



**National Trust *for*
Historic Preservation**
Save the past. Enrich the future.

Why Old Places Matter

How Historic Places Affect Our Identity—and Our Well-being



A resource for preservation professionals and community leaders to
share with the public—Why Old Places Matter

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I. Why Old Places Matter: Introduction



Everyone has a place that matters to them, but it's not always easy to articulate why that place is so important, especially if that place is threatened.

As we arrive at the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act, the preservation movement can still be viewed by some as trivial or less meaningful than other issues. Yet, old places are fundamentally important to our sense of well-being; preservation is good for people.

In 2013 Tom Mayes, deputy general counsel at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, was awarded the Rome Prize by the American Academy in Rome. During his six-month residency in Rome as a Fellow of the Academy, Mayes began a series of essays, collectively titled, "Why Do Old Places Matter?" that explored the reasons old places are beneficial for people.

The series of essays begins with the examination of the reasons why old places are good for people based on the importance of self definition through continuity, memory, and identity. These fundamental reasons inform all of the other reasons that follow: history, beauty, civic identity, architecture, ancestry, creativity, community, and the reasons that are more pragmatic—preservation as a tool for community revitalization, the stabilization of property values, economic development, and sustainability.

As this series explores, there are almost endless reasons why old places matter—from simply being beautiful, to providing stability in a world that is changing rapidly. What's important to remember is the idea that old places matter not only because of the past. Old places matter to people today and for the future. Old places are critical to people's sense of who they are, to their capacity to find meaning in their lives, and to envision a future.

This toolkit is designed to serve as a resource for advocates and professionals working in preservation to help them better explain why old places matter in their communities.

Help us spread the word of Why Old Places Matter!

This toolkit is enhanced content for the Spring 2015 Forum Journal on Why Do Old Places Matter? More information on the blog series and the journal can be found at blog.preservationleadershipforum.org/why-do-old-places-matter or see key quotations at savingplac.es/oldplacesexposure.

II. Why Old Places Matter: Key Messages



James River, Williamsburg, Virginia | Credit: Kris Weinhold

The ability to articulate a narrative about the power of old places is critical to building a case for the importance of preserving old and historic buildings. The next section includes an overarching or framing message for each of the reasons that Mayes identifies as being good for people. This is followed by supporting messages, and a related story or statistic to help build a persuasive narrative for your intended audience. Use these messages, or tweak them as appropriate as you develop materials, craft speeches or testimonies to convey the power of old places. As you prepare these messages, remember that being specific and personal is key to bringing awareness to our cause for saving places.

Continuity

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they provide balance and stability. They place us on a continuum of time and enable us to be psychologically and emotionally healthy. They provide a sense of stability in an ever-changing world, especially when our communities are threatened or displaced.

- Old places ground us. The influential report, *With Heritage So Rich*, states that old places give us “a sense of orientation to our society...to establish values of time and place.”
- The continued presence of old places—schools and playgrounds, parks and public squares, churches and houses and farms and fields— reminds us that we are part of the slow processes of history, and that we can make a lasting contribution that extends far beyond the span of our own life.
- A person’s attachment to a place is crucial to forming their own life story and to creating a meaningful and coherent narrative out of their lives. Old places help people to create meaningful life stories.



Mt. Zion Rosenwald School, Florence County, South Carolina | Credit: National Trust for Historic Preservation

Story

- “On a trip to Puglia, the Fellows of the American Academy visited a World Heritage Site, Matera, where the residents had been removed from their community in the mid-20th century. Our guide at one of the churches, a descendant of one of the families removed to the new location, said that her grandmother hated the move and felt that the community never recovered from the forced removal. Studies have shown that the loss of the sense of continuity from uncontrollable change in the physical environment may even cause a grief reaction. Put simply, people need the continuity of old places.” -Tom Mayes

Memory

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they help us remember and are essential to our sense of ourselves. They are triggers that help us remember important and defining moments in our lives. They are tangible representations of our memories.

- "Old buildings are like memories you can touch," as one architect told her granddaughter. Old places—our homes, libraries, schools, barns, and parks—are conjurors and keepers of our personal and collective memories.
- Places embody our memories, and memory is a core component of our identity, both individually and collectively.
- Memory can be contested or controversial. Regardless of conflicting points of view, the place itself serves as the focal point where divergent views about a place's significance and meaning can be expressed.



Gate at Ramah Cemetery, Huntersville, North Carolina |
Credit: Thompson Mayes

Story

- "Like many people, my earliest memories are of places—a pasture on our old farm where I napped in the warm sun until a cow licked me, and the dining room of my grandfather's house where we watched President Kennedy's funeral cortège. Simply seeing a place again may bring back a flood of memories—whether it's the Caffè Reggio in Greenwich Village, which I frequented in my 20s, or the Davidson College Library where I pored over architectural history books as a teenager. "Old buildings are like memories you can touch," the architect Mary DeNadai tells her granddaughter. It's a succinct explanation of how old places—our homes, libraries, schools, barns, and parks—seem to hold and embody our memories."-Tom Mayes

Individual Identity

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they are the landmarks of our identity; our identity is tied to where we come from, and there is a sense of pride and identity associated with these old places.

- Old places are the landmarks of our identity and the roadmaps of our soul. From the house we grew up in to our high school or college to the place we met our spouse, we say “I am who I am today because of this place.”
- When we first meet someone new, one of the first questions we ask is “where are you from?” We tell our stories through the places that mold and define us.
- When the places that are part of our identity are threatened, lost or destroyed, our identity may be damaged as well. When we lose a place we love, we lose a part of ourselves as well.



State of Virginia Monument, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania | Credit: Duncan Kendall

Story

- “I so identify with place as a source of my self-esteem, my identity, my peace of mind, and my place on this continuum we call life past, present, and future. Three places in particular are special to me: the house and land I grew up in in Lena, South Carolina, as well as my paternal grandmother’s home in same small hamlet and my maternal grandmother’s home in Barnwell, South Carolina. Forever etched in my memory, they give me strength that I can’t even fully fathom as well as comfort in knowing ‘there was a place.’” -Gerald Trowell, preservationist

National Identity

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places embody our shared identities. Old places matter because they can be a force for a broader, more inclusive identity. Old places can become a venue for understanding difficult history in our nation's past.

- Think of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, or the Pyramids of Egypt, the Lincoln Memorial in Washington or the Statue of Liberty in New York. These places are shorthand for, and a crucial component of, a city or nation's identity.
- Our beloved and revered places help to create a "we." As a city, state, nation, or community, the places we seek to preserve represent who and what we value from the past, and also what we aspire to be in the future.
- Too often in early preservation efforts, old places were consciously used to tell a selective view of American history, and to define us in ways that left people or issues out. Current debates are broadening, reshaping, and deepening our understanding of both our history and our American identity.



United States Capitol Building, Washington, D.C. | Credit: Architect of the Capitol, via Flickr

Story

- "I am fortunate enough to be able to trace my father's ancestors' immigration to the United States from Norway in 1869, at a time of great poverty in that country. My great-great grandfather homesteaded on the Kansas prairie, where he, his wife and their eight children lived in a dug-out, literally underground, for twelve years. That place, which I first experienced as a child, speaks to me of the courage, the determination, the hard work, the overcoming of adversity that was a part of their lives. And their story plays out time and again through the human migration narrative; one that continues today and is so vividly reported on the front pages of our newspapers. For those who chose to come here, and for those who were brought here against their will and unable to trace their ancestors' specific path of arrival, I draw strength from their courage and fortitude." -Stephanie Meeks, president & CEO, National Trust for Historic Preservation

Beauty

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they are beautiful. To put it simply, beautiful places make people happy. Beautiful places are accessible to all of us and are a universal offering.

- Beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, but once found, old places reveal the power of beauty—to inspire, to delight, to uplift.
- Places of beauty can take us outside of ourselves, to experience both the grandeur of the universe and all that is possible while making us feel a part of it.



Kykuit, National Trust for Historic Preservation Historic Site, Tarrytown, New York | Credit: The National Trust for Historic Preservation

- From the Zen gardens of Kyoto, to Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater, to the Ruins of Windsor in Port Gibson, Mississippi, to the well-tended city block, it's important for everyone to have access to places of beauty. Being in the presence of beauty makes people feel good.

Story

- “One of the many buildings in Rome that is open only for a few hours every week—on Sunday morning—is Sant'Ivo, a Baroque church designed by Francesco Borromini. The interior is light-filled and tall, and plays with scale and perspective. The form of the space is a complex of triangles and curves, convex and concave. The pilasters are grey. The walls are plain. My eyes were drawn upward, and I felt amazement and awe, and somehow, in that moment, in that lofty space, the world was a great and wonderful place. Altogether, it's what the architect Catie Newell, a Fellow here at the Academy, described to me as “that moment of gasp.” A moment when we are stopped in our tracks and taken out of ourselves, when we feel that the universe is a big and amazing place, and that we are part of it.” -Tom Mayes

History

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they provide an understanding of history that cannot be experienced in any other way. They provide us a more vivid, sensory, and memorable way to experience history.

- History is part of what makes us distinctly human. It explains us. It has the capacity to deepen and enrich our conceptions of ourselves, and of our place in the world.
- There's nothing like visiting the ruins of Pompeii, or Independence Hall in Philadelphia, or Anne Frank's House in Amsterdam. History is most vividly learned and retained though experiencing the places where history happened.
- Because old places are uniquely capable of giving people a "full-body experience" of history, we should take advantage of that natural strength and invest in the very sites where people have the greatest capacity to engage with history. The tools and techniques of public history can help history come alive.



The Tenement Museum, New York City | Credit: The Tenement Museum

Story

- “When I think about the years I’ve spent wandering around Detroit, New York, Washington, DC—the cities where I’ve spent the most time—it’s the old places that have the most to teach about what the city was like, what happened there and how things came to be as they are. Whatever one might have read or heard, old places connect ideas to reality and sensory perception in a unique way. Often it’s not even a recognized or interpreted historic site but the everyday buildings and neighborhood fabric, whatever is left of past eras—buildings, stone walks or curbs, even old streetlights—that have not merely aesthetic value but a power to illuminate and enrich understanding of place, events and community. It’s the old buildings that exuded that strength, inviting us to learn more.” -David Schon, partner, Nixon Peabody

Architecture

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they are a form of art. Architecture can only be experienced in the physical place—once those buildings are gone, that opportunity is forever lost. Not unlike painting, music or literature, old buildings help us understand our capacities as humans.

- Architecture is the ultimate form of “public art.” Unlike a painting, a film or a dance performance, architecture is art that exists in public and can be experienced by anyone through various senses—visually, tactilely—but also by physically entering and appreciating a place from within. No other kind of art can be experienced in so many ways.
- Architecture helps define the unique character of our communities. This is not only true for signature, postcard-ready places like New York’s Empire State Building or Seattle’s Space Needle or Chicago’s Sears (Willis) Tower. Architecture is the reason that modest residential neighborhoods from Brooklyn to Kansas City to Miami have a unique feel, a sense of place, all their own.
- Architecturally significant buildings do not need to be old to be appreciated; a recent Frank Gehry or Louis Kahn design can be as captivating as a 17th century cathedral. Yet age imbues architecture with special meaning by providing a glimpse into the past. Like antique furniture or a classic vintage car, older buildings have added value and meaning because they link us to specific periods in our shared past.



Farnsworth House, Plano, Illinois | Credit: Carol Highsmith

Story

- “As a boy, I was fascinated by an old house that my father’s friend, Jim Withers, used as a barn. It was dilapidated, to say the least—the glass was missing from almost all of the windows, and the shutters sagged from their hinges. But inside, there were all the marks of an architect or master builder. The high-ceilinged rooms had hand-carved woodwork, and the wide mantelpieces were supported by intricate molding. The woodwork, the relationship of the woodwork to the tall plaster walls, the size and height of the rooms, all felt like part of something whole. I didn’t know then why the house made me feel the way it did, but I later learned that I was probably experiencing—despite the bales of hay stacked in the rooms—the concepts of proportion, balance and harmony, as well as the marks of time.”
-Tom Mayes

Sacred

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they have the capacity to provide deep spiritual and psychological benefits, which makes our present and future lives better.

- The sacred nature of old places is reflected not only in architecture, history, landscapes and geography but also in the emotion that the places evoke within those who experience them.
- The spiritual nature of historic sites transcends ideology to move people of all backgrounds to explore the history around them and examine their own beliefs with heightened consciousness.



Acoma Sky City, San Esteban del Rey Mission Church, New Mexico | Credit: Douglas Merriam, Courtesy of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

- Old places help give us a deeper connection to our own identity and to the generations of people that visited and inhabited these places before us.

Story

- “Evidence of America’s slave history simply must be preserved, as the legacy of slavery affects all American people. The tactic of the enslaver was to systematically erase all memory of the African’s past; let us not repeat this ill by contributing to the erasure of his past in America too. Though this history is ugly and unjust, Shockoe Bottom is a site of conscience, a place where we can bear witness to the human rights abuses of slavery, learn from the lessons of history, and spark a conscience in people so that they can choose the actions that promote justice and lasting peace today. Historical sites like these are valuable not only to Americans, but to the entire world that engages with America.” -Lupita Nyong’o, actress

Creativity

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they foster an environment and community of creative people.

- Old places have inspired some of the most celebrated artists and works in American history, and continue to inform and influence artists today across the creative spectrum.
- The creative environment inherent in old places inspires not only artistic works but also new, inventive uses of sites that foster deeper public engagement with places and their history.
- From Shadows-on-the-Teche in New Iberia, Louisiana, to Music Row in Nashville, the unique stories, collections, geography and architecture found in old places inspire the artists, musicians and writers who experience these sites to create new works that help shape our national identity and culture.



*Chesterwood Studio, Stockbridge, Massachusetts |
Credit: The National Trust for Historic Preservation*

Story

- Musician, Ben Folds said this about Studio A in Nashville, “...take a moment to stand in silence between the grand walls of RCA Studio A and feel the history and the echoes of the Nashville that changed the world....listen first hand to the stories from those among us who made the countless hit records in this studio—the artists, musicians, engineers, producers, writers who built this rich music legacy note by note, brick by brick.”

Learning

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because we learn from them. Old places have things to teach us that are embedded in the physical characteristics of the place.

- Old places are learning labs for exploring our past and offer lessons that evolve as new layers of history are unearthed, explored and shared.
- The learning experiences that old places provide help shape our comprehension of generations that preceded us, shape our world view and force us to confront the full story of our past.
- Old places provide learning experiences and influence young people in ways that cannot be achieved through classroom teaching alone.



Drayton Hall, Charleston, South Carolina | Credit: The National Trust for Historic Preservation

Story

- Kay Cole James, prominent politician, transformed Holly Knoll, a historic African American site during the Civil Rights era, into Gloucester Institute and created a place of learning for emerging leaders. “She not only restored the home to its original condition but also created the Gloucester Institute—an intellectually safe environment where ideas can be discussed and transformed into practical solutions that produce results. Gloucester provides a peaceful place to restore and refresh leaders, and to train and nurture emerging leaders.” This place is an integral part of educating college students through the Emerging Leader program. –*Jessica Pumphrey, public affairs, National Trust for Historic Preservation*

Sustainability

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they are sustainable. Keeping and using old places is one of the most environmentally sound things we, and our communities, can do. We know that the greenest building is the one already built.

- Many people view climate change as the gravest threat human civilization has ever faced. It's clear that we can't build our way out of the global warming crisis. We have to conserve our way out. That means we have to make better, wiser use of what we've already built.
- Preservation is the ultimate form of recycling. It makes no sense for us to recycle newsprint and bottles and aluminum cans while we're throwing away entire buildings, or even entire neighborhoods. Demolition is fiscally irresponsible, environmentally disastrous, and ultimately unsustainable.
- When we preserve old places, we are not just sparing our landfills and helping reduce carbon emissions. We are often also preserving the unique building materials and construction techniques handed down from previous generations that make older buildings more environmentally sustainable. Before HVAC systems and climate-controlled indoor air, and before anyone knew what a "green building" was, buildings were constructed to adapt to their environment.



Wing Luke Museum, Seattle, Washington | Credit: Wing Luke Museum

Statistic

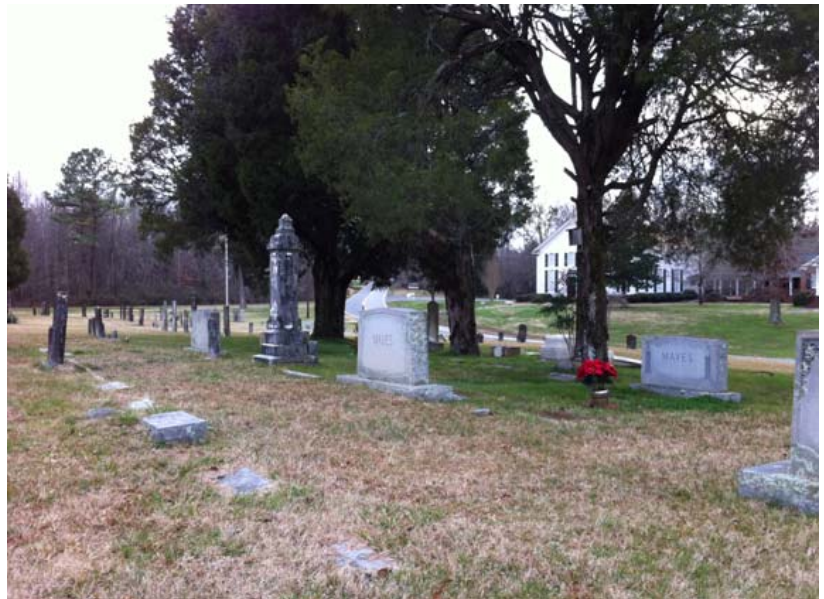
- "Building Reuse almost always yields fewer environmental impacts than new construction when comparing buildings of similar size and functionality...It takes 10 to 80 years for a new building that is 30 percent more efficient than an average-performing existing building to overcome, through efficient operations, the negative climate change impacts related to the construction process."
-Preservation Green Lab report, *The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse*

Ancestors

Key Messages

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they connect us to our ancestors. Old places that connect us to our ancestors provide us with an exceptional experience.

- From Ancestry.com to Henry Louis Gates' *Finding Your Roots*, people of all backgrounds are devoted to finding out who—and where—they came from, and discovering, recovering, or forging new ties between themselves and their ancestors.
- It doesn't matter whether your ancestors arrived on the *Mayflower*, via Ellis Island, in chains against their will, or across the Bering Strait. If people listen to what the genealogical record actually has to say, and follow that to the places of their ancestors, they can learn a far more interesting, deeper and nuanced story of their own past, and the past of America as a whole.
- Knowing about our ancestors grounds us. It gives us a sense of identity through time, connects us to an unfolding story, and helps us to understand who we are. Science even backs this up. A 2010 study at Emory University found that kids who know stories of their ancestors show higher levels of emotional well-being.



Ramah Presbyterian Church and Cemetery, Huntersville, North Carolina | Credit: Thompson Mayes

Story

- “I was able to look across the battlefield and see it the way it looked when my great-great-grandfather was there. Words cannot describe what a spiritual moment that was for me, and it was only possible because of the preservation of that hallowed ground.”-Trace Adkins, musician

Community

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they are the places where people share a common space, a common experience, and a shared sense of what the space means to them. They are where people, time, and place intertwine to form community.

- Schools, churches, post offices, town squares, parks, streets, neighborhoods—all of these allow people to share a place. They are the building blocks of community.
- These places gather stories over time. The experience of living, working, shopping, exercising, worshipping, and playing in and around these old places builds a sense of shared community that transcends generations.
- Old places foster community by giving people a sense of shared identity through landmarks, history, memory, and stories, and by serving as shared places where people meet and gather.



Athens, Georgia | Credit: The National Trust for Historic Preservation

Story

- Old places foster community, from a shared sense of place, to the storytelling that happens in old neighborhoods, to the way people meet and gather on common ground. “People matter more than buildings, than things, but the spirit of the people—the heartbeat of the community—is in the old things.” – *Dennis Hockman, editorial & creative director, National Trust for Historic Preservation*

Economics

Overarching Message: Old places matter because they support a sound, sustainable, and vibrant economy.

- While we shouldn't reduce the many powerful qualities of old places to simply an economic calculation, dozens of studies have proven that historic preservation is good for the economy.
- Old buildings attract tourists, talent, and investment, serve as incubators for small businesses, create jobs and good wages, and revitalize neighborhoods and communities.



Tennessee Theatre, Knoxville, Tennessee | Credit: Historic Tennessee Theatre Association

- Just imagine if these economic studies could capture the full value old places give people—the sense of identity and belonging, the awe of beauty, the creativity and imagination? Then their valuation would be priceless.

Story

- “The good news is historic preservation is good for the economy. In the last fifteen years dozens of studies have been conducted throughout the United States, by different analysts, using different methodologies. But the results of those studies are remarkably consistent—historic preservation is good for the local economy. From this large and growing body of research, the positive impact of historic preservation on the economy has been documented in six broad areas: 1) jobs, 2) property values, 3) heritage tourism, 4) environmental impact, 5) social impact, and 6) downtown revitalization.” *–Don Rypkema, principal of PlaceEconomics*

III. Media Outreach & Tools

The following pages of this toolkit include examples of different ways in which you can use the messages from “Why Do Old Places Matter?” Think about spreading the message of “memory” or even “identity” by submitting a blog post somewhere online, an opinion editorial (op-ed) or a letter to an editor. Each of these tools can help tell the story of Why Old Places Matter.

The sample materials (press release, media advisory, blog post, etc.) are included to show how these messages about why old places matter have been used in various media outlets. We hope these samples (not for reprint) will generate ideas for your own organization.

Working with Local Media

Media Relations: General Tips for Pitching Reporters

The following are tips on pitching a story or event to a reporter. Some of these tips are also relevant to establishing and maintaining a solid working relationship with reporters. Initiating contact with relevant reporters before, during, and after coverage will help affirm a relationship which may prove helpful when you seek to pitch a story to score media coverage.

- **Do Your Research**

Learn as much as you can about the reporter’s interests before you pitch a story idea. Follow them on Twitter, read their recent stories and blogs and create a Google news alert with their name to keep up with their writing. Leave a comment on a relevant story, retweet it and/or email them with a comment or question when appropriate to begin cultivation of the relationship. This will help you both get to know each other.

- **Grab Their Attention**

Get to the point, and then work in the details. If you are cold calling a reporter with whom you do not already have a relationship, or even if you have worked with the reporter before, it is important to get their attention quickly. You should know why the reporter might cover your story. You should be able to quickly and interestingly explain the story or event.

- **Practice Your Pitch**

Prepare your story by practicing the pitch on a co-worker to be sure your story and approach is interesting. Write down important details and outline how you plan to pitch the story.

- **Listen First**

When you call a reporter, be sure they are not on deadline. If so, the reporter may wish to speak to you at a better time. Inquire as to a better time to call and call back at that time. If you've sent an introductory email or already left a voicemail, don't assume they've already seen/heard it. Also, don't ask them if they have. Start fresh, at the beginning.

- **Be Specific**

When you talk to the reporter, be prepared with supporting facts and their sources, names, and details. You need to be organized in case the reporter wants to follow up on any stories or facts you present. Be specific about your story.

- **Know the Issue**

The reporter you work with may be very knowledgeable on the details surrounding your story. You should have a clear message and story as well as in-depth knowledge on the issues.

- **Relevance**

Connect your story with a relevant current event. Maybe there is a related bill in Congress or a new study or local issue that makes sense to reference.

- **Facts**

If you do not know the answer to a reporter's inquiry, suggest that you call them back when you have the information. Do not make up facts as they may appear on tomorrow's front page.

- **Additional Materials**

Be prepared to offer additional materials such as pictures, background information and sources that they may need to complete a story.

- **Keep a Record**

Record what stories you pitch and to whom. This will provide you with a log of reporter interests and particular requirements that may aid in working with the reporter in the future.

- **Retry, Re-pitch**

Do not harass a reporter. However, you should consider different angles that strike different interests if one method is not working. If you come up with a new angle or development, feel free to pitch the story to the reporter again. Also, feel comfortable to ask for feedback if they aren't interested; it may help generate another hook.

- **Be a Resource**

Even if you don't have a particular story idea to pitch to your media contacts, if a preservation story makes the news (demolition threat, groundbreaking, ribbon-cutting, funding vote, etc.), reach out and offer to be a resource for any future coverage.

Media Relations: Making Contact

Print:

Newspaper deadlines vary according to individual newspapers, but a reporter typically hits deadline around 2 pm for morning newspapers. Most print reporters, due to daily deadlines, are only free for phone conversations a few hours during the early part of the day. Email is a great way to communicate with a reporter.

DO NOT call print reporters after 4 pm as they are usually filing their stories at that point.

Television:

Television stations operate primarily off media alerts, which are brief one-page outlines that invite the media to attend an event, and press releases, which are announcements written like a news story to describe compelling news your organization is making. These tools allow assignment editors to look quickly at information. The correct person to send these to and to call to pitch the story will be the assignment editor or manager or the planning editor or manager.

It is always a good idea to fax or email the media alert a day or two before your event and again the morning of the event. If you email it, be sure to copy and paste the alert into the body of the email to ensure it is delivered. Emails with attachments can trigger spam filters. Call and ask for the assignment desk to confirm receipt of your press materials.

Television needs a visual opportunity to make a story happen. When contacting an assignment editor, be sure to include the visual elements of your story—the photo opportunities. If you already have video it is even easier to gain television coverage. Video footage that is not packaged into a complete news story is called B-roll. Having this sort of footage available gives you an advantage when you are pitching a television story, but it is sometimes expensive to create and may not help if the story is not one that has the right news hook. However, having good B-roll can often make the difference to a decision about coverage.

Television newsrooms tend to be even more pressed for time than print publications. You may have to speak to more than one assignment editor or forward your materials several different times and to several different people.

Radio:

Familiarize yourself with the station's audience and informational needs. If you are contacting a news radio station, research its different programs and determine which one

would be a good match with your story. Organizations like National Public Radio like to have stories with a rich variety of sound. Think about what kind of audio your story can include, and who can be a dynamic spokesperson for your story. Offer these elements in your pitch to the producer or reporter.

Blogs:

Blogs focus on a specific topic and can help get a message out to your target audience. Reaching out to bloggers is smart because there is the potential that they will take interest in your cause and write about it every day. They might also link to your Web site and/or the National Trust's site.

You can search for blogs covering your geographic area/area of interest on **Technorati** www.technorati.com, **Google** <http://blogsearch.google.com> and **Blogflux** www.blogflux.com, in addition to many other places.

To approach bloggers, look for an email address on the blogger's page. The email might be under a profile link, a "contact us button" or on the side bar. If you can't find an email, leave a post that expresses your interest in contacting the blogger. Also look for the blogger on Twitter and Facebook. Bloggers are vigilant by nature, and will usually respond to you as soon as they can.

Social Media: Promote your materials on social media. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and Instagram are all great venues for promoting blog posts, speeches, events, etc.

Sample Press Release

Contact Name, Phone and Email

Date (City) – A new report released today, *Building on Baltimore's History: The Partnership for Building Reuse*, by the Partnership for Building Reuse, a joint initiative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Urban Land Institute (ULI), examines how Baltimore can overcome market, financial, technical and regulatory barriers to revive areas of the city with underused and vacant older buildings. *The opening paragraph should present the most important part of your news and why it matters.*

Nationally recognized for their creative reuse of older buildings, Baltimore's private developers, public agencies and nonprofit organizations have demonstrated great ingenuity in preserving the city's remarkable architectural heritage while serving its modern needs. However, with Baltimore's thousands of vacant and underused buildings, the Partnership selected this city for the study because of the potential to accelerate and spread revitalization by making it easier for property owners and investors to renew and repurpose older buildings.

"Baltimore has embraced building reuse as a catalyst for community revitalization to transform areas such as Fells Point, Federal Hill and Hampden into bustling commercial and residential corridors," said Stephanie Meeks, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "The city's economic growth, like that of many municipalities across the country, benefits directly from the preservation of its historic neighborhoods and the adaptive reuse of its existing buildings. These character-filled areas have proven attractive to young professionals, small business owners and entrepreneurs who are increasingly moving to these areas to live and work." *The release should include quotes from leaders whose words and credibility add meaning and authority to the announcement.*

"We know that in today's economy, companies and skilled workers are seeking cities that offer a great urban experience," said Patrick Phillips, Global Chief Executive Officer, ULI. "Baltimore has long understood this, and is fortunate to have a rich stock of historic buildings that can be adapted and productively reused. The Partnership's report helps us understand how the public and private sectors can work together to help developers, investors, and creative professionals take advantage of this opportunity— in the process creating jobs, preserving Baltimore's architectural heritage, and sharpening the city's competitive edge."

Building on Baltimore's History: The Partnership for Building Reuse key recommendations include:

- Adopt key provisions of the city's proposed new zoning code, Transform Baltimore
- Promote creative building and energy code solutions
- Improve and promote incentive programs, including the Maryland Sustainable Communities Tax Credit

Led locally by the ULI Baltimore District Council, *Building on Baltimore's History: The Partnership for Building Reuse* engaged more than 90 real estate developers, historic preservation advocates, government agency staff, land use professionals and community leaders. As part of this effort, the National Trust's Preservation Green Lab researched connections between the vitality of Baltimore neighborhoods and the character of the city's existing buildings. The research found that older buildings provide more space for Baltimore's local economy and attract a higher percentage of young people than neighborhoods with mostly newer, larger buildings. The study also discovered that more than 83 percent of the Baltimore Sun's 2014 "Top 50 Restaurants" and

2013 “Top 50 Bars” are located in buildings constructed before 1920, well above the citywide total of 50 percent of commercial businesses located in buildings of that vintage.

In the coming months, ULI Baltimore and the National Trust will work with local partners and city leaders to advance these recommendations and bring the benefits of building reuse to more Baltimore neighborhoods and residents.

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About the Partnership for Building Reuse

The National Trust for Historic Preservation and Urban Land Institute created the Partnership for Building Reuse in 2012 to enhance opportunities for building reuse in major U.S. cities.

Recognizing the environmental, economic and community benefits of reusing vacant and blighted property, the Partnership for Building reuse brings together community groups, real estate developers and civic leaders around the common goal of making it easier to reuse and retrofit these valuable assets. Launched in Los Angeles, Baltimore is the third of five cities participating in the initiative prior to a national convening and publication of a comprehensive report in 2016.

About the Urban Land Institute (ULI)

The Urban Land Institute (www.uli.org) is a global nonprofit education and research institute supported by its members. Its mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Established in 1936, the Institute has more than 30,000 members representing all aspects of land use and development disciplines.

Sample Media Advisory

Media Advisory

CONTACT NAME, PHONE AND EMAIL

Preservationists Launch Interactive Space to Promote Union Terminal Ballot Initiative *'Yes on 8' Action Center opens with photo exhibit featuring iconic Art Deco site*

WHEN: Thursday, October 9, 2014
7-9 p.m.

WHERE: 'Yes on 8' Action Center
511 Walnut St.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

WHAT: The National Trust for Historic Preservation, in collaboration with the My Union Terminal Campaign Committee, is launching an action center on Fountain Square to build support for Issue 8, a Nov. 4 ballot initiative that would raise funds to help restore Union Terminal. The action center will kick off with the Oct. 9 photo exhibit, and then remain open from 11 am to 6 pm on Monday-Friday through Nov. 5, with special events planned for evenings and weekends.

Additional activities planned at the center include a preservation pop-up, in collaboration with Cincinnati Preservation Collective, on Oct. 14, and a lecture, in collaboration with Cincinnati Preservation Association, on the history of saving Union Terminal on Oct. 16. The action center will host two special events a week throughout October.

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About Issue 8

Issue 8 is a one-quarter of one percent sales tax increase to fund the restoration of Cincinnati Union Terminal. The tax would generate nearly \$170 million in revenue over five years. When combined with historic tax credits, contributions from the State of Ohio, and philanthropic fundraising efforts, it will allow for the complete repair and restoration of Union Terminal. For more information, visit www.myunionterminal.com

About the National Trust for Historic Preservation

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, a privately-funded non-profit organization, works to save America's historic places. www.PreservationNation.org

Sample Blog Post

“How to Save Ugly Buildings”

By: Julia Rocchi

“It’s always easier to save a place that people consider beautiful than a place— no matter how historically significant—that people think is ugly.”

So writes Tom Mayes, our National Trust colleague who spent his time as a Rome Prize recipient examining why old places matter. And as any preservationist can tell you, he’s right: Styles with architectural features that challenge viewers, sites with stories that outweigh their architectural merit, and spaces with layers of grime that obscure their charms often require that, before we can get down to the hard work of saving a place, we first have to prove to a skeptical public why it should be saved.

How, then, do you persuade people to fall in love with a place that doesn’t fit the traditional mold of “beautiful?” This toolkit starts the conversation about ways to inspire love, passion, or at least understanding for the homelier places in our midst.

Join the debate of what defines beauty.

Tom Mayes says, “As I talk to people about beauty and old places, I note that many architects and artists—like many preservationists—hesitate to talk about beauty. The hesitancy is for many reasons—the difficulty of defining what beauty is, the loaded cultural aspects of beauty, the subjective nature of people’s experience of beauty, or even the simple fact that decision-makers sometimes consider beauty frivolous or expendable.”

Then what better way to engage others than to join the millennia-long discussion yourself? Even when others disagree with you about beauty’s exact definition and application, at least you’re all talking about the place you care about and keeping it top of mind for them—maybe even long enough to change said mind.

Explain the architectural merit.

Sometimes a style, even though it might be unpopular, represents a daring innovation or new technique in the field of architecture that should be preserved. Consider Brutalism, the name of which comes from the French *béton brut*, or “raw concrete.” As David Hay recently wrote in *Preservation Magazine*, the style “promised a raw and rough materiality that had a social and artistic purpose”—a monumental yet affordable approach for many public buildings. Looking at such places again when you know their intent lends a depth and interest that perhaps you missed before.



Inside the Houston Astrodome

Make an emotional connection.

While the Houston Astrodome, a National Treasure, can lay claim to being the world's first domed stadium, even more resonant is its place in the hearts of fans in Texas and across the country. In its 40-plus year run, the building served as a dramatic backdrop for just about every sports and entertainment event imaginable.

When the time came for a crucial vote in November 2013 regarding the Astrodome's future, the National Trust asked people to share their personal memories about the Dome. The result: an outpouring of love, support, and affection that met the more negative comments head on.

Share the place's unique history.

When you first look at the John Coltrane Home in Dix Hills, New York, you simply see a modest brick ranch house built in 1952. Yet Coltrane recorded, rehearsed, and wrote some of his most well-known pieces there, including his masterpiece "A Love Supreme," in the three years before his death in 1967.

Now, local group Friends of the Coltrane Home is working to save the site, with the hopes of one day restoring and interpreting it as an education center. In the meantime, sharing this everyday home's extraordinary past teaches those who encounter it how history crops up in unexpected places.



Inside the John Coltrane House in Dix Hills, New York

Go inside the place.

Letting people experience places from the inside out not only gives them a new perspective (literally), but also encourages them to make a personal connection with the space. Take Miami Marine Stadium, another National Treasure. It hosted boat races, concerts, and Easter services in its heyday, but was closed to the public 20 years ago after Hurricane Andrew swept through the region.

Despite the closure, however, its funky look and cantilevered roof continued to beckon teenagers, Parkour practitioners, and graffiti artists. So, when Instagram aficionados recently had the opportunity to go in and take pictures legally, they jumped at the chance to capture the inherent “cool” of this local landmark—and in their enthusiasm, helped others see the unexpected beauty of a neglected place.

Encourage people to consider the alternative.

The real question here is, “What else would we lose if this place disappeared?” As Tom Mayes discovered, losing old places—no matter their level of “beauty”—means we also lose our senses of identity, continuity, and memory. He puts it this way:

“Old places help people place themselves in that ‘great, sweeping arc’ of time. The continued presence of old places—of the schools and playgrounds, parks and public squares, churches and houses and farms and fields that people value—contributes to people’s sense of being on a continuum with the past. That awareness gives meaning to the present, and enhances the human capacity to have a vision for the future.”

Don’t be afraid to ask detractors, “Imagine if this place were gone. Then what?”



Lincoln Center, an example of Modern architecture in New York City

If nothing else, remember that perceptions can—and will—change over time.

Places reflect the ideas, passions, tastes, and technologies of their time. The elaborate Victorian style drew on the Industrial Age's manufacturing prowess. Art Deco's colorful ornamentation lent optimism in troubling economic times. Modernism symbolized innovation, experimentation, and a break with tradition. All these styles were derided at one point or another, and all have found greater love as generations pass.

In Tom Mayes' words: "The history of preservation demonstrates a remarkable march of the ugly transforming into the beautiful." Take heart, then, that the place you love, even if others don't find it beautiful, has a lot to offer— and you can help them discover why.

Have you ever helped people fall in love with an "ugly" place? Share your stories and tips in the comments.

Sample Speech

“Why Historic Hotels matter”

By: Terry Richey

Welcome and congratulations on another successful year with Historic Hotels of America. When the Trust launched this program 25 years ago, our focus was on trying to save many of the wonderful properties you manage today from the wrecking ball. Over the years, Historic Hotels has grown well beyond that purpose and today, through your stewardship, our network touches over 15 million guests a year with a message that history matters.

With the Hotel Hershey, I have now visited 85 of our HHA members. But my visits didn't begin with my tenure at the Trust...I have been a lover of old hotels since my college days. Like so many other people, I have always been drawn to interesting old places. What draws people to old places? Why are hotels so important among the old places people like to go?

Trust research indicates that one-third of Americans would have a preference for a historic hotel. As age and income goes up, this preference goes up. Just to be clear. Being “old” is not enough. Hotels can't be frozen in the time. They can't be stodgy. Or sacrifice amenities. Great hotels are not museums but are ever changing to meet the needs of guests. But being “old” has real marketing cachet and distinctive advantages for a huge segment of the American traveling public. Trying to understand why can help us better understand how to market the unique advantages that our historic hotel properties provide.

So why does “old” matter?

Long-time Trust attorney, Tom Mayes, recent won the Rome Prize which allowed him to spend six months on sabbatical at the American Academy in Rome. Tom went to study why old places matter and what he learned can help us market this unique benefit that we all have in common.

Tom has written a series of blogs that are available at the Trust's website. Each blog features a different reason for why people are attracted to old places. I want to use a few of those, along with my experiences at your hotels, to talk about why historic hotels matter.

Continuity. Memory. Community. Beauty & Architecture. History.

Continuity

Tom wrote in his blog: “In a world that is constantly changing, old places provide people with a sense of being part of a continuum that is necessary for them to be psychologically and emotionally healthy.”

Old places help carry forward our life stories. It's not just about the past but about today and about something we can count on tomorrow. Historic hotels are there for us. We know that they were connected with our grandparents and we know they will connect to our grandchildren. This quality of an unbroken relationship gives us a wonderful sense of comfort.

One of my best friends grew up spending two weeks each summer at a family retreat at Bishop's Lodge outside of Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Lodge became a touchstone across five generations. Every summer, this family returns to this wonderful old place that it has learned to count on across the decades.

Historic places really do give us a wonderful sense of continuity.

Memory

Another premise from Tom's study is that "Old places help us remember." A NY Times architectural critic once said: "The essential feature of a landmark is not its design, but the place it holds in a city's memory." You can feel the memories when you stand in the lobby of a hotel like the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza. You know that thousands and thousands of lives have been touched in that place and you believe that it important to preserve and protect it. It is no wonder that the Netherland Plaza is a National Historic Landmark; it carries our collective memories forward.

Community

Historic hotels embody our pride of place. They become the rallying point for communities. In many cities, our historic hotels are the grandest, most elegant and most storied places. Places where we bring our families and out-of-town guests to show off our community. Maybe no geography is better defined by a hotel than Mackinac Island and The Grand Hotel. With the world's longest veranda, it defines what being the center of a community means. Historic hotels play this important role all across America.

Beauty and Architecture

Historic hotels are often more beautiful or more architecturally significant than other buildings in a city. Often the best artisans, finest architects, and renowned interior designers created these iconic structures. Sometimes our historic hotels were created for other purposes and through adaptive reuse, their beauty and architecture make them an ideal hotel.

Take the Jekyll Island Club Hotel for example. It was opened in 1887 as a hunting retreat for America's wealthiest families and then abandoned during World War II. A century later it was restored as an elegant hotel showcasing all of the beauty and architectural detail that could not be replicated today. We love old places because of their beauty.

History

Finally, as a representative here of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, I'd be remiss not to mention a final important reason why old places matter. Old places do the best job of telling the story of our past. Being physically present at a place where history happened can bring it to life like nothing else. When I visit the Fairmount Hotel in San Francisco, I know I am walking thru the doors of history. A place that survived the great San Francisco earthquake. A place where the United Nations charter was drafted. And the place where Tony Bennett first sang "I Left My Heart in San Francisco."

Historic places, and especially historic hotels, matter. They give us a sense of continuity and memory. They build communities. They preserve beauty and architecture. And they tell great stories. On behalf of the Trust, thank you for carrying those stories forward.

Sample News Story

“How Legacy Architecture Shapes Our Experience of Place”

By: F. Kaid Benfield

I have been trying trying to understand what makes historic places special to so many of us. Part of it is that they are relatively rare in the United States, I guess. For several decades our newer everyday architecture—our subdivisions, strip malls, office buildings—has been simultaneously bland and deadening in its consistency. Every place looks like every other place, or so it seems. While that isn't literally true—some exciting buildings are being designed and built, some nourishing new places are being fashioned—the best of our older buildings and neighborhoods have a distinctiveness to them, almost by default.

But I also think there may be something deeper going on. We gravitate to older places because they ground us in space and time. There also is an emerging literature teaching us that they function pretty well, too. I'm not pretending to have all the answers, but here are some concepts that I would like to put on the table for consideration:

Continuity of place

Let me start with a concept that I am calling continuity of place. We've all had the experience of being in a setting that has been changed in a major way—by demolition of a group of buildings, perhaps, or by the rise of new ones—since the last time we were there. Sometimes the change can occur in as little as a week. Things seem off, disorienting, anxiety-provoking as we try to get our bearings and tap into our memories of what used to be. When continuity is disrupted, it can be jarring.

Last year Tom Mayes wrote an article for the Preservation Leadership Forum that considers the positive associations we have with continuity:

"[T]he idea of continuity is that, in a world that is constantly changing, old places provide people with a sense of being part of a continuum that is necessary for them to be psychologically and emotionally healthy. This is an idea that people have long recognized as an underlying value of historic preservation, though not often explained. In *With Heritage So Rich*, the idea of continuity is captured in the phrase 'sense of orientation,' the idea that preservation gives & 'a sense of orientation to our society, using structures, and objects of the past to establish values of time and place.'"

Mayes elaborates by citing an essay by internationally known architect Juhani Pallasmaa, who stresses the concept of time in relation to our experience of older places:

"We have a mental need to experience that we are rooted in the continuity of time. We do not only inhabit space, we also dwell in time . . . Buildings and cities are museums of time. They emancipate us from the hurried time of the present, and help us to experience the slow, healing time of the past. Architecture enables us to see and understand the

slow processes of history, and to participate in time cycles that surpass the scope of an individual life.”

That rings true for me. There is something comforting about older places.

Research on place attachment and continuity

Indeed, this has been confirmed by international academic research. While examining the topic for this article, I found a paper by Malaysian Professor Norsidah Ujang on “Place Attachment and Continuity of Urban Place Identity.” Ujang contends that uniform concepts of planning and “the commodification of places”—everything looking like everything else—weakens identity and attachment to particular places. After systematically questioning 330 users of three main shopping streets in Kuala Lumpur, the author’s researchers concluded that familiarity with a place contributes to a feeling of psychological comfort, while “psychological discomfort and strong emotional expressions” are “strongly felt as a reaction against physical changes and unfit interventions.”

The paper concludes by recommending that planners take steps to reinforce rather than disrupt place identity and legibility, and strive “to ensure continuity of place identity through proper understanding of places as physical, social and psychological dimensions of human experience.”

Another aspect of our shared architectural legacy that may be important is that it is, in fact, shared. We experience and are comforted by the continuity of older places not just as individuals but as community members. The town square and the court house, perhaps also the old church and the old school—even the Victorian mansions lining a nearby street—bind us together in a way that would be diminished if they were rapidly changing. Their legacy is not just mine but ours.

Cultural engagement

Closely related to continuity of place but also a little different, I think, is something I’ll call cultural engagement. Older places that are unfamiliar, with which we have had no continuity, can also elucidate powerful positive experiences. Think of someone encountering the great pyramids of Giza, or a Native American pueblo for the first time. These places are magical precisely because we have had little or no previous experience, no continuity, with them.

Instead of comforting us with their familiarity, such places challenge our imagination to conjure other times and connect with past cultures in ways that we ordinarily do not. They educate us and equip us with a broader and deeper world view— a view that taps into past wisdom—that we can then bring to more contemporary experience.

I have a favorite, much more modest example that I feature in my new book (*People Habitat: 25 Ways to Think About Greener, Healthier Cities*). Just a few miles from my house, right across the Maryland border from Washington, DC, sits a partially restored old amusement park dating from the Art Deco era. The old carousel still runs in season and delights kids; you can still buy cotton candy there. But it’s not really an amusement

park today—there’s no roller coaster, and the old bumper car pavilion is now an occasionally used music hall. It is certainly unlike any amusement park I ever knew.

Instead, today it exists as a place of respite for adults and of play for kids, and as an evocation of an amusement facility rather than a fully-functioning real one. It challenges visitors to bring our imaginations with us and meet it halfway, as a partial expression of the past and of a culture that no longer exists in the same way. I go to Glen Echo Park often, because it is alongside one of my regular bike training routes, and I love it in a way that I wouldn’t if it were new, even if it were physically the same. It taps into deep cultural connections that wouldn’t be there if I knew the place didn’t have an embodied history to share with its visitors.

Contribution to city vitality

While one of things I like best about Glen Echo Park is that it is relatively quiet (but for the playful chatter of children) and not particularly urban, new research from the National Trust confirms that older, smaller properties in cities make also major contributions to urban vitality.

Based upon statistical analysis of the built fabric of three major American cities, the research (titled *Older, Stronger, Better*) finds that established neighborhoods with a mix of older, smaller buildings perform better on a range of economic, social, and environmental metrics than do districts with larger, newer structures. The key seems to be the diversity that older, smaller buildings bring to a city neighborhood:

“Buildings of diverse vintage and small scale provide flexible, affordable space for entrepreneurs launching new businesses and serve as attractive settings for new restaurants and locally owned shops. They offer diverse housing choices that attract younger residents and create human-scaled places for walking, shopping, and social interaction.”

In particular, the study—conducted by the Trust’s Preservation Green Lab with several respected partners—relied on spatial analysis to determine the relative role of building age, diversity of age, and size, alongside other measures. More than 40 performance metrics were considered, including cultural vibrancy, real estate performance, transportation options and intensity of human activity.

Compared to districts dominated by larger, newer buildings, those with smaller and older buildings were found to have several key advantages:

- Older districts have more population density and more businesses per commercial square foot.
- Older, smaller buildings support the local economy with more non-chain, locally owned businesses.
- Older business districts offer greater opportunities for entrepreneurship, including women and minority-owned businesses.
- Cultural outlets thrive in older, mixed-use neighborhoods.
- Older, mixed-use neighborhoods have higher Walk Score and Transit Score ratings.
- Older buildings attract more young people and a more diverse age group.

- There is more nightlife on streets with a diverse range of building ages.

Indeed, one might say from these findings that older districts with a diversity of building ages and types are more urban, at least in the traditional sense, than newer, larger building and block types. The methodology appears to have been rigorous and I would encourage interested readers to dive in to the full, 100-page study and its appendices for a more critical review.

Contribution to environmental sustainability

When it comes to sustainability—at least in the literal sense—we don’t need data to demonstrate the performance of older buildings: their continued existence already proves that they have, in fact, been sustained over time. That said, we do have data, at least with respect to environmental sustainability.

In particular, another study by the Preservation Green Lab, released two years ago, concluded that it can take between 10 and 80 years for a new, energy-efficient building to overcome, through more efficient operations, the negative energy and climate change impacts caused in its construction process. The research looked at a range of six building types in each of four climatically diverse cities across the US: Portland (OR), Phoenix, Chicago and Atlanta. Data were compiled and analyzed for six categories of building use (or reuse, in the case of older buildings), including single-family homes; multifamily buildings; commercial office buildings; mixed-use buildings in “urban villages”; elementary schools; and warehouse conversion. The study examined the role that geography, energy performance, electricity-grid mix, building type and building lifespan have on overall environmental performance of new construction versus older building reuse.

The major findings from the study included the following:

- Building reuse typically offers greater near-term environmental savings than demolition and new construction. For five of the six building types considered in the study, it can take 10 to 80 years for a new building that is 30 percent more efficient than an average-performing existing building to overcome the negative climate change impacts related to the construction process.
- Benefits are maximized when building reuse is practiced at scale. For example, retrofitting, rather than demolishing and replacing, just one percent of Portland’s office buildings and single family homes over the next decade would help to meet 15 percent of Multnomah County’s total CO2 reduction targets over the next decade.
- The greatest environmental benefits of reuse are achieved by minimizing the input of new construction materials.

I would add that older buildings designed and constructed before what my friend and architectural thought leader Steve Mouzon calls “the thermostat age” were often designed with much more attention to climatic conditions than newer buildings tend to be. Through such measures as thick walls, high ceilings, proper ventilation, sensitive shading and site orientation, such older buildings have what Steve calls “original green” properties that help save energy, greenhouse gas emissions, and other resource inputs.

Change, but ask the right questions

In closing, I must add emphatically, though, that all this is not to say that places shouldn't evolve and change. It would be hypocritical for me as an advocate of revitalization to suggest otherwise. Indeed, we should embrace change that is for the better—change that, as Professor Ujang suggests, does not blur the distinction of place but adds to it. What's important is that we be thoughtful about it: I'll admit that it can be tricky to discern in advance which changes to place will be positive and respectful, and which will be negative and disruptive with respect to our experience of place, but good placemakers must always ask the question. And we must always try our best to ensure that change nourishes rather than diminishes the human experience.

-Your name, title and other pertinent identifying information. For example: Jane Doe, executive director of XXX organization

Sample Op-Ed

Preserving the history of the Manhattan Project

In many respects, the Manhattan Project ushered in the modern era. The creation and use of these early weapons of mass destruction raised profound ethical questions, which remain just as challenging and urgent today as in 1945. As a nation, we have a responsibility to grapple openly and objectively with the Manhattan Project's complex legacy. *Your opening should make clear the column topic, answer why the subject is important and grab the reader's attention.*

To do that, we need a place for reflection. Legislation before Congress would establish the Manhattan Project National Historical Park, an assembly of three locations central to the development of the atomic bomb: Hanford, Washington, site of the first full-scale nuclear reactor; Oak Ridge, Tennessee, home to the first uranium enrichment plant; and the laboratory and related sites at Los Alamos, New Mexico. *Add additional paragraphs that support your focal point and communicate your preservation message. Use clear and concise examples and anecdotes.*

The House of Representatives failed to pass a bill to create the park last year; the legislation is poised for another vote in the coming months. It then also faces a tough road through the Senate, most likely packaged with other public lands bills to be considered this summer.

The primary issue in both chambers remains the concern that preserving and interpreting the Manhattan Project sites would inappropriately celebrate the atomic bomb and the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the close of World War II.

In fact, the opposite is true. Opening up these sites as a national park would provide an opportunity for Americans to consider the Manhattan Project in its full scope and complexity, encouraging the sort of thoughtful reflection that is the best way to avoid glorifying the bomb.

Few events have affected as many aspects of American life as deeply as the Manhattan Project. It irrevocably altered the global standing of the United States and set the stage for the Cold War. It sparked innovations in medicine, science and technology. And, of course, the deadly force of the atomic bomb humbled us all.

A new national park, managed by the Department of Energy and the National Park Service, would encourage visitors to consider the Manhattan Project's many ethical, cultural and scientific implications. The inclusion of these three primary sites eloquently reflects the project's scale, as well as the frenetic, round-the-clock effort required to create an atomic weapon ahead of the enemy.

At the Hanford site, visitors could stand amid thousands of interconnecting aluminum tubes of the B Reactor, which produced the plutonium for the "Fat Man" bomb. They could visit the secret government-constructed boomtown at Oak Ridge where more than 80,000 people once worked to enrich uranium. At the V Site in Los Alamos, where the bomb was assembled for testing, visitors could contemplate the consequences of its detonation a few weeks later at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Such firsthand experience provides a tangible understanding that is different than reading history. What better way could there be to wrestle with the Manhattan Project in all its complexity? *Including compelling numbers that support the theme strengthens the op-ed's impact.*

The National Park Service exists in part to help us interpret the lessons of our national history. For nearly 100 years, the Park Service has been the guardian of our nation's stories and many of its most important cultural sites.

To cite just one example, the agency has earned the respect of many in the Asian American and Pacific Islander community for its sensitive interpretation of another World War II site, the Minidoka National Historic Site in Idaho. At its peak, Minidoka imprisoned more than 9,000 Japanese, many of them U.S. citizens. Preserving the camp does not glorify this painful chapter of American history; on the contrary, it reminds us of the danger of letting fear govern our actions. Likewise, preserving the laboratories where scientists created the atomic bomb would underscore the great responsibilities that come with great scientific achievement, and it would better prepare us to navigate the complex moral terrain of our own era's technological advances.

We did more than split the atom at Oak Ridge, Los Alamos and Hanford. We divided history. We stepped forward into a new era, one in which science granted us extraordinary power to improve our world — or to destroy it.

The novelist Herman Wouk, whose best-known works were inspired by his service in World War II, once noted that "the beginning of the end of war lies in remembrance." The beginning of wisdom lies there too.

-Your name, title and other pertinent identifying information. For example: Jane Doe, executive director of XXX organization

Sample Letter to the Editor

To the Editor,

As Houston continues the process of reconsidering its historic district designations, it is important to remind property owners in these areas, and their elected representatives on the City Council, of the many benefits to living and owning property in a historic district. Some of these factors—historic charm and character and enhanced “curb appeal,” for example—are obvious, but others, including the economic benefits of owning property in a historic district, are not as well known.

We all know how the economy has battered real estate prices over the past few years, but according to several recent studies, properties located in historic districts have retained their value when compared to other homes. In a meta-analysis of studies conducted in several states, economist Donovan Rypkema found that the “results of these studies are remarkably clear: property values in local historic districts appreciate significantly faster than the market as a whole in the vast majority of cases.”

And closer to home, the University of Houston’s Hobby Center for Public Policy conducted a study that clearly showed the positive impact historic designation has on property values in Houston.

The bottom line is that homeowners in historic districts can have confidence that their investment will be protected over time.

Houston is fortunate to have 16 designated historic districts, an impressive number. The city is also fortunate to have a first-rate local preservation organization—the Greater Houston Preservation Alliance—working to retain and improve these historic areas.

Before residents and the City Council opt to repeal or revise historic district designations, they should consider the many ways that designation has improved their neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Meeks
President
National Trust for Historic Preservation

-Your name, title and other pertinent identifying information. For example: Jane Doe, executive director of XXX organization

National Trust Channels

About our online resources

There are several National Trust channels to consider for spreading the word about preservation projects in your state. These include our blog, publications, e-newsletters and social media platforms.

The National Trust manages two blogs. Our **Preservation Leadership Forum** blog is geared toward helping professional preservationists stay on top of the latest research, tools, resources and trends. It provides articles, preservation news and analysis, advocacy information, and links to important stories.

The other blog is **PreservationNation**, which features less-technical treatments of stories of people saving places that would appeal to a national audience. It includes stories, news, and notes from the National Trust for Historic Preservation as well as the wider preservation movement. The public has unrestricted access to all content on this blog.

The National Trust also produces the quarterly *Forum Journal*, preservation's premier scholarly publication. This all-digital journal offers in-depth articles on preservation practices and current challenges to the field, accompanied by slide shows, videos and links to additional resources. Recent issues have focused on rehab tax credits, urban preservation efforts and international issues in preservation. This publication is available to members of the National Trust Forum.

The National Trust also maintains a Partner Network of state and local preservation nonprofit organizations and sends those members a **monthly e-newsletter**. The National Trust Partner Network is available to all organizations that are Forum members. The Trust is very active on social media, especially Facebook and Twitter.

How to submit content

To submit your story idea to the PreservationNation blog, contact:
editorial@savingplaces.org.

To submit your story idea to the Preservation Leadership Forum blog,
Email forumonline@savingplaces.org

In either case, please reach out to ask any questions that could help frame your story idea or research before submitting content.

Sharing Your Story Online

Social media and e-newsletters to supporters or members are great channels to share links to media stories about historic preservation in your region. Media stories can help broaden your preservation constituency and build advocacy for preservation in your community.

IV. We're Here to Help

National Trust Contacts

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