



City of Dallas

Historic and Cultural Preservation Strategy

Introduction to the Draft

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Agenda

- Why does the City of Dallas need a Strategy for Historic and Cultural Preservation?
- Who had input into this strategy?
- What impact will the strategy have?
- Q&A





The Charge from City Council

City Council has been firmly committed to reexamining the City's policies, programs, and operations, paying close attention to how the City delivers services to historically marginalized communities, low-income communities, and communities of color.

Recently Adopted Equity-Centered Policy Reforms:

2020 – Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan (CECAP)

2021 – Connect Dallas Strategic Mobility Plan

2022 – Racial Equity Plan

2023 – Economic Development Policy

- Economic Development Incentives Policy

- Dallas Housing Policy 2033 (DHP33)



2020
Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan



2022
Racial Equity Plan



2023
Economic Development Policy and Incentives Policy



2023
Housing Policy

In November 2022, the Housing and Homelessness Solutions Council Committee requested that staff **develop a community-vetted vision** for the City's historic preservation efforts, then offer a **strategy for how to realize that vision.**



Why does Historic Preservation need a Strategy?



Since 1973, City of Dallas staff and preservation advocates have used historic preservation as a tool to:

- **Stabilize neighborhoods.**
- **Remember Dallas' prominent Civil Rights leaders**, such as Juanita Craft and Kathlyn Joy Gilliam.
- **Bring investment and life back into downtown.**
- **Save the cornerstones of communities**, such as the Knights of Pythias Temple, St. Ann's Catholic School, Old Dallas High School/Crozier Tech, and Freedman's Cemetery.

The City's preservation program has helped save the places that make Dallas special despite challenging fluctuations in funding, staffing, and political support.

A Crozier Tech Alum stands to speak at an equity in historic preservation event in his restored alma mater, saved by preservation advocates and staff in 2000 via landmark designation.



Why does Historic Preservation need a Strategy?



The preservation needs of Dallas' communities have changed since 1973.

Today, historically marginalized communities need:

- Ways to preserve and share stories that have no building associated with them
- Supports for cultural organizations, legacy small businesses, and community gathering places
- More assistance navigating historic preservation processes such as landmark designation and tax incentives
- Assistance accessing City resources such as home repair grants, Small Business Center Grants, and Office of Arts and Culture grants



LULAC students and DMAHL tour guides visit the Eagle Ford School in West Dallas.

Image courtesy of DMAHL.

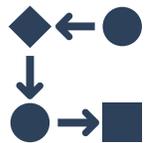
Volunteers garden in Joppa. Image courtesy of the South Central Civic League.





Historic Preservation Today

In 2024, 4 PUD staff and 1 Code Compliance officer safeguard all of Dallas' Historic Districts. They do so by ensuring that any proposed change to a designated property is vetted rigorously prior to approval.



Processes

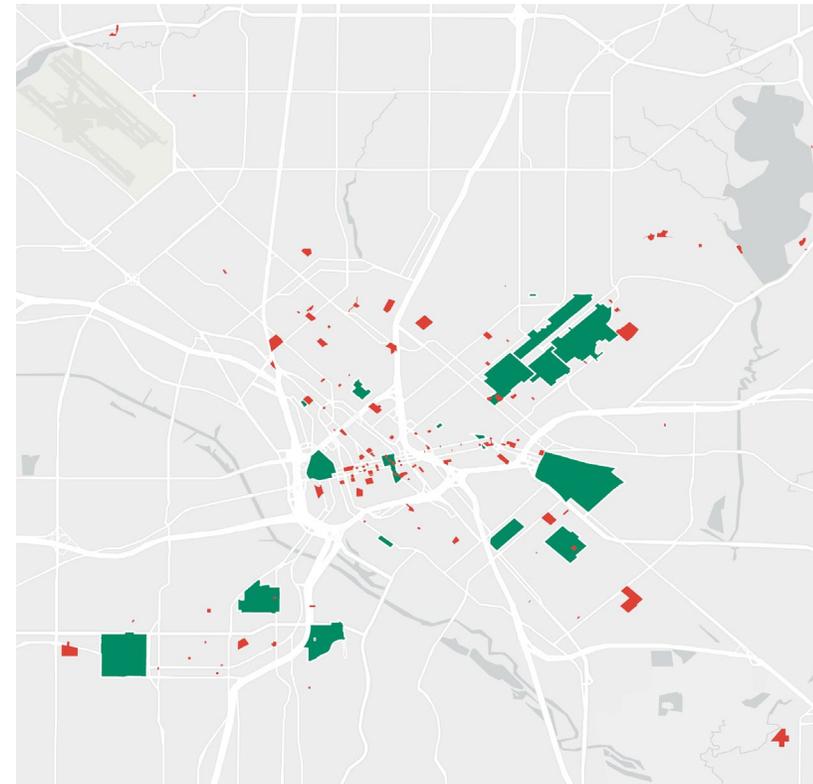
- Landmark Designations
- Demolition Delay
- Tax Exemption Program
- Certificate of Appropriateness
- Staffing the Landmark Commission
- Issuance of Citations
- Building Permit Review



Places

132+ Individually
Landmarked Buildings

21 Historic Districts



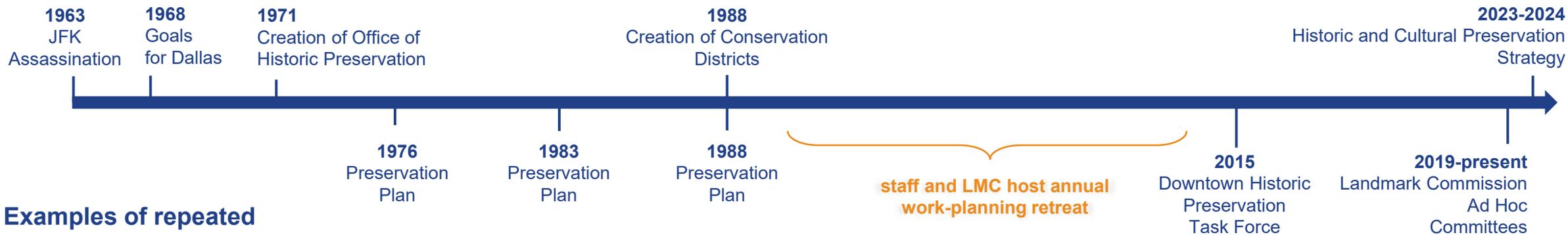
No capacity for proactive preservation planning, resident assistance, strategic collaborations with neighborhood groups, or the development of user-friendly tools.





Why does Historic Preservation need a Strategy?

The program was created to help restore civic pride in turbulent times. 1980s budget crises forced staff to triage and scale down program goals. Administrative challenges became chronic, with the same issues flagged repeatedly for decades.



Examples of repeated recommendations

	1976 Preservation Plan	1983 Preservation Plan	1988 Preservation Plan	2015 Downtown Historic Preservation Task Force	2019-present Landmark Commission Ad Hoc Committees
<i>Simplify designation process</i>	X	X	X		X
<i>Increase scope of administrative review</i>		X	X		X
<i>Change approach to demolition review</i>			X		X
<i>Increase public outreach</i>	X	X			X

It is time to update the program's mission and allocate the resources necessary to finally fix chronic challenges.





What is the Strategy?

A clear **vision** and **mission** for the City's role in preserving Dallas' historic and cultural assets.

A set of **goals** that, if achieved, will ensure that the City's preservation efforts achieve the recent equity and economic development commitments adopted by Council.

A set of **actions** related to current service delivery and new initiatives.



An explicit recognition of the **roles that other departments play** in preserving Dallas' historic and cultural assets.

Implementation roadmap, including phasing for added capacity.

For each action, the Strategy defines:

Challenge: What are the current challenges faced by staff and Dallas residents?

Solution: What needs to be done to address the challenge?

Stakeholders: Who will lead this action? Who will they partner with?

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications: What needs to happen first? What resources are needed?

Metrics and Indicators of Success: How will we know we've been successful

Not a Preservation Plan

Not a survey of historic resources

No proposed ordinance language revisions

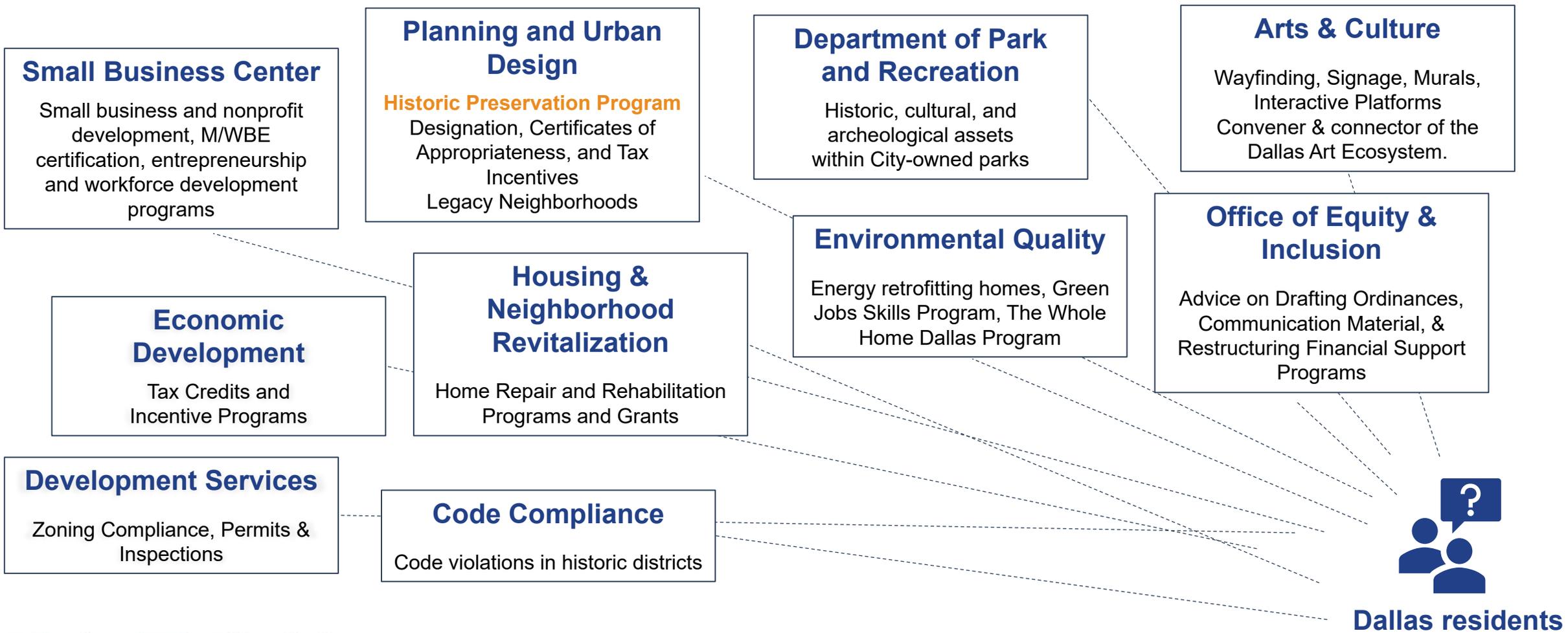
Not (just) about improving current processes





Who does the Strategy apply to?

Many departments make up the City's historic preservation function. Dallas residents looking to preserve a historic or cultural asset utilize services across the City, beyond Planning and Urban Design.



Who had input into this strategy?



At City Council's request, the engagement process sought the expertise of Dallas' historically marginalized communities and preservation experts.

100+ Residents engaged via survey and workshops across all 14 Districts

30+ Community-based organizations engaged

12 City Departments interviewed and engaged in recommendation design

14 Steering Committee workshops with diverse historic preservation advocates

Plus dozens of advocates, Landmark Commissioners, and staff who – between 2015 and 2022 – contributed hundreds of hours diagnosing the Dallas program's weaknesses and investigated solutions.



East Dallas Public Workshop



Steering Committee



Old City Park Public Workshop



West Dallas Public Workshop



Emerging consensus on what success looks like.



There is remarkable consistency around what changes are needed.

More	
Accessibility	City services must be easier to navigate for residents pursuing historic and cultural preservation efforts.
Efficiency	in review process administration , so that staff can allocate more time to proactive programming.
Inclusion	City landmark designations, preservation tools, and Landmark Commissioner appointments must better reflect the needs, histories, and cultures of Dallas' historically marginalized communities.
Community Engagement	Outreach , communication, education, and resources
Tools	that better meet the needs of endangered neighborhoods whose needs won't be fully met by the Historic District designation.



The Impact

An Updated Vision

The City of Dallas envisions a future where our city's **diverse histories and cultures** are **evident, protected, and celebrated**.

We aspire to enrich the lives of today's residents by embracing the history and culture of their communities.

We envision a city where future development recognizes and responds to Dallas' past. Preserving history and culture is a **non-negotiable, integral part of equitable and authentic growth**.

An Updated Mission

Through its historic and cultural preservation tools and regulations, the City **aims to support Dallas communities**

– including property owners, residents, and community organizations – in their efforts **to preserve and conserve the places that are important to them**.



The Impact



The actions included in the strategy are organized under three goals generated from community and stakeholder engagement:

Goal 1: Preserve Dallas' diverse history in ways that contribute to our cultural and economic future.

Goal 2: Empower residents to preserve the places that are important to them.

Goal 3: Maximize the benefits that all of Dallas—residents, property owners, and developers—receive from historic preservation so that they will want to do more of it.



Luna's Tortilla Factory Sign Post. Image Courtesy of the Dallas Mexican American Historical League.



The Impact: Key Points



- **This is a Citywide strategy** – both in how...
 - it addresses historic and cultural preservation functions *across* departments
 - it provides resources to residents in every single council district – not just those with historic districts
- **The strategy addresses long-standing challenges with the preservation program**, including:
 - Lack of appropriate staffing
 - Siloing – lack of collaboration between departments on preservation
 - Lack of a Citywide vision or mission for preservation
- **The strategy eliminates barriers** that have prevented historically marginalized communities from fully participating in or benefiting from the City’s preservation resources:
 - Lack of educational resources and staff capacity for assistance
 - Gaps in funding and preservation tools for low-income communities
- **The strategy creates innovative new programs and tools** that address the historical and cultural preservation needs of marginalized communities:
 - Legacy Neighborhoods
 - Local Signage
 - Legacy Small Business and Cultural Organization Program



The Impact



GOAL 1 Preserve Dallas' diverse history in ways that contribute to our cultural and economic future.

1.1 Ensure that historic preservation administrative processes, structures, and decision-making bodies reflect the City's value of equity.

1.2 Honor historically marginalized communities and the places that are important to them.

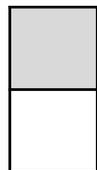
1.3 Make Dallas' diverse history visible throughout the city.

1.4 Leverage public parks and buildings as vehicles for remembering Dallas' history.

1.5 Encourage residents and visitors to explore Dallas' diverse history.

1.6 Ensure that Dallas' diversity of cultures is a factor when determining the historic and cultural significance of potential landmarks.

1.7 Proactively design repair support programs and resources that will help preserve historic naturally occurring affordable housing.



Actions pertaining to existing historic preservation **program within P+UD**

Actions pertaining to the larger historic and cultural preservation **function across departments**



The Impact



GOAL 2 Empower residents to preserve the places that are important to them.

2.1 Engage residents and businesses across Dallas to identify and proactively protect culturally significant places.

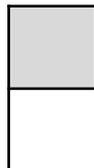
2.2 Make it easy for all residents to navigate the City's historic preservation program.

2.3 Create a program focused on helping communities access existing City resources that best meet their neighborhood preservation needs.

2.4 Preserve and promote centers of cultural activity throughout our city.

2.5 Support legacy small businesses and cultural organizations that contribute significantly to the culture and community of their neighborhoods.

2.6 Help historic property owners and residents tackle their homes' unique maintenance needs and take full advantage of the tools and resources available to them.



Actions pertaining to existing historic preservation **program within P+UD**

Actions pertaining to the larger historic and cultural preservation **function across departments**



The Impact



GOAL 3
Maximize the benefits that all of Dallas — residents, property owners, developers — receive from historic preservation so they will want to do more of it.

3.1 Streamline and simplify tax incentives to encourage developers and property owners to preserve historic structures.

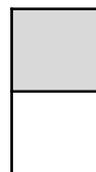
3.2 Increase affordability and sustainability in historic districts through the reuse of materials.

3.3 Adapt City services delivery to the unique needs of historic districts.

3.4 Maximize the impacts of the City's preservation and sustainability work by combining efforts.

3.5 Focus the historic preservation program on people and impact by streamlining time-consuming processes.

3.6 Ensure that long-term, the historic preservation program is stable, sustainable, and accountable.



Actions pertaining to existing historic preservation **program within P+UD**

Actions pertaining to the larger historic and cultural preservation **function across departments**





Next Steps

Please share any questions or feedback with Andrea Gilles.

- The draft Strategy is **posted on Planning and Urban Design's website** and the public can submit feedback.
- P+UD team will be providing **individual briefings** to the councilmembers not on the WEE/ED Committees.
- This item is on the **March 27** City Council Voting Agenda.

