

## WHY WE PRESERVE

Preservation of the built environment is recognized as a vital public purpose for the following 33 cultural, environmental, anthropological, and economic reasons:



### Cultural –

- 1) Historic preservation retains the architectural and aesthetic character of a community while forming a strong communal sense of place
- 2) Historic buildings create direct connectivity to our past that allows residents and visitors to experience where history occurred first-hand and promotes respect for those who lived in different times and in different societies
- 3) Historic buildings create a pride of place for residents who build life-long associations with these familiar neighborhood markers
- 4) Architecture is one of the fine arts and historic preservation is a tool to preserve significant examples of this art form – reasons to save specific structures may include preserving a unique example of an architectural style, period, or a specific architect's master work
- 5) Historic preservation is a U.S. Supreme Court-affirmed public purpose and appropriate use of the government's police power to save buildings and districts, which reflect elements of a community's cultural, social, spiritual, economic, political, engineering, or architectural history
- 6) Historic landscapes and scenes create a shared identity and joint community memory
- 7) Heritage and the built environment builds local, regional, state, and national identities and common ground
- 8) Historic preservation fosters a sense of civic beauty and community pride

### Environmental

- 9) Historic preservation is the ultimate form of recycling, by keeping older buildings out of landfills (in 2014, construction debris in the U.S. was more than twice the amount of generated solid municipal waste)
- 10) Traditional neighborhoods are more dense, compact, and walkable, encouraging non-auto trips and providing an option for auto-free living
- 11) Historic preservation prevents the waste of imbued energy that went into the creation of construction materials used when the buildings were originally constructed
- 12) Historic building methods were adapted to the local environments over generations and performed environmentally better than only the most recently constructed structures by utilizing cross-ventilation, natural lighting, larger overhangs, shading, and other climate appropriate building techniques

## **Anthropological**

- 13)** In the present period of near design uniformity, visitors seek out historic districts because of the authenticity, charm, character, distinctiveness, and beauty found within these districts
- 14)** Locally designated historic districts prevent the destruction of a community's heritage and unique identity through mandated review and approval for all major exterior work
- 15)** Historic preservation retains unique architectural features that often possess high levels of detailing that are not economically feasible to create today
- 16)** Many historic neighborhoods have more income diversity due to the often-close proximity of buildings that support a range of unit sizes with differing rental and sales prices
- 17)** Pre-1950 neighborhoods are more people-scaled as they were designed prior to the primacy of the car, which has detrimentally altered the urban form since
- 18)** Historic places help communities celebrate their past or may help bring meaning to painful points of a community's shared legacy
- 19)** Historic preservation documents the past through scholarly research and oral histories, which preserves our heritage for future generations
- 20)** Due to the rich use of varying materials, building sizing, and detailing, late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century architecture created more human-scaled environments
- 21)** Historic preservation creates a living record of communities and their residents

## **Economic**

- 22)** Historic preservation retains traditional building methods and craftsmanship
- 23)** Historic preservation is a powerful community renewal development tool that can rapidly revitalize entire neighborhoods
- 24)** Historic preservation supports local economic development activities as historic buildings are eligible for subsidies that are unavailable to new construction projects
- 25)** Historic preservation is more labor and skill intensive whereas new construction is more material intensive
- 26)** Historic preservation has been identified as a good investment with designated historic districts often outperforming comparable non-designated districts for real estate returns
- 27)** Historic preservation is a sprawl reducing tool by encouraging more compact redevelopment in already urbanized areas
- 28)** Landmarking and local historic districts ensures neighborhood stability
- 29)** Local landmarking creates more cohesive neighborhoods where residents encourage each other (directly or indirectly) to maintain and preserve their own pieces of heritage
- 30)** Adaptive reuse makes older buildings relevant and purposeful today
- 31)** Cultural and/or heritage tourists spend more money and stay longer in historic locations than non-cultural/heritage tourists
- 32)** Historic districts tend to have less market volatility than non-designated districts
- 33)** Older buildings were often designed to accommodate smaller retail spaces on their ground floors. These spaces enliven the street life of communities, and these smaller spaces are more appropriately scaled for smaller independent start-up businesses