



Architecture and Engineering

Historic Resource Surveys and the Internet

THE CENTER FOR HISTORIC
ARCHITECTURE
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
GERALD D. HINES COLLEGE
OF ARCHITECTURE

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**HISTORIC RESOURCE
SURVEYS
AND
THE INTERNET**

**Produced by
The Center for Historic Architecture
University of Houston, Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture**

**For
The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training**

1998

This manual was intended to teach communities and neighborhoods how to complete their own historic resource surveys and then to share that information quickly, economically and efficiently using today's computer technology and the Internet. When viewed over the Internet the underlined words in italics serve to link the viewer with more information about that particular topic. This manual can be viewed on the Internet at the University of Houston web site address: <http://www.arch.uh.edu/indexcoa.html>.

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CENTER FOR HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE MISSION STATEMENT

The Center for Historic Architecture at the University of Houston Gerald D Hines College of Architecture has a multi-purpose mission:

- to encourage preservation of the built environment
- to educate future architects to be competent preservationists and to be planning activist
- to document our architectural past
- to assimilate the past into modern architectural consciousness
- to empower organizations and individuals within the preservation community

The Center for Historic Architecture was created within the University of Houston Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture to assist Texas communities and organizations with preservation issues and design. When communities contact the University of Houston for assistance in historic design, planning and building documentation, The Center for Historic Architecture pairs them with students and faculty interested in preservation issues. All projects are integrated into College course work through seminar classes, design studios, and independent research projects, enriching our students' educational opportunities.

As students interact and learn in real-world settings, the Center fulfills a principal goal of the University of Houston to reach out to our community as an urban resource and partner. We are proud of our involvement in our civic projects, and proud of the over 300 students who have participated in them.

The University of Houston provides base faculty salaries, but all program costs for the Center must be met by outside funding. Our accomplishments would not have been possible without the generous support of special individuals, community organizations, government agencies and foundations that believe in our students, our programs and our mission.



Barry Moore,
FAIA Director

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1.0 What is a Historic Resource Survey?

A Historic Resource Survey is a process of inspecting and evaluating a community's historic resources. Surveys can be conducted for a variety of reasons thus producing survey data for different needs. Planning needs are often the major reason for conducting historic resource surveys. It is the responsibility of the organization conducting the survey to 1) determine the goals and priorities for the survey, 2) decide what data is needed, 3) conduct the survey, 4) evaluate the data, 5) store and manage the data and 6) produce the survey results. For further information for conducting historic resource surveys please read National Register Bulletin #24. Guidelines to Local Surveys. A Basis for Preservation Planning which is available through the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.

A Historic Resource Survey is a collection of information which:

- Identifies historic resources in the community
- Documents and describes elements of the physical, cultural and historical landscape
- Associates the property with historical events or people.

Why conduct a survey?

- Plan for the use of the community's resources.
- Help the community in developing a preservation plan.
- Increase awareness and understanding for preserving the environment.
- Fulfill requirement for a National Register of Historic Places District nomination
- Help obtaining local, state and federal financial assistance.

What are the steps in performing a survey?

- Planning
- Preliminary Research
- Field work
- Organizing data
- Assembling the data
- Editing the data

1.1 What is Involved in Planning a Survey?

A great deal of time and effort goes into gathering all of the necessary information needed for a Historic Resource Survey. Therefore, to insure a successful survey a significant amount of time should be spent during the planning stage. The planning stages of a survey will usually include 1) establishing the goals and priorities of the survey, 2) determining scope of work to be accomplished, 3) assessing amount of data needed, 4) collection of preliminary research, 5) preparation of survey forms to be used and 6) organization of volunteers to perform work. Additionally, other topics that need to be addressed during the planning stages include many of the following:

- Decide who will do the field survey
- Determine the purpose and ultimate goal of the survey
- Determine scope of work to be done
- Estimate the approximate cost of travel, supplies, time, and data storage
- Identify the current boundary of the district or site
- Identify the amount of data and information needed for the survey
- Prepare a survey form by organizing questions and information that will be needed
- Set up a timetable with deadlines for collecting, reviewing, organizing, editing, reporting and publishing gathered data
- Gather the equipment to be used in performing the field survey and storing the final results

What information should be included on the survey forms? (see Appendix for sample form)

- **Resource name**
The name of the original owner or the historic name of property
- **Site number**
Entry number used to organize the data
- **Physical address**
The street address, route number, state, county or federal road, if the address is ambiguous, a brief description of the location should be used

- **Owner**
The name of the property owner
- **Location**
Is this the original location or has it been relocated
- **Date of construction and any additions**
- **Resource type:** (See Appendix 7 2)
 - Site
 - Building
 - Structure
 - Object
- **Original building type** (See Appendix 72)
 - Commercial
 - Governmental
 - Institutional
 - Residential
- **Legal description**
The information filed with the land records in the county courthouse, local planning and zoning commission, or surveyor's office; it usually refers to the lot/block description of the property.
- **Existing survey representation**
Name of any previous surveys with date and comments
- **Apparent physical condition of the property**
 - Good
 - Fair
 - Poor
- **Statement of Significance**
A statement of historic content, property types and relevant characteristics
 - Significant
 - Contributing
 - Non-contributing
- **Grid reference**
The USGS or UTM coordinate description

- **Surveyor**
Name of person or persons conducting the survey and recording information
- **Date of survey**
- **Photographs listed by roll/frame number keyed to contact sheet**
(See Appendix 7 3)
Visual evidence of architectural and aesthetic significance
- **Maps** (see Appendix 74)
show the resulting information taken from the area indicating boundary area, significance, condition, and types of structures
- **Notes and Comments**
Place for additional information on the building or site

What layout should the survey forms have?

- One form per property
- Check box format
- Provide areas for comments

What kind of research should be done before beginning the field survey?

- Document all historic resources to one of the four “resource type” categories as given in the National Register Bulletin #24
Building
Structure
Site
Object
- Study the history and prehistory of resources in the community
- Identify original boundaries through historical maps
- Compare historical maps with contemporary maps to identify changes
- Locate natural resources in the community
- Review previous surveys
- Identify economic development or change
- Identify significant events in the community
- Trace cultural development or change
- Note trends that are reflected in the community

What kinds of resources are available for research?

- Newspapers, periodicals, magazines and journals
- Community organizations and church histories
- Neighborhood civic associations
- City records, tax rolls
- Telephone directories, city and commercial directories
- Previous surveys
- Local family histories, letters, personal diaries, photographs, keepsakes and oral histories
- Census reports
- Photographs and slides
- City and county building records and construction documents
- Sanborn Insurance Maps

Where can these resources be found?

- Libraries
- Archives
- City Planning Departments
- City Deeds and Records Departments
- Universities and colleges
- Museums
- Historical societies
- Archeological societies
- State and national parks
- National Archives
- Library of Congress
- Garages, attics and basements
- Community organizations and civic organizations
- State Historical Commission
- Internet

What kind of equipment is needed to conduct the field survey?

- Clipboard and note pad
- Pens or pencils
- Survey forms
- Relevant maps
- Tape measure

- Compass
- Camera and film
- Authorization letter from local authority if required

What types of photographs are required?

- 35mm film, black and white prints or color slides
- Film type will depend on the survey requirements
- Preferably *oblique angle* shot so that more than one side of the building is visible, otherwise an *elevation* shot is acceptable (see Appendix).
- Annotate direction of photograph, i.e. North, South, East, West, Northeast, etc.
- Photograph in winter, if possible, to minimize foliage

How is the field survey conducted?

- Fill out survey forms while at the site and only from the public right of way
- Take photographs of the property
- Record additional information about the property

1.2 How Should the Field Survey Data Be Managed?

The usefulness of a Historic Resource Survey is directly related to the management and evaluation of the survey data. After the field forms, photographs and other documentary evidence have been collected, it is the responsibility of the project coordinator or other knowledgeable person to review and assess the data. Once the data have been evaluated it is imperative that the information be organized and then prepared for appropriate storage so that the data and collected materials are preserved.

- Review data while field survey is still in progress for content, clarity, and correctness
- Compile all survey forms
- Label the back of the each photograph with the roll/frame number and the street address, sort database by roll /frame and then key to corresponding contact sheet (see Appendix 73).
- Input/store data on database software program

- Retrieve data from database for reports
- File field survey forms as working copies (not as final copies)
- Preserve photos, negatives, slides, maps and other hard copy resource materials
- Use card system if computer database system is not available.

How should the data be utilized?

- Use a database to sort through information collected from the field survey
- Design reports to relay information that can help communities in their historic preservation programs, ordinances, zoning, building guidelines, and restoration projects.
- Identify significant or concentrated areas of properties that could apply for National Register of Historic Places District nomination.

What is the National Register of Historic Places?

The National Register of Historic Places is a program that was created under the 1935 Historic Sites Act and later expanded under the Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The National Register of Historic Places was designed to serve as a guide to identify properties that are important to our history and are worthy of preservation. A Historic Resource Survey is often used to determine which building or buildings could be individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The survey can also be used to demonstrate intact groups or areas eligible for a National Register District nomination.

Why apply for the National Register of Historic Places?

- Recognizes the historical significance of a building or group of buildings
- Can assist in securing financial assistance for preserving a property

What other types of state and local financial assistance may be available?

- Block grants
- Federal and state grants
- Historic preservation fund grants
- Grants-in-aid

- Federal and state tax credits
- Tax incentives
- Private foundations and individuals

Who benefits from the published survey results?

- Historians
- Archeologists
- Architects/designers
- Planners
- Builders
- Local government officials
- Cultural organizations
- Preservation groups
- Civic Organizations
- Schools
- Individual property owners and residents
- Community groups

Where could a copy of the survey be found?

- Web site
- Library
- Local Government
- Civic Organizations
- Schools

2.0 What is a database?

A large part of any historic resource survey is the organization and presentation of the survey data. Computer applications called databases are the perfect tool for managing your survey data, because they allow one to assemble, organize, access, search and sort using a variety of different parameters, as well as update information all in one computer program.

2.1 Why Are Databases Used?

- Easily organizes and accesses information into a variety of formats
- Stores data in the form of text, numbers or encoded graphics
- To search and quickly retrieve information gathered on a certain topic or theme.

2.2 What Are The Components of a Database

An important characteristic of database management is that all programs require you to structure your information. This structuring is important both for technical reasons (it is determined by the computer program) and as a means for people to organize the information. The primary tool for database organization is a field. A field will contain a single category of information. A collection of fields is called a record.

What Is A Field?

- A single item of information or data.
For example each item on the survey form, such as the street address, is a field.

What Is a Field Type?

- Indicates the kind of information stored in the field
(The following are examples of field types)
Text...a collection of any combination of letters, numbers or symbols
Number...any positive or negative number, including integers and decimals
Date...day, month and year; the data is in different formats.

Time...hours, minutes and seconds, the data is in 12 hour or 24 hour formats

Variable choice...such as Pop-up menu, radio button and check box.

Serial number...a number that automatically increases as each new record is added.

Calculation...The results of a calculation derived from a formula that that is created when the field is defined.

What Is A Record?

- A collection of fields.

For example each building in an historic resource survey is a record.

What Are Find! Match Functions?

- A way to have the program place records into a specific arrangement

For example a database that contains all of the survey addresses can be separated so that you access only the addresses on a particular street.

What Are Sort Functions?

- Alphabetical or numerical arrangement by using one or more fields.

For example: arranging all sites by their street name and address.

What Is A Layout?

Since the primary reason for using a database is the organization as well as management of the information collected in the historic resource survey, it is imperative that you look to your survey forms to determine the necessary fields that you will need in your database. Once you have created the appropriate fields you are then able to create many different kinds of layouts for presenting the data you have collected. For example you might need a different layout for the different tasks that you perform such as data entry, printing form letters, or preparing reports.

2.3 How Is A Database Designed And Used?

When creating a database, the following must be done:

- Determine the tasks that must be accomplished by the database.
- Know who else might use your database and possibly follow their format.
- Investigate if your format is compatible for future use.
- Decide what information will need to be stored in the database
- List the field names that will be used to identify each item of information
- Identify the layouts that are needed. A separate layout might be needed for each task performed. Data entry, printing form letters and printing mailing labels are examples of different kinds of layouts
- Design survey forms and database so that they are compatible and similar in layout.
- Input data from the survey form and other resources
- Compile data according to database layouts

3.0 What Kind of Computer System Is Needed?

The kind of computer you should buy depends on your needs. With the rapid advancement of technology, computers are constantly being updated and improved. This manual will therefore not tell you what to buy, but instead will address the options that you have in choosing a computer to create your database and in putting that database on the World Wide Web.

If you are planning to conduct your historic resource survey on paper and then have someone else design and monitor your Web page, you don't need to purchase a computer. If you already have access to the Internet and intend to design your own Web page, a computer with a network card or modem would be all that you need.

- If you are going to do your survey on paper and have your Web page designed and monitored by someone else, you don't need a computer.
- If you are going to use a computer database and design your own web page, a multimedia computer package may be best
- If you are going to set up and maintain your web page on your own computer, you will need a powerful web server.

3.1 What Computer Hardware Is Needed?

Your choice of software will determine the minimum computer requirements needed. Most software packages contain the minimum computer hardware requirements on the side of the box. A multimedia computer package is a packaged bundle of hardware items and software programs that is the current computer standard for that time frame. So, usually you won't find the fastest processor or newest component with a bundled package.

Any multimedia computer package usually will contain the following:

- Fast processor speed (not necessarily THE fastest)
- Sufficient memory (with room to add more)
- CD-ROM drive
- Sound board and 2 external speakers
- Good quality monitor
- Modem

Finally, shop around. Look for the best computer package, best price and the best customer service and technical support center.

3.2 What Computer Software Is Needed?

Software depends on how you want the web page to look and what software you are able to access, use, and/or learn. Current options are:

- **Text editor** — you must know HTML code to use this.
- **Word processing program** — you can create the document and save as HTML code, but you are limited to what kind of graphics you can have
- **Desk-top publishing program** — you can create the document and save as HTML code, this type of program will allow for better graphics than if you used a word processing program
- **Web page editor** — a cross between a desktop publishing and graphics editor program that is designed especially to create web pages

4.0 What Are The Internet And The World Wide Web?

The Internet is an international system of inter-connected computers, a global computer network. The World Wide Web is just one part or system of the protocol of the Internet, just as E-mail and FTP are also parts of the Internet. The World Wide Web (WWW) was developed to provide a universal code or language for sharing and publishing information. Before the WWW developed, one needed to have the same computer system or the same computer program to get and read other people's data. With the introduction of the World Wide Web, all you needed was a Web Browser, a program in WWW code, which would allow you to view someone else's data regardless of their computer. Now the WWW allows us to view information from one side of the planet to the other with just the click of a mouse. The WWW is the fastest growing means of communication on the Internet.

4.1 How Can The Internet Be Accessed?

Getting on the Information Super Highway and connecting to the Internet is easier than it sounds. A computer system with a modem or network card is all that is required to access the Internet.

With a computer system connected by modem through a regular phone line one can dial up an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to gain access to the Internet. An Internet Service Provider provides the physical connection between you, through the phone line, to other computers on the Internet. An ISP can also provide you with E-mail, server space and Web page design. Explore the different ISP's that are available in order to determine which one can provide the best service for you and your organization.

If your organization or institution already has a built-in network with an Internet connection, all you will need is a computer with a network card to plug into the current network. Consult your computer system administrator to see what kind of equipment would be recommended.

Once you are connected to the Internet, you will need a Web Browser to access other World Wide Web sites. A Web Browser reads HTML or WWW code and translates that into a graphic format. Netscape Navigator and Microsoft's Internet Explorer are currently the two most popular Web Browsers.

You may access the Internet through:

- An in-place network (i.e. a corporation or university)
- An Internet Service Provider (ISP)

4.2 What To Ask an Internet Service Provider?

- What services will be available?
- e-mail
- hard disk space for web page
- Do they offer specials for organizations? (free space or service)
- Do they have 24-hour technical support?
- Do they provide web page authoring?
- Can my web sites be protected with passwords?
- Can they manage, store, and monitor the web page?
- How many Common Gateway Interfaces (CGI) will they support?

4.3 What To Look For In A Web Server?

If you are accessing the Internet through an Internet Service Provider, contact that ISP's system administrator to find out what kind of 24-hour access and technical support they can offer you. They can also tell you what kind of computer would be best in maintaining 24 hour access from their past experience.

If you are in an in-place network, like a university or a corporation, contact your computer systems administrator to see what kind of network you are on and what kind of computer that network can support. He will also help you get that system connected to the network and the Internet. Your administrator can recommend specific computer configuration for your network and possible computer vendors you could buy from.

Most web servers are expensive. They usually have the fastest and latest hardware available to provide you with superior Internet access. You might even have to upgrade your phone or Internet connection to take advantage of this latest hardware. In getting a list of specifications, seek out help.

5.0 Why Create A Web Page?

To share information and data with others using the Internet.

5.1 What To Know Before Getting Started?

- What information is going to be included on the web page
- How is the web page going to look? (layout)
- How is the web page going to be organized (format)

5.2 How Can A Web Page Be Organized?

Web sites are now the fastest and quickest way to publish information for everyone to see. It doesn't require printing costs or extensive mailing lists. Basically, if people want to find out more information about your project or organization, they can access your web site and its information with the simple click of a mouse from their homes or offices.

You can create a Web site or Web page by yourself or you can have a web page designer create one for you. Most of the ISP's can provide you with Web design services.

Where do I start in designing my own Web page?

First, you need to know what information would like to make accessible to the public on your Web page. Information about your organization, its purposes and goals, your Historic Resource Survey and its result are a good start. Next you need to decide on a layout. Remember a Web page is just like an electronic brochure It can contain graphics, charts, as well as pictures and text. Look at other Web pages to find interesting ways for displaying your information. Web pages are laid out in a horizontal or wide orientation. Any graphics or pictures you want to include on your Web page can be scanned in electronically.

Your Historic Resource Survey database can also be included on your Web page. A web page designer can incorporate your database, allowing it to be accessed in several ways Web designers use CGI's or Common Gateway Interfaces to link your database with your web page. It is necessary to tell your designer how you would like people to use your database on the Web, and then an appropriate CGI can then be found. Remember a CGI can only allow a user of the WWW to view your information and not change it, so your data is protected.

If you chose to create your own Web page there are many web authoring software programs available that will help you create your own Web page. Also, many of the word processing programs now allow you to save documents in WWW format, HTML-hyper text markup language, the universal code for Web pages. These web authoring programs now contain WYSIWYG' s (What you see is what you get) software which allows you to create a web page visually without knowing HTML. You simply create a web page just like you would create a word

processing or desktop publishing document and simply save it as an HTML file. These packages may also contain CGI libraries, so you can interface your database with your Web page Consult your ISP's webmaster or your computer systems administrator for assistance in using CGI's.

- Multiple pages – in this organization an index page allows passage to other pages by clicking on graphics or highlighted text
- Single page – this scheme has all of the information on one page, the location of information may be quickly accessed by “clicking” on graphics or highlighted text

What file formats can be use?

The following file types are non-platform specific:

- **HTML** — the code used for text on web pages
- **.gif** — standard format for saving line art
- **.jpg** – standard format for saving photo-realistic art

5.3 How To Get A Web Page Onto The Internet?

- A File Transfer Protocol (FTP) program is needed to get the information from your personal computer to the web server computer.
- You may designate your computer as the web page server, but this computer must stay on 24-hours a day and should not be used for other applications

How do people know where my web page is?

- Publish your address
- Provide a link from another web site
- Add your address to a search engine listing

5.4 How Can A Web Page Be Secured or Protected?

- You may set up a domain so that only people who type in the appropriate user name and password may access your web site

5.5 How Can A Web Page Be Changed or Updated?

- You may use a FTP program to download files from your web page, correct or update those files, and then reload the files back onto the web server

6.0 Definitions

- **Block Grants**
Grants or money available for the rehabilitation of historic structures and buildings usually available at the local level or through non-profit organizations
- **Building**
A structure, such as a house, barn, church, hotel or similar construction created to shelter any form of human activity.
- **Card system**
An alternative way to store field survey data if the preferred method (database software) is not available. Information is completed on a card, which is then filed in a card file system.
- **Contributing**
A building, site, structure or object which add to the historic architectural qualities, historical associations, or archaeological values for which a property is significant because
 - a) it was present during the period of significance, and possesses historic integrity, reflecting its character at that time or is capable of yielding important information about the period, or
 - b) it independently meets the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places.
- **Database**
A computer program that arranges data for rapid sorting, expansion, updating, and retrieval.
- **District**
A significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects which are united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development
- **Fair Condition**
Needs repair and/or has had moderate alterations made to the exterior.
- **Federal and State Grants**
Grant money available at the Federal and State level for the rehabilitation of historic buildings and structures
- **Federal and State Tax Credits**
Tax incentives and credits available for the rehabilitation of historic buildings
- **Good Condition**
Structurally sound and/or has had minor alterations made to the exterior
- **HTML**
The code used for text on a web page
- **Historic context**
The broad pattern of historical development in a region or a community that may be represented by historic resources.

- **Historic resource**
Any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.
- **Historic property**
A district, site, building, structures, or objects significant in American history, architecture, engineering, archeology, and culture.
- **Internet Service Provider Allows access to the Internet.**
- **Inventory**
A close and careful look at the area being surveyed It is designed to identify precisely and completely all historic resources in the area
- **Non-contributing**
A non-contributing building, site, structure, or object is one that does not add to the historic qualities, associations, or archeological values of the district or the following:
 - a) it was built less than 50 years ago.
 - b) due to alterations, disturbances, additions, or other changes, it no longer possesses historic integrity.
- **Oblique view**
In photography, a perspective view showing more than one side of a structure or object.
- **Object**
The term object is used to distinguish buildings and structures from those constructions that are primarily artistic in nature or are relatively small in scale and simply constructed. Although it may be, by nature or design, movable, an object is usually associated with a specific setting or environment, such as statuary in a designed landscape.
- **Poor**
In need of major repair and/or has had major alterations to the exterior.
- **Significant**
A building, structure, site, or object (50 years or older) of high historical, cultural, architectural or archeological importance and whose demolition or destruction would constitute an irreplaceable loss.
- **Site**
A site is the location of a significant event, prehistoric occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, mined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historical, cultural, or archeological value regardless of any existing structure.
- **Structure**
The term structure is used to distinguish buildings from other functional constructions made for purposes other than creating shelter, often used to refer to an engineering works.

- Tax Incentives
Federal tax law offers tax incentives to taxpayers that contribute to the preservation of this nation's old and historic buildings. A two-tier system of tax credits may be available for the rehabilitation of historic buildings.
- USGS/UTM coordinates
United States Geological Survey or the Universal Transverse Mercator grid reference coordinates

7.0 Appendix

7.1 *Historic Resource Survey Form*

7.2 *Photograph of Resource and Building Types*

7.3 *Database Sorted by Photographic Roll/Frame Number Keyed to
Contact Sheet*

7.4 *Maps*

8.0 Bibliography

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National Register Bulletin 24 (page 57). published by the U S Dept of the Interior, National Park Service, Interagency Resources Division, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C, 20013-7127

For more information on surveying and other topics in this manual:

National Register Bulletin No. 24
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