



TREATMENT STRATEGIES

Historic Preservation Purpose Statement

By preserving elements of our past, both natural and man-made, we foster a sense of who we are and where we have been. As part of the Metropolitan and Community Planning section of the Planning & Development Department, the City of Eugene's Historic Preservation Program helps guide responsible growth and change while encouraging a pride of Eugene's unique history. History continues to occur on a daily, monthly and yearly schedule. If we lose touch with our past, we lose a vision of the future built on the irreplaceable heritage of our local and evolving traditions.

Strategies for Eugene's Historic Preservation Program

The purpose of this section is to identify long-term strategies that will enhance our understanding about the history of the River Road area while assisting property owners to understand the value of preserving significant historic resources, as well as the unique character of the River Road Neighborhood. The list of strategies was created based on field analysis, evaluation of historic resources, and a review of information obtained during preparation of the *Eugene's Historic River Road* document.

The strategies are suggested ideas for future preservation work by interested persons or groups who want to advance the identification and protection of historic resources in the River Road area. Partnerships are increasingly valuable to accomplishing community goals like historic preservation. Partners for the future might include the River Road Community Organization (RRCO), the Emerald Park District, 4J School District's neighborhood schools, property owners and occupants of the area, as well as Lane County and the City of Eugene. Implementation of the recommended strategies will be based on merit as established by the River Road Community Organization, their partners working on various priorities, and available funding.

This section describes opportunities for conducting further historic preservation work and lists related recommended strategies under topical areas.

Education and Public Involvement

The City of Eugene continues to experience steady growth, and many Eugene residents have lived in the area for less than five years. There is an ongoing need to promote public education and involvement in local history initiatives. There are a large variety of architectural styles and types of historic resources extant in Eugene. Historic

preservation typically describes a historic property as one that is over 50 years of age, currently taking us back to 1956. Preservation of the “recent past” is somewhat problematic because it is part of current memory for many people, or not as historically charming as much of the ornamented architecture of the 19th and early 20th century.

The River Road area contains a large quantity of historic residential architecture that spans periods from 1870 to the present. The majority of residential construction took place after the conclusion of World War II (1945). For the past 50 years, farms, orchards, truck farms and large parcels of land have been parceled and subdivided to create a diversity of house types, based on the trends of the period in which they were constructed. This parceling of land continues into the present as owners choose to divide their large tax lots to accommodate infill construction of one to ten more housing units.

The City of Eugene regularly supports a number of programs, projects, and events designed to encourage public involvement and education in historic preservation activities. Eugene is responsible for the active neighborhood program which assists the River Road Community Organization to hold and advertise their monthly meetings and publish their periodic newsletters.

The purpose of RRCO is to advocate on behalf of the people living in the area and represent the community organization’s view to Lane County, City of Eugene and other decision-making agencies, on matters affecting the general welfare, growth and development of the area as well as:

- Facilitate neighborhood improvement projects and social events.
- Provide a forum to identify, discuss, and resolve neighborhood issues.
- Inform citizens on issues, public process, urban services and elections.

There are opportunities for coordination between various groups that deal with local history initiatives and historic preservation. Organizations that address preservation in the region include the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, Historic Preservation League of Oregon, Oregon Historical Society, Lane County Historical Society, the University of Oregon’s Historic Preservation Program, the Associated Students of Historic Preservation, the Shelton-McMurphey-Johnson House Associates, the Pioneer Cemetery Association, and the Eugene Masonic Cemetery Association. Students enrolled in the historic preservation program at the University of Oregon have varied interests in preservation and often enjoy participation in local historic preservation projects. For many years the Associated Students for Historic Preservation have coordinated local historic preservation week events which have included speakers, tours, and educational sessions.

If property owners in the River Road are interested, periodic workshops on appropriate rehabilitation of historic buildings or landscapes could be held. During the course of this project various people observed that information on appropriate infill might be beneficial to property owners who have an interest in maintaining neighborhood character. Public informational workshops could be scheduled during historic preservation week events that traditionally occur in May.

The City addresses the merits of historic designation by explaining the purpose and regulatory implications of listing properties as local landmarks or in the National Register of Historic Places on a case by case basis. The City will complete an educational workshop in 2006 to provide more information on the topic of identifying and protecting significant historic resources in the River Road area.

As part of Eugene's regional boom that followed WWII many young families purchased houses in the River Road area. Many of these families are aging and selling their family homes, so an oral history/video project that works to document local memory and history in the River Road area could advance the local history initiative. The local schools have a teacher in-service day that could be used to promote historic preservation education for students and an oral history/video project might be instigated at the high school level.

Items to consider pursuing in the River Road area under the education and public involvement topics are:

1. Encourage communication and collaboration between city and county staff, elected officials, and the public to educate one another about preservation issues of common concern.
2. Create partnerships with existing River Road organizations to assist in educating the public and property owners about the importance of historic preservation and landmark designation within the area.
3. Develop a historic preservation educational awareness program to inform the public and property owners in the River Road area about historic landmark designation and the implications of protection through the land use code.
4. Implement a distribution plan for information about the history of the River Road area, historic designations, and advisory design guidelines through the internet and City of Eugene web site, the RRCO newsletter and other opportunities for direct mailings.
5. Collaborate with the 4J school district to develop a local history youth initiative that would promote oral histories and build historic preservation support with the young and their families.
6. Create a public walking tour brochure highlighting significant historic sites within the River Road area which can be posted on the city web page for individual use by the public. Locate historic materials in the local volunteer library and schools.

Support For Historic Preservation Program Activities

The City of Eugene provides funding to administer a local historic preservation program through the Planning and Development Department budget. In addition, other departments engage in historic preservation work through activities such as planning and design for historic parks, rehabilitating city-owned historic buildings, coordinating

cultural events that help educate community members about local history and the roles of various ethnic groups, and conducting research on the history of specific local government services.

The City of Eugene maintains close ties with the University of Oregon's Historic Preservation Program. Strong faculty and student participation is evident in a number of ways, such as participation in local survey work, National Register nominations, and individual student research projects

The City of Eugene has successfully obtained federal grants through the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office to fund historic survey work, planning, National Register nominations, and education activities. The City has also received special grants to help restore the Shelton-McMurphey-Johnson House, the Eugene Train Depot and the Masonic Cemetery. The City helps to facilitate community support of the ongoing preservation and restoration of the Masonic, Pioneer and Mulkey cemeteries.

It is increasingly difficult for the City of Eugene to adequately fund a local historic preservation program that addresses the multitude of issues, projects, and service needs of community members. Support for local historic preservation program activities would be greatly enhanced with increased funding. Collaboration with local historic agencies and our educational institutions is a partnership that has a proven successful track record for advancing historic preservation projects, goals, and initiatives.

Items for interested persons and groups to consider pursuing in River Road under the support preservation activities topic are:

- 7.** As deemed appropriate, continue to seek grant assistance from a variety of local, state and federal programs.
- 8.** Encourage RRCO and other partners to advocate for the responsible public management of important, publicly owned resources in the River Road area, like schools and park land.
- 9.** Continue to involve related University of Oregon student programs in local preservation initiatives and projects.
- 10.** Develop and/or encourage programs that promote communication between younger generations and the elderly, particularly an oral history program that helps to establish a list of significant persons for the River Road area.
- 11.** Sponsor a rehabilitation workshop to inform property owners about the process and benefits of rehabilitating a historic structure, and consider addressing appropriate infill construction as a topic of interest.
- 12.** Encourage a mentoring network that would enable property owners involved in historic preservation projects to communicate and learn from one another.

Preservation Planning

The Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area General Plan (Metro Plan) provides the overall vision for community growth and development. It addresses the size of the community, its population, the form and density of development, areas for future expansion, how services will be provided for a growing population, design of the urban street system, protection of natural and historic environments, the pattern of parks and open spaces, and numerous other urban development factors. The vision for the metropolitan area is expressed as goals and policies in the Metro Plan and companion documents like the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (TransPlan) and neighborhood refinement plans.

Through extensive public involvement, the Eugene-Springfield community has chosen an overall form of compact urban growth within the physical boundaries provided by the McKenzie and Willamette rivers and the South Hills ridge lines. Growth is managed by having new development occur in a sequential pattern as the full ranges of urban services are provided by the two cities.

In addition to establishing compact urban growth as the urban form model, the Metro Plan also contains the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). The UGB is designed to concentrate urban growth within a defined geographic area. Land outside the city boundaries of Eugene and Springfield, but inside the UGB, is called the urban transition area.

The Metro Plan vision contains the concept of planning for intense urban development on suitable land and encourages the protection of historic resources. The term “historic resource” generally applies to structures, objects or sites that are more than fifty years old that still retain their character defining features. Eugene implements the Land Use Code for this area that includes the historic preservation component that regulates officially listed properties as City of Eugene Historic Landmarks or those listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Section III-I-1, *Historic Preservation Element* of the Metro Plan, states that historic structures can enrich our lives by offering architectural diversity to the visual environment and provide tangible links to the future. The goal of the element is to preserve and restore reminders of our origin and historic development as links between past, present, and future generations. Two objectives instruct us to expand public awareness of our origins, and encourage preservation of significant resources in our community. Eight policies are used in formulating land use decisions.

In some cases, the vision in the Metro Plan to encourage increased densities, especially near downtown and other major employment centers, may conflict with efforts to preserve historic resources. The residential neighborhoods surrounding downtown, for example, contain a large supply of older housing stock. As these areas experience redevelopment, infill construction will make it difficult to preserve or mitigate impacts on historic resources. These situations illustrate the challenge of achieving policies aimed at increasing residential density, encouraging historic preservation, and providing affordable housing options.

Items to consider pursuing in the River Road area under the support of preservation planning topics are:

13. Collaborate with local natural resource programs to preserve significant open spaces and historic landscape features, including identified heritage trees and Goal 5 resources.
14. Work closely with mixed-use center projects to ensure that historic resources are integrated into future development plans as deemed feasible.
15. Monitor the implementation of site specific design for public improvements while discouraging the removal of large street trees and other historic landscape features that contribute to the character of the River Road neighborhood.

Historic Designation

The City of Eugene maintains a local historic landmark program, with applications evaluated by Eugene's Historic Review Board according to criteria for determining historic significance established in section 9.8165 of the Eugene Code. In recent years more property owners have expressed an interest in the local program, mostly for honorific reasons. City landmarks and properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are able to utilize the Historic zoning and Historic Preservation Loan Program. It is important to educate interested property owners on historic regulations including alteration review, moving and demolition, and incentives. The City's *Advisory Design Guidelines for Historic Residential Properties* works towards this education.

Items for the City to consider pursuing in River Road under the historic designation topic are:

16. Encourage designations of significant historic resources in the River Road area as City Landmarks or in the National Register of Historic Places.
17. Encourage the River Road Community Organization to establish a priority list of potential landmarks and develop a plan to encourage their protection.
18. Promote nominations of significant residential buildings in the River Road area using the already established *Multiple Property Submission for Residential Properties in Eugene, Oregon*, which is a parent document that allows listing residential properties in the National Register of Historic Places.

Preservation Incentives

The Oregon Special Assessment program is the only statewide program that provides a financial incentive to owners of properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The program allows a second fifteen-year property tax freeze for residential and income producing properties.

The City administers a variety of loan programs using both federal and local general funds. When federal funds are used for a construction project, staff review the proposal to determine if there are adverse impacts to historic resources. This review is a requirement of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (1966). The review includes an assessment of whether the proposed development project is appropriate given the historic significance, integrity, and condition of the historic resource in cooperation with Oregon SHPO compliance staff, which are always the lead agency.

The City of Eugene maintains the historic preservation loan fund and lends up to \$20,000 as a match to projects that meet historic preservation criteria for selection. Funds are lent at five percent interest, and the project must be visible to the public. Successful projects have included exterior painting, new roofs, wood repair, replication of missing historic features, and landscape improvements.

Items to consider pursuing in the River Road area under the preservation incentives topic are:

19. Support state and federal legislation that will provide incentives for property owners and strengthen historic preservation goals and objectives.

20. Promote the city's historic preservation loan program for properties listed as City Historic Landmarks or in the National Register. Include an educational component that explains the benefits while encouraging property owners to use the available funds.

21. Recognize that private funding is the primary vehicle used for the preservation of individual resources and subsequently, neighborhood character. Promote the following of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. Encourage quality construction that strives to maintain the overall quality of life within the River Road area.

Regulations Affecting Historic Preservation

Regulatory agencies, such as the Department of Environmental Quality or Environmental Protection Agency, and federal legislation, such as the Clean Air Act and the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA), can create conflicts with historic resource preservation. For example, reuse of historic residential properties to nonresidential use often requires non-compatible changes to the structure to meet updated building codes and ADA requirements. Mandates about the treatment and disposal of lead paint directly affect the cost of rehabilitation projects.

Regulatory measures are adopted by the City of Eugene based on federal and state mandates and the vision contained in the Metro Plan. These regulations can either create incentives for preservation or deter appropriate rehabilitation and conservation of historic resources.

Items to consider pursuing in the River Road area under the regulations topic are:

22. Prepare infill design guidelines to aid property owners when partitioning, subdividing, or constructing additions. Such guidelines would focus on maintaining the original character of historic properties while striving to avoid inappropriate alterations.

23. Integrate preservation policy, guidelines, and regulations with future site specific design projects. The City's *Advisory Design Guidelines for Historic Residential Properties* works towards this integration.

Cultural Resource Surveys

Cultural resource surveys are a valuable tool to identify and evaluate historic resources. Since the mid-1980s, in cooperation with the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office and the University of Oregon Historic Preservation Program, the City has conducted an ongoing survey of cultural resources within the city limits. This partnership has led to the completion of cultural resource inventories for the following neighborhoods, shown below:

- College Hill Neighborhood (1985-87 and 2003-04)
- Fairmount Neighborhood (1985-87)
- South University Neighborhood (1985-87, 2000)
- West University Neighborhood (1986-87)
- Eugene Downtown (1989-92)
- Chase Gardens/Old Coburg Road (1991-92)
- Whiteaker Neighborhood (1993-95)
- Jefferson Neighborhood (1996-97)
- Westside Neighborhood (1997-98)
- River Road Neighborhood (2005)

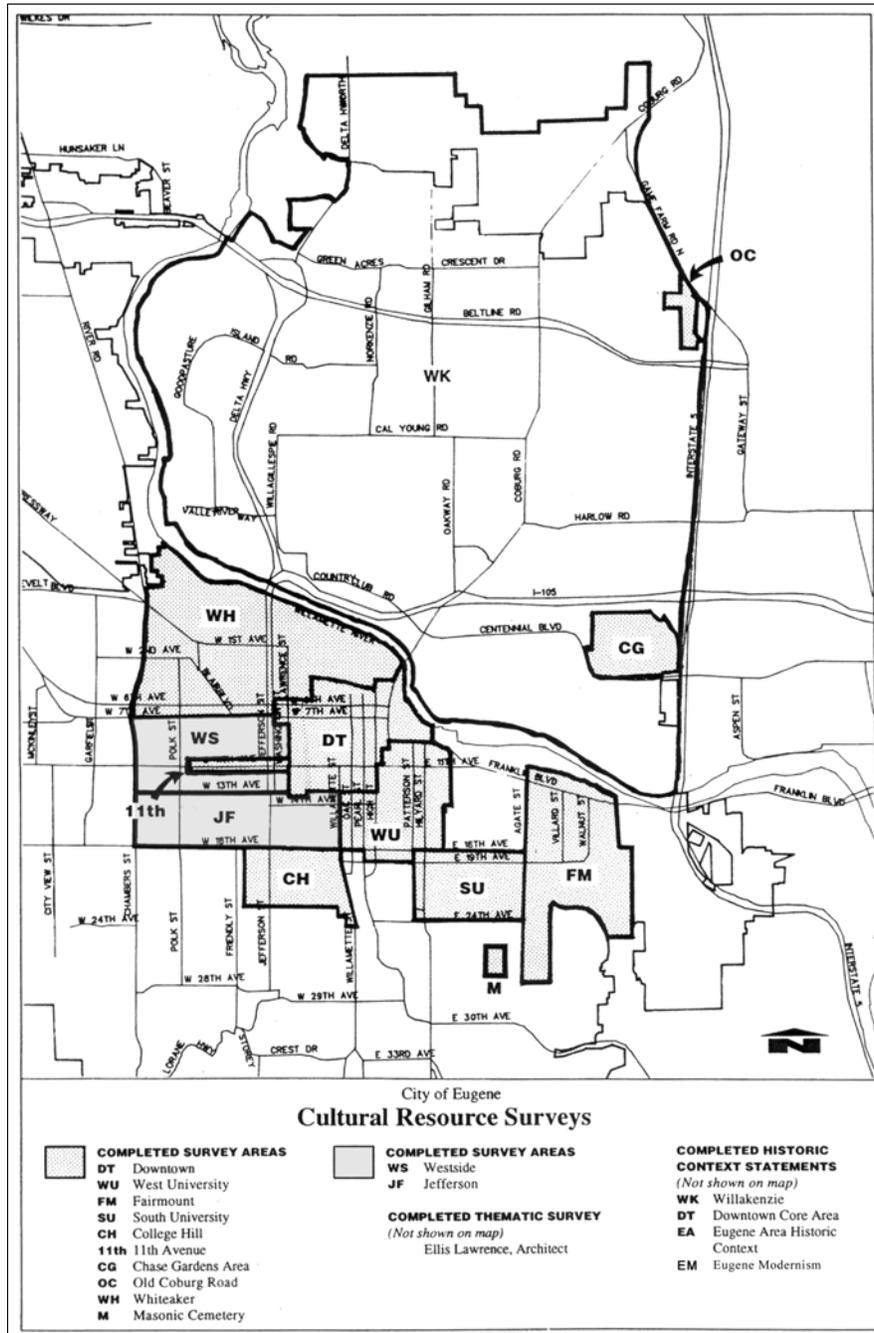
These surveys have inventoried more than 4,000 historic properties, and resulted in protection of over three hundred historic resources, including two historic districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places. (Refer to the cultural resource survey map on following page.)

Large areas within the Eugene Urban Growth Boundary remain unsurveyed. The Eugene Area Historic Context Statement helps indicate the potential types and number of historic resources, including agricultural land and open space, being impacted by growth. One of these is the River Road area located northwest of the core area of Eugene. First settled in the 1850s, River Road was initially established as a distinct agrarian community. It contains numerous historic resources, including farmhouses and a few barns. Now within Eugene's Urban Growth boundary, this area has experienced extensive growth and development in recent years. The subdividing of large tracts of land and infill construction are recent and ongoing patterns of development.

Items to consider pursuing in the River Road area under the cultural resources survey topic are:

24. Conduct surveys of significant historic resources, including schools, churches and landscapes, in areas where historic resources are concentrated or where resources might be impacted by urban growth, redevelopment, or conflicting uses.

25. Encourage completion of written, oral and video histories that help the public understand the persons, events and buildings that reflect the unique character of the River Road area.



Cultural resource surveys completed by the City of Eugene as of 2005.