Historic Preservation Commission. She has a B.A. degree in the history of architecture and planning from Brown University and a PhD in American and New England studies from Boston University. Jean served on the board from 2010-2016 and was reelected to her current term in 2017. She chairs Landmarks Illinois' Preservation Issues Committee, serves on the Executive Committee and co-chairs the Strategic Planning Task Force developing the organization's 2023 Transformation Plan. Jean has been a longtime National Trust for Historic Preservation Advisor and chaired the Advisors' board.

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Since 1989 the James Marston Fitch Charitable Foundation has been in the vanguard of historic preservation practice and theory. Our mission is to support professionals in the field of historic preservation, and to achieve this we provide mid-career grants to those working in preservation, landscape architecture, urban design, environmental planning, decorative arts, architectural design and architectural history.

ENDNOTES

ENDNOTES

¹ The context for the Relevancy Project is the historic preservation movement in the United States of America. I do not address heritage conservation / historic preservation as a global field of practice.

² Simon, Nina. "[The Art of Relevance](#)." Museum 2.0, 2016. Special thanks to the conference staff at the National Trust for Historic Preservation for hosting Nina Simon as a TrustLive speaker at PastForward 2016 in Houston, where I was first introduced to her work.

³ Ibid., 25.

⁴ Simon, Nina. "[The Art of Relevance](#)" presentation at TEDxPalo Alto, 4 May, 2017. 0:41 – 1:30.

⁵ Simon, "[The Art of Relevance](#)" presentation, 0:41 – 0:44.

⁶ Simon, "[The Art of Relevance](#)" presentation, 3:44 – 4:00.

⁷ Beyer, Scott. "[Historic Preservation Is Great, Except When It Isn't](#)", Governing: The Future of States and Localities website, 28 September 2020.

⁸ Simon, "The Art of Relevance" presentation, 0:41 – 0:44.

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau [July 1, 2021 population estimates](#) and [2020 Household Income](#).

¹⁰ You might ask if this project demonstrates confirmation bias, or a propensity to choose interviewees who agree with my own beliefs. I came to this project aware of my own perspectives and my possible implicit bias, which was the very reason for this project. Landmarks Illinois wanted to understand what other preservationists were experiencing and thinking about our field's future. Were our observations unique? Could there be a collective response to similar problems? The 130 people interviewed represent all parts of the preservation field, professionals and volunteers, people in different positions, organizations, agencies and universities, those new to the work and well-established, in almost every U.S. region. The Relevancy Project interviewee list is included in the Appendix.

¹¹ Kuhlman, Renee, Jim Lindberg and Amy Webb. "Building Relevance: A Snapshot of the Preservation Movement" Series: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation, October 8, 2020.

¹² Mason, Randall and Kaitlyn Levesque. "[Preservation and Change: Survey of Attitudes and Opinions in the Historic Preservation Field](#)." Urban Heritage Project/Penn Praxis, March 2022.

¹³ Professor Mason and I met on August 20, 2019 where I introduced The Relevancy Project and its purpose. At first, it appeared that the project was duplicative to Professor Mason's attitudes and opinions survey work, which was also being planned. However, The Relevancy Project interviews were not meant to be a data-driven survey, but to have several hours with each interviewee to go in-depth into their opinions and their ideas for change. The projects are complementary. The ultimate goal for The Relevancy Project is to identify actions to bring about the change we seek and to inspire preservationists to take action.

¹⁴ Ibid., 4.

¹⁵ My credentials are included in my [LinkedIn profile](#).

¹⁶ Website of the [Case Foundation](#), publisher of Be Fearless by Jean Case, January 2019. The audiobook is available for download via Audible and Amazon.

¹⁷ National-level resources include, but are not limited to, [A National Impact Agenda for the Preservation Movement](#) by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) and with the NTHP as its partner, the National Preservation Partners Network's [Preservation Priorities Task Force](#) and its issue briefs.

¹⁸ For those wanting additional detail, this was labeled a "secondary façade." The windowless wall was designed as such because of its original industrial function.

¹⁹ I do want to raise how the reviewer responded to my and others' disbelief, as have regulatory reviewers in other states and at the National Park Service in similar scenarios that I heard about in these interviews. Reviewers point to the fact that building owners are not forced to use the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit. The credit exists to incent completing a project that complies with

the standards, which were codified in 1977 to establish federal preservation practices. Building owners can pursue projects that don't comply with the standards, but without the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit as a financial tool.

²⁰ The National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation defines “Integrity” as: “Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance.” United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources. [“National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.”](#) 1997. 44.

According to Sherry Frear, Chief of the National Register of Historic Places and the National Historic Landmarks Program, “Of the approximately twelve hundred actions handled by the National Register each year, on average, less than 1 percent are rejected for failing to meet the criteria for listing or for lacking physical integrity.” 2021 PastForward Conference presentation, [“Diversity + the National Register: ‘How will we know it’s us?’](#)” November 2, 2021, 10. The challenge here is that nominations can be discouraged or denied at the State Historic Preservation Office level prior to being recommended to the National Park Service.

²¹ “The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgement, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property’s physical features and how they relate to its significance.” [“National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,”](#) 44.

²² Ibid.

²³ For the purposes of this discussion, I am referring to our designed and built environment while recognizing that we also work to preserve intangible culture and heritage, natural and sacred landscapes and resources below ground level.

²⁴ United States Conference of Mayors Special Committee on Historic Preservation. [“With Heritage So Rich.”](#) Originally published by Random House, New York, 1966, reprinted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1999. 193-194.

²⁵ Wedeen, Sophia. [“Home Repairs and Updates Pose Considerable Burdens for Lower-Income Homeowners.”](#) Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, June 16, 2022.

²⁶ Two homeowner assistance programs in Illinois are worth noting. The statewide [Historic Residence Assessment Freeze](#) program helps defray increased tax assessments after homeowners make property improvements for a 12-year period. In Chicago, Landmarks Illinois also supported successful pilot legislation allowing [accessory dwelling units](#) as a way to generate income and increase affordable housing availability without demolition.

²⁷ A reminder that when I use the words “we”, “our” or “some” in this and other posts I am referring to preservation professionals and people who identify as participants in the preservation movement.

²⁸ Mason, Randall and Kaitlyn Levesque. [“Preservation and Change: Survey of Attitudes and Opinions in the Historic Preservation Field, Report of Findings.”](#) March 2022. 36.

²⁹ What do I mean when I refer to “diverse people?” To Landmarks Illinois, diversity means including people of various ages, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, geographic, cultural and religious backgrounds, people with disabilities, national origins and immigration status, sexual orientation, genders or gender identities, housing status, health status, lifestyles, experiences, interests and worldviews. Diversity is a group of people who are different from one another and who are working or being in the same place together. [Read our guiding principles here.](#)

³⁰ This paragraph is how Landmarks Illinois defines inclusion. Read this and other definitions in our guiding principles linked above.

³¹ Read Richard Rothstein’s, [The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America](#) for an in-depth account of a century of government and private industry actions that created and perpetuate segregation in the United States of America. Rothstein, Richard. [“The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America.”](#) Liveright Publishing Corporation, New York, 2017.

³² Here the word “community” refers to a defined physical geography, such as a block, neighborhood or downtown.

³³ “Community” is used here to expand beyond those living in a defined geographic area. A “community” can be a group of people who share a part of how they identify. A person can be a part

of many communities. In the case of a former jazz club, the “community” could include people that live or spend time in proximity to that place, or used to go to the club or play there, or jazz lovers interested in the cultural history of that place.

³⁴ University of Pennsylvania Master’s student Yuexian Huang noted the importance of community engagement, though not necessarily leadership, in their 2018 thesis, “[Preservation Approaches to Preserving Sites of Chinese American Heritage in New York City.](#)”

“The engagement of the Chinese community is the key since they are the only people who know the best about social histories behind those ordinary façades of historic buildings. Grassroot [sic] preservation organizations are also essential since they help boost communication between the preservation agency and community members.” Huang, Yuexian. “[Preservation Approaches to Preserving Sites of Chinese American Heritage in New York City.](#)” A Thesis in Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania, 2018. 86.

³⁵ The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination rigor has changed from the beginning of the NRHP program. One could argue that the process was more equitable to nominators at the program’s beginning due to the relative lack of required narrative and documentation compared to contemporary nominations.

³⁶ DeSantis, Mark K. “[The Federal Role in Historic Preservation: An Overview.](#)” Congressional Research Service, R45800. Updated April 7, 2020. CRS-27. Note that the report states that this data is “prior to FY2014.” The federal fiscal year for 2014 began October 1, 2013.

³⁷ Erik Hein, Executive Director of the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO), after reading The Relevancy Guidebook draft, made a comment regarding this quoted 8% statistic in an email to the author on August 18, 2023. His remark provides important context that is not included in the statistic. “While certainly there is historic bias, there are also...reasons for this statistic that have to do with data categorization, early nominations that lacked detail, and the inability to address some properties that should apply across-the-board...it is not really a reliable statistic and the assumptions that accompany it are not...accurate.” There needs to be “a better understanding of this so [that] we can have a...conversation [about] how to improve.”

³⁸ “[Underrepresented Communities Grants Opportunity.](#)” National Park Service.

³⁹ “[Cultural Resources Grants.](#)” National Park Service.

⁴⁰ [Two images from this article](#) show the difference between equality and equity.

⁴¹ For resources on tribal historic preservation programs, please consult the [National Association of Tribal Historic Preservation Officers](#) (NATHPO).

⁴² As an act of self-determination and defiance, American Indians and Native Americans have taken these labels in order to redefine them in their own terms. This terminology is inscribed in United States law pertaining to the rights of sovereign tribal nations.

⁴³ Rothstein.

⁴⁴ In Chicago, one such unsung preservationist is finally getting the accolades he deserves: Bishop Louis Henry Ford. In 1941, Bishop Ford bought the 1836 Henry B. Clark House, believed to be the city’s oldest house. Bishop Ford and his wife, Margaret, began restoring the home in 1948 while they lived and held services in the home. The Fords owned the home when it became one of the city’s first local landmarks in 1970 and until the city purchased it from them in 1977. Despite owning the home for far longer than the original family, the Henry B. Clark House historic name stood. Its interpretation as a house museum gave little time to Bishop Ford’s legacy. That is, until recently when Pastor Kevin Anthony Ford, the bishop’s grandson, and architectural historian and preservation activist, Elizabeth Blasius, led a successful campaign to propose renaming and reinterpreting the home, which became a reality in 2022. The home has been officially renamed the [Henry B. and Caroline Clarke/Bishop Louis Henry and Margaret Ford House](#), adding and recognizing the Fords and original owner, Caroline Clarke.

⁴⁵ “[What tiny towns in rural America can teach the cities about adaption.](#)” All Things Considered, National Public Radio (NPR), June 21, 2022. [Rural Indexing Project.](#)

⁴⁶ Instagram Stories posts by [@sylvanaquafarms](#) on June 27, 2022. Information used with permission by [@sylvanaquafarms](#), but the synopsis and interpretation are my own.

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- ⁴⁷ [“Engaging Descendant Communities in the Interpretation of Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites: A Rubric of Best Practices Established by the National Summit on Teaching Slavery.”](#) National Trust for Historic Preservation African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund. V1.0, October 25, 2018.
- ⁴⁸ French, James. [“Opinion: Can equality be realized at the home of the father of the Constitution?”](#) The Washington Post, June 14, 2021.
- ⁴⁹ Schneider, Gregory S. [“James Madison’s Montpelier strips power from enslaved descendant’s group.”](#) The Washington Post, March 25, 2022.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵¹ Lukpat, Alyssa. [“At Montpelier, Slaves’ Descendants Will Share Power With White Board Members.”](#) The New York Times, May 16, 2022.
- ⁵² Freed Wessler, Seth. [“She Warned the Grain Elevator Would Disrupt Sacred Black History. They Deleted Her Findings.”](#) ProPublica, May 20, 2022.
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- ⁵⁵ [“How new state laws and book ban movements have made the teaching of US history contentious – 5 essential reads.”](#) The Conversation, July 3, 2023.
- ⁵⁶ Shryock, John. [“Judge tosses Alabama law protecting Confederate monuments.”](#) WSFA 12 News, January 15, 2019.
- ⁵⁷ Prickett, Sam. [“High Court Rules Confederate Monument Outside Birmingham City Hall Cannot Be Covered, Fines City.”](#) Birmingham Watch, November 27, 2019.
- ⁵⁸ Jordan, Gina. [“Florida lawmakers move to protect historical monuments and markers.”](#) WUSF Public Media, April 10, 2023.
- ⁵⁹ Kuhlman, Renee, Jim Lindberg and Amy Webb. “Building Relevance: A Snapshot of the Preservation Movement” Series: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation, October 8, 2020.
- ⁶⁰ A total of 49% of Americans believe affordable housing access is a major problem where they live and another 36% say that it is a minor problem. Schaeffer, Katherine. [“A growing share of Americans say affordable housing is a major problem where they live.”](#) Pew Research Center, January 18, 2022. Accessed July 30, 2022.
- ⁶¹ [“Defining Housing Affordability.”](#) U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, August 14, 2017. Accessed August 14, 2022.
- ⁶² Powe, Ph.D., Michael and Emi Morita. [“At Home on Main Street: A Report on the State of Housing in Downtowns and Neighborhood Commercial Districts.”](#) National Main Street Center, 2022.
- ⁶³ Housing markets respond to the economic principles of supply and demand. “Hot” markets are those where demand outstrips supply, resulting in increased housing prices. “Cooling” markets are formerly “hot” markets where people are leaving to find more affordable housing choices. “Cool” markets are where job losses, depopulation and aging or missing infrastructure result in greater supply than demand, but where maintained and improved property can be in low supply. Hot and cool housing markets can be present within the same community.
- ⁶⁴ [“Habitat for Humanity.”](#) “2022 State of the Nation’s Housing Report.” Undated webpage. Accessed July 30, 2022.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶⁶ Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. [“State of the Nation’s Housing 2022.”](#) The President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2022. 9. Accessed July 30, 2022.

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- ⁶⁷ National Association of Realtors®. “[NAR Study Shows Lack of Affordable Housing Biggest Obstacle to Home Buying](#).” April 12, 2022.
- ⁶⁸ [Habitat for Humanity](#).
- ⁶⁹ National Low Income Housing Coalition. “[The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Rental Homes](#).” Undated webpage, Accessed July 30, 2022. Extremely low-income renters are defined as people “whose household incomes are at or below the poverty guidelines or 30% of their area median income.”
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- ⁷² National Alliance to End Homelessness. “[State of Homelessness: 2021 Edition](#).” Undated webpage.
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- ⁷⁵ Walk-Morris, Tatiana. “[How Adaptive Reuse Can Help Solve the Housing Crisis](#).” American Planning Association, May 1, 2021.
- ⁷⁶ Ogilvie, Jessica P. “[Why Underused Hotels, Motels Could Be The Faster Path To Easing L.A.’s Affordable Housing Gap](#).” LAist, April 6, 2022.
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- ⁸⁶ See “[Affordable Housing and Density Issue Brief – Fall 2021](#),” published by the Preservation Priorities Task Force , a joint project of the National Preservation Partners Network and National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- ⁸⁷ “[HUD’s Public Housing Program](#).” U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, undated.
- ⁸⁸ “[Public Housing \(PH\) Data Dashboard](#).” U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, undated.
- ⁸⁹ “[Public Housing: Image Versus Facts](#).” Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Spring 1995.
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- ¹³¹ [Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food & Agriculture.](#)
- ¹³² Woodlawn is a former plantation that once comprised over 2,000 acres. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation [Woodlawn webpage](#), amongst the “scores of workers” who supported that land, “at least 90 of whom were enslaved people of African descent.” The enslavers of these 90 people included Martha Washington, Lawrence and Eleanor Lewis, owners of Woodlawn plantation, and other Lewis relatives, which appears to include their son. According to the [Woodlawn Pope-Leighey House](#) website, Eleanor Parke Custis Lewis “inherited 155 enslaved people as wedding gifts” and from her grandmother, Martha Washington’s, and her mother’s estates. Also from the site’s website, “We are in the process of investigating the history of slavery at Woodlawn and uncovering and sharing the stories of the people who helped build and maintain this historic property.” Jobe Hill’s [Saving Slave Houses Project](#) features [this page](#) with a 1975 drawing of Woodlawn.
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