

Historic Preservation Element

Updated Policies

Revised Goal Statement: Preserve, protect, and rehabilitate historic properties in the National Capital Region and promote design and development that is respectful of the guiding principles established by the Plan of the City of Washington (L'Enfant and McMillan Plans) and the symbolic character of the capital's setting.

Section A: The Historic Plan of Washington, D.C.

The federal government should:

1. Preserve, rehabilitate, enhance, and restore (where applicable) the Plan of the City of Washington (L'Enfant and McMillan Plans) and the urban design principles established by the Plan including building placement, street layout, vistas, and open spaces.
2. Locate memorials, museums, and major federal facilities with respect for the urban design principles established by the Plan of the City of Washington (L'Enfant and McMillan Plans).

Historic Plan of Washington: Views

The federal government should:

3. Protect and maintain views outward from the L'Enfant City and views inward from vantage points along the rim of the topographic bowl from inappropriate intrusions and modifications. Open space should be preserved to allow for public use and enjoyment of these views.
4. Protect the reciprocal views along the rights-of-way established by L'Enfant streets, as well as to and from squares, circles, and reservations.

Historic Plan of Washington: Streets and Avenues

The federal government should:

5. Protect, maintain, and restore, where applicable, the L'Enfant street network and rights-of-way.
6. Restore or rehabilitate historic streets that have been inappropriately disrupted or closed to their original right-of-way or configuration at the earliest opportunity.
7. Avoid inappropriate traffic channelization, obtrusive signage and security features, and other physical intrusions that obscure the character of the right-of-way and viewsheds.

8. Protect the open space of the L'Enfant streets and avenues. Maintain the integrity, form, design of the L'Enfant system of streets as well as the street trees that frame axial views and reinforce the city's historic landscape character.
9. Protect the historic importance and function of the streets as operational thoroughfares.
10. Construct building facades to the street right-of-way lines (building lines) to reinforce the spatial definition of the historic street plan.
11. Protect the character and alignment of the boundary streets of the District of Columbia as defining features of the capital city.

Historic Plan of Washington: Open Space and Reservations

The federal government should:

12. Protect, rehabilitate, and restore the public squares, circles, reservations and park system that are a legacy of the Plan of the City of Washington.
13. Protect the reservations that contain historic landscapes and features from incompatible changes or intrusions.
14. Protect the open space and viewsheds across reservations created by L'Enfant streets and avenues.
15. Embellish L'Enfant reservations with monuments, fountains, and civic art to enhance these open spaces in accordance with the Commemorative Works Act where applicable.
16. Protect and maintain the historic spatial significance of the L'Enfant reservations when designing and locating physical security measures.
17. Protect, rehabilitate, and enhance the extensions of major L'Enfant rights-of-way and associated reservations throughout the District of Columbia as part of the open space framework of the national capital.

Section B: Identification of Historic Properties

The federal government should:

1. Identify and protect historic properties and disseminate information about their significance to the public.
2. Recognize that there may be Modern era (post World War II) resources including buildings, structures, and landscapes that are historically significant and reflect design or cultural significance of the recent past. Identify and protect these resources to ensure that properties that have not been evaluated for listing in the *National Register of Historic*

Places are nonetheless noted for their potential future significance and are treated accordingly.

3. Coordinate with local agencies, citizen groups, and property owners in the identification, designation, and protection of historic properties, public and private, since collectively these resources reflect the image and history of the National Capital Region.
4. Conduct archaeological investigations at the earliest phases of master planning or project development in order to avoid the disturbance of archaeological resources.
5. Recognize that historic federal properties are sometimes important for local history and ensure that locally significant characteristics or qualities are maintained.

Section C: Protection and Management of Historic Properties

The federal government should:

1. Sustain exemplary standards of historic property stewardship.
2. Integrate the preservation, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic properties, including buildings and landscapes, into master plans for federal campuses and facilities.
3. Preserve, rehabilitate, and protect historic landscapes and open spaces, both natural and designed, which are an integral component of federal properties.
4. Protect significant archaeological resources by leaving them intact and undisturbed. Maintain an inventory of sites with a potential for archaeological discovery and significance.
5. Use historic properties for their original purpose or, if no longer feasible, for an adaptive use that is appropriate for the context and consistent with the significance and character of the property.
6. Ensure the continued preservation of federal historic properties through ongoing maintenance and transfer to an appropriate new steward when disposal of historic properties is appropriate.
7. Plan, where feasible, for federal historic properties to serve as catalysts for local economic development and tourism.
8. Promote the integration of sustainability objectives with the preservation, rehabilitation, or restoration of historic properties.

9. Protect and rehabilitate the National Mall and its monumental character as a historic open space that functions as the nation's preeminent gathering space.
10. Protect and preserve in place the extant boundary stones marking the original survey of the District of Columbia.
11. Ensure that the sites and settings for federally owned historic assets in the region are preserved and maintained as integral parts of the National Capital Region's historic character.

Section D: Design Review

The federal government should:

1. Ensure that new construction is compatible with the qualities and character of historic buildings and their settings, in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* and the *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*.
2. Work cooperatively with local agencies to ensure that development adjacent to historic properties does not detract from their historic character, but is compatible with the surrounding context.
3. Protect the settings, including viewsheds, of historic properties, as integral parts of the historic character of the property.

Section E: Historic Image of the Capital

The federal government should:

1. Federal development should adhere to the high aesthetic standards established by the planning and design legacy of the Plan of the City of Washington (L'Enfant and McMillan Plans).
2. Plan carefully for appropriate uses and compatible design in and near the monumental core to protect and preserve the nation's key historic properties.
3. Federal facilities and spaces should respect and complement the capital's rich architectural heritage and historic resources.
4. Protect the skyline formed by the region's natural features, particularly the topographic bowl around the L'Enfant City from incompatible changes.
5. Protect, enhance, and restore vistas and views, both natural and designed, which are an integral part of the Plan of the City of Washington and the national capital's image.

6. Design transportation infrastructure that is consistent with the urban design principles of the Plan of the City of Washington (L'Enfant Plan and the McMillan Plan) and surrounding historic properties.
7. Recognize the role historic properties, memorials, and monuments have in defining the national capital and its image.