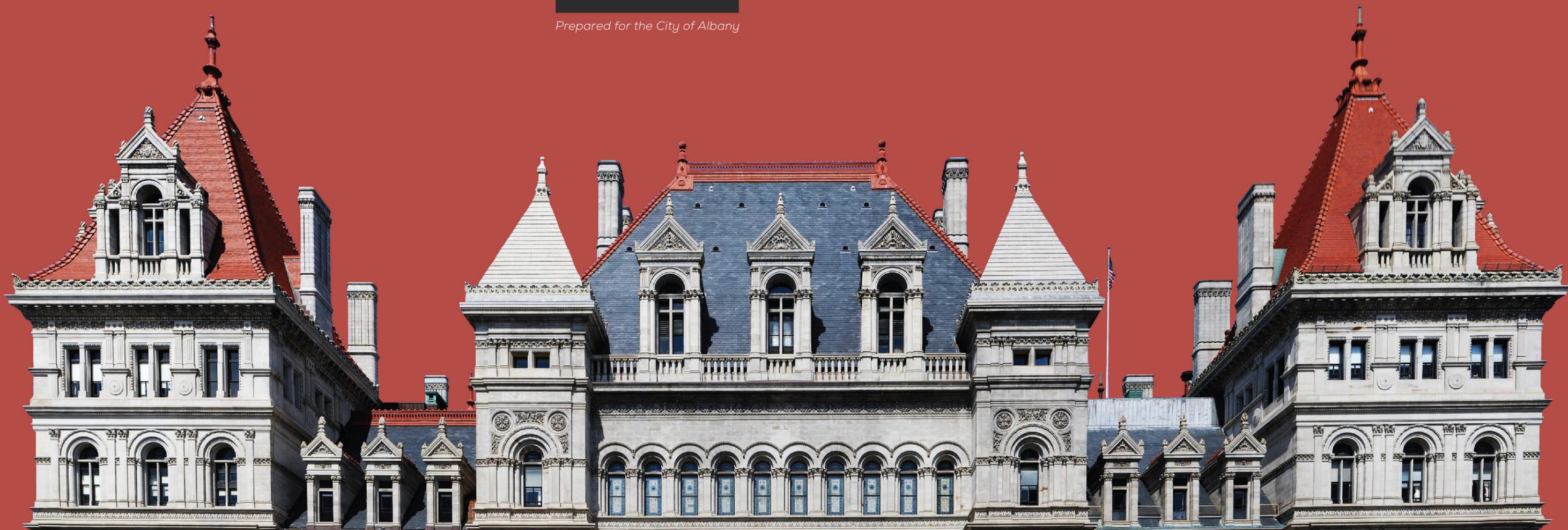


Albany

NY

HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
PLAN

Prepared for the City of Albany



Albany, New York HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

September 30, 2019





Acknowledgments of the Albany, New York Historic Preservation Plan

Historic Preservation Plan Steering Committee

Glinnesa Gailliard
Chris Hacker
Travon Jackson
Cara Macri
Jack McEneny
John Myers
Akum Norder
Tony Opalka
Jackie Ring
Erin Tobin

Historic Resources Commission

John Myers, Chair
Jennifer Geraghty
Chris Hacker
Marilyn Kaplan
Jack McEneny
Lee Pinckney
Norman Rice
Erin Tobin

Common Council Members

Kathy Sheehan, Mayor
Hon. Corey Ellis, President
Hon. Richard Conti, President Pro Tempore (Ward 6)
Hon. Kelly Kimbrough, Majority Leader (Ward 4)
Hon. Dorcey Applyrs (Ward 1)
Hon. Derek Johnson (Ward 2)
Hon. Joyce Love (Ward 3)
Hon. Jahmel K. Robinson (Ward 5)
Hon. Catherine M. Fahey (Ward 7)
Hon. Jack Flynn (Ward 8)
Hon. Judy Doeschate (Ward 9)
Hon. Owusu Anane (Ward 10)
Hon. Alfredo Balarin (Ward 11)
Hon. Michael O'Brien (Ward 12)
Hon. Ginnie Farrel (Ward 13)
Hon. Joseph Igoe (Ward 14)
Hon. Thomas Hoey (Ward 15)

City Staff

Christopher P. Spencer, Commissioner
Bradley Glass, Planning Director
Yasmine Robinson, Deputy Director
Lauren Alpert, Principal Planner
Zach Powell, Senior Planner
Erin Glennon, Senior Historic Preservation Planner
Luis Roldan, Planner
Poulomi Sen, Planner
Mary Millus, GIS Services/Data Management
Tony Opalka, City Historian

Consultant

The Lakota Group
116 W Illinois St Floor 7,
Chicago, IL 60654



Funding

This project was funded in part through a Certified Local Government Grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, as administered by the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (contract number PRK01-T61801GG-1290000).

The contents and opinions, however, do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior. This program receives Federal funds from the National Park Service. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental Federally Assisted Programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of Federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.

Left Cover Images (Top left to bottom right): 450 Western Avenue (1941), Source: AlbanyGroup; State Education Building (1931), Source: AlbanyGroup; Museum Building (1982), Source: AlbanyGroup; State University (1968), Source: AlbanyGroup; Broadway at Clinton and Quackenbush (1943), Source: Jerry A. Clay; and Morris Company Building (1920), Source: AlbanyGroup.

Right Cover Images (Top left to bottom right): North Pearl (1968), Source: AlbanyGroup; Palace Theater (1931), Source: AlbanyGroup; Lark and State (1992), Source: AlbanyGroup; Cathedral of All Saints (1950), Source: AlbanyGroup; State Street (1918), Source: AlbanyGroup; and Union Station (1906), Source: AlbanyGroup.

All photos by The Lakota Group unless otherwise noted in the report.



Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction 7

- Albany Preservation Background
- Preservation and Archaeology Chronology 8
- Key Issues and Observations 10
 - Historic Resource Surveys
 - District Integrity
 - Vacant Buildings and Demolitions
 - Neighborhood Revitalization and Adaptive Use
 - Diversity and Underrepresented Populations
 - Design Review
 - Preservation Education and Advocacy
 - Engaging Youth in Preservation
- Organizational Needs 11
- Historic Resources and Historic Preservation Defined 12
 - National Register of Historic Places
 - Local Historic Districts and Landmarks
 - Local Conservation Districts
- Benefits of Historic Preservation 13
 - Economics
 - Housing
 - Heritage Tourism
 - Sustainability
- How to Use this Historic Preservation Plan 14
 - What is a Historic Preservation Plan?
- Planning Process 16

Section 2: Albany Historic Resources 17

- Historic Resources 18
- Historic Context 18
 - Native Americans and Early Dutch and English Settlement
 - Transportation and Development
 - State and Local Government Spur the Economy
 - Diverse Populations in Albany
 - Early Suburban Development and Westward Expansion
 - Urban Renewal and Big Government
 - Archaeological Resources
 - Commercial Buildings
 - Residential Buildings
 - Civic and Government Buildings

- Religious and Institutional Buildings
- Parks and Recreational Buildings
- Educational Buildings and Facilities
- Transportation and Infrastructure
- Hudson River/Riverfront Resources
- Vacant Buildings and Demolitions
- Adaptive Use
- Adaptive Use Opportunities
- Albany Building Periods
- (MAP) Albany Building Periods (Page 31)
- Existing Landmarks and Districts
 - National Register of Historic Places
 - (MAP) National Register Properties and Districts (Page 34)
 - Local Historic Designations
 - (MAP) Local Landmarks and Districts (Page 60)
- Existing Survey and Documentation
 - (MAP) Survey Areas (Page 75)
- Architectural Styles and Building Types 76

Section 3: City Planning and Program Administration 84

- Federal and State Context
- Local Plans and Policies
- City Zoning
- Design Review
- Building Codes
- Preservation Administration
- Incentives
- City Departments, Agencies, and Preservation Partners

Section 4: Historic Preservation Plan 93

- Albany Historic Preservation Vision
- Historic Preservation Goals, Objectives, and Actions 95
 - Survey Documentation and Registration
 - Program Administration and Management
 - Neighborhood Revitalization

- Education, Advocacy, and Outreach
- Plan Organization 95
- Goals and Policy Statements 96
- Survey Documentation and Registration 97
 - Issue Summary
 - Key Historic Contexts
 - (MAP) Future Survey Areas (Page 102)
 - (MAP) Potential Districts and Landmarks (Page 106)
- Program Administration and Management 108
 - Issue Summary
- City Revitalization 111
 - Issue Summary
 - (MAP) Demolitions, Vacancies, and "X" Placard Properties (Page 115)
- Education, Advocacy, and Outreach 116
 - Issue Summary

Section 5: Implementation 119

- Implementation Matrix 120
 - (MAP) Future Survey Areas by Priority (Page 130)
- Local Incentives and Funding Sources 132
- Regional, State, and Federal Incentives and Funding Sources 133

Section 5: The Community Speaks 135

- Community Engagement Summary 136

Appendices 149

- Appendix 1: The National Register Criteria for Evaluation 150
- Appendix 2: The National Historic Landmark Criteria for Evaluation 150
- Appendix 3: Definitions 151
- Appendix 4: Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance 153



SECTION 1 : INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This City of Albany Historic Preservation Plan was prepared by a passionate group of community stakeholders and residents concerned with the future preservation and maintenance of Albany's significant historic resources - the buildings, structures, and sites dating back 250 years that contribute to Albany's sense of place and economic vitality. This Historic Preservation Plan builds on the city's previous preservation successes and advances a new preservation vision for continuing economic growth and adaptive reuse in Downtown Albany, enhancing established neighborhoods, maintaining community character, managing growth, and promoting livability and civic pride, as well as protecting important historic resources and other tangible links to Albany's past. This Historic Preservation Plan also seeks to inspire and motivate existing stakeholder groups and a new generation of preservation advocates in the implementation and management of Albany's historic preservation program.

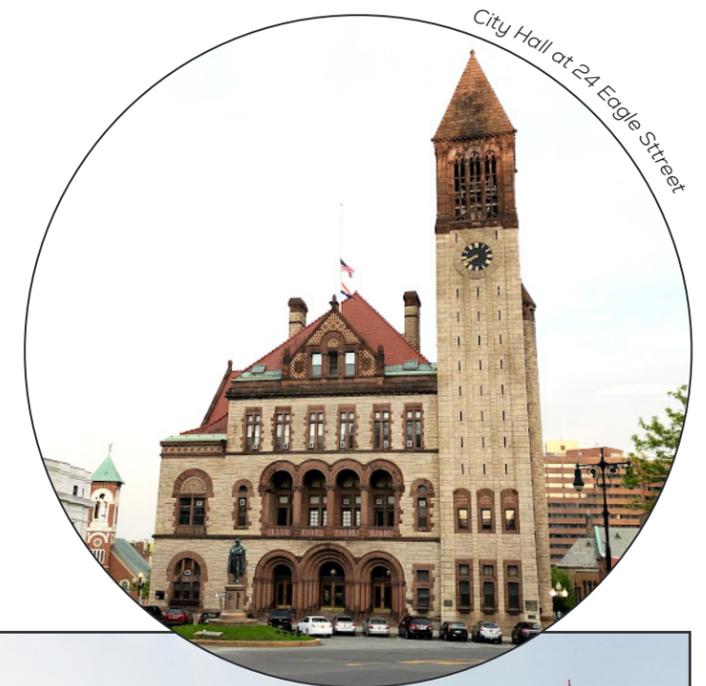
Today, Albany's wealth of historic resources and architectural assets, including its historic neighborhoods, downtown district, Capitol Hill district and iconic New York State Capital, help to define the city's vibrancy, authenticity, and urban appeal. Such assets help to attract young professionals and entrepreneurs who desire quality working spaces and a unique physical environment in which to start their businesses and creative endeavors. Albany's varied, historic housing stock also contributes to the city's livability, providing a source of affordable quality housing to families and households seeking advantageous locations near Downtown Albany, Capitol Hill, the University at Albany, historic parks, and other community amenities. With over 400 years of history and 291 years of architecture, the city's heritage and built environment are poised to play a key role in future economic growth, affordable housing options and overall quality of life.

Albany Preservation Background

Albany's formal historic preservation efforts would not begin until the 1980s when the Albany Common Council adopted its first Historic Preservation Ordinance and established the Historic Resources Commission to administer the designation and management of local landmarks and historic districts. Albany's preservation planning efforts would come 17 years

after the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act by the U.S. Congress, which established the National Register of Historic Places, this nation's official list of buildings, sites, structures, and objects worthy of preservation. With the National Register, local communities would have a new preservation planning tool to spur the recognition and designation of landmarks and districts of local significance. Prior to the creation of Albany's preservation ordinance and commission, the city relied on non-profit and governmental partners to advocate for and list properties in the National Register of Historic Preservation. Albany's first National Register-listed property would be the Schuyler Mansion at 32 Catherine Street, listed in 1967.

Albany began to adopt historic preservation practices and policies, which included the adoption of a Historic Sites Ordinance and the creation of a Historic Sites Commission (HSC) in 1966. In 1974, the scope of preservation coverage was increased with the creation of the Capitol Hill Architectural Review Commission (CHARC). Following the New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980, which authorized local communities to create preservation ordinances and commissions, the City of Albany adopted its first preservation ordinance in 1983. The ordinance also created the Historic Resources Commission (HRC) which succeeded the two commissions with jurisdiction over all historic resources in Albany. Approximately 3,600 individual resources are designated themselves or part of historic districts recognized under the HRC Ordinance. The HRC is an equal player in the development review process with the Planning Board and the Common Council. In 2008, the City received Certified Local Government status. Although many of the City's historic resources have been identified, many areas have never been surveyed and additional survey work is needed. Many of Albany's historic resources are recognized under both local and federal regulations, but some districts and individual buildings have received only one level of designation.



Albany State Capitol Building at State Street and Washington Avenue

Preservation and Archaeology Chronology

The following is a timeline of significant events and historic preservation and archaeology efforts in the City of Albany since the early 17th century:

1300-1600	Area inhabited by Mahikan and Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Native Americans	1825	Erie Canal and Albany Basin open	1890	United Traction Company Building constructed, designed by Marcus T. Reynolds, listed in the National Register (1976)
1609	Henry Hudson reaches Albany on the ship Half Moon	1831	Mohawk and Hudson Railroad opens between Albany and Schenectady	1899	Washington Avenue Armory completed, designed by Isaac Perry, listed in the National Register (1995)
1624	Fort Orange constructed by the Dutch at the current site of Downtown Albany; European settlement begins	1842	State Hall (New York State Court of Appeals) completed, listed in the National Register (1971)	1899	New York State Capital completed, designed by Thomas Fuller, H. H. Richardson, Leopold Eidlitz and Isaac Perry, listed as a National Historic Landmark (1971);
1630	Patroon Kiliaen Van Rensselaer purchases land and names it Rensselaerswijck	1845	Nut Grove (William Walsh House) constructed, designed by Alexander Jackson Davis, listed in the National Register (1974)	1900	United Traction Company Building constructed, designed by Marcus T. Reynolds, listed in the National Register (1976)
1652	Dutch Governor Pieter Stuyvesant claims Fort Orange from the Patroon; Village of Beverwyck founded	1847	Stephen and Harriet Myers House constructed, listed in the National Register (2004)	1900	Albany Union Station completed, designed by Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, listed in the National Register (1971)
1664	Dutch surrender Fort Orange to English Duke of York and Albany Beverwyck renamed Albany	1848	Fire destroys much of business district and adjacent industrial and residential areas	1904	First Trust Company Building constructed, designed by Marcus T. Reynolds, listed in the National Register (1973)
1674	Albany returned to the English by treaty	1850	Church of the Holy Innocents constructed, designed by Frank Wills, listed in the National Register (1978)	1905	Benjamin Arnold Walworth House and Carriage House completed, designed by Stanford White, listed in the National Register (1982)
1676	Fort Frederick constructed on what is now Capitol Hill	1852	Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception completed, listed in the National Register (1976);	1907	Albany Institute of History and Art constructed, listed in the National Register (1976)
1683	Albany County established by the New York Provincial Assembly, one of the 12 original counties	1859	James Hall's Office constructed, designed by Andrew Jackson Downing and Calvert Vaux, listed as a National Historic Landmark (1976)	1912	Hook and Ladder No. 4 Fire House constructed, designed by Marcus T. Reynolds listed in the National Register (2001)
1686	Governor Dongan grants Albany a city charter known as the Charter"; Pieter Schuyler is appointed as the first mayor	1867	St. Peter's Church constructed, designed by Richard Upjohn and Richard M. Upjohn, listed as a National Historic Landmark (1972)	1912	New York State Department of Education Building completed, designed by Henry Hornbostel, listed in the National Register (1971)
1728	Van Ostrande-Radliff House (48 Hudson) constructed, listed in the National Register (2008)	1869	St. Mary's Church constructed, designed by Charles Nichols and Frederick Brown, listed in the National Register (1977);	1914	Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church constructed, listed in the National Register (2008);
c. 1740	Quackenbush House constructed, listed in the National Register (1972)	1873	Whipple Cast and Wrought-Iron Bowstring Truss Bridge constructed, listed in the National Register (1971)	1917	New Scotland Avenue Armory constructed, designed by Lewis Pilcher, listed in the National Register (1994)
1754	First Colonial Congress held at Albany, Benjamin Franklin introduces Albany Plan of Union for the colonies; Treaty made with the Iroquois Five Nations	1881	Walter Merchant House constructed, listed in the National Register (1972)	1918	First Congregational Church of Albany constructed, designed by Fuller and Robinson, listed in the National Register (2014)
1761	Schuyler Mansion constructed, listed as a National Historic Landmark (1967)	1883	Quackenbush Pumping Station/Albany Water Works constructed, listed in the National Register (1983)	1918	Delaware and Hudson Railroad Company Building completed, designed by Marcus T. Reynolds, listed in the National Register (1972)
1777	New York State adopts first constitution	1884	Albany City Hall constructed, designed by H. H. Richardson, listed in the National Register (1972)	1924	Harmanus Bleeker Library completed, designed by Fuller and Robinson, listed in the National Register (1996)
1780	New York State Legislature first meets in Albany	1886	Thomas Olcott House (1860) purchased for use as the New York State Executive Mansion, listed in the National Register (1971);	1925	University Club of Albany completed, designed by Robinson and Fuller, listed in the National Register (2011)
1786	Centennial of the Albany City Charter	1886	Old Post Office completed, listed in the National Register (1972)	1930	St. Andrew's Episcopal Church constructed, designed by Norman R. Sturgis, listed in the National Register (2005)
1787	Cherry Hill constructed, listed in the National Register (1971)	1886	Cathedral of All Saints begins construction, listed in the National Register (1974)	1931	Palace Theater constructed, designed by John Ebersson, listed in the National Register (1979)
1793	Fire destroys buildings in lower State Street and Maiden Lane	1886	Bicentennial of the Albany City Charter;	1932	Philip Livingston Junior High School completed, designed by Andrew Delehanty, listed in the National Register (2014)
1797	City of Albany designated capital of New York State	1886	YMCA Building constructed, designed by Fuller and Wheeler, listed in the National Register (1978)	1941	Lil's Diner constructed, listed in the National Register (2000)
1798	Ten Broeck Mansion constructed, listed in the National Register (1971); First Reformed Church constructed, listed in the National Register (1974)	1899	New York State Capital completed, designed by Thomas Fuller, H. H. Richardson, Leopold Eidlitz and Isaac Perry, listed as a National Historic Landmark (1971);	1942	Albany County Historical Association founded
1806	Construction begins on first state capitol, designed by Phillip Hooker			1944	U.S.S. Slater commissioned, listed as a National Historic Landmark (1998)
1817	Albany Academy constructed, designed by Philip Hooker, listed in the National Register (1971); 44 Central Avenue constructed, listed in the National Register (2014)				

1964 Albany Historic Sites Commission established

1965 Construction begins on the Empire State Plaza

1966 National Historic Preservation Act passed by U.S. Congress; National Register of Historic Places established

1972 Pastures and Washington Park Historic Districts listed in the National Register;

1974 Historic Albany Foundation established; Preservation League of NYS established

1978 Construction of the Empire State Plaza completed; Lafayette Park Historic District listed in the National Register

1979 Ten Broeck Triangle Historic District listed in the National Register;

Lexington Avenue Historic District designated a Local Historic District

1980 Center Square-Hudson Park and Downtown Albany Historic Districts listed in the National Register

1982 Mansion Historic District listed in the National Register

1983 Historic Preservation Ordinance and Guidelines adopted; Albany Historic Resources Commission created to replace previous commission;

Ten Broeck Triangle National Register Historic District expanded;

Central Square-Hudson Park, Clinton Avenue/North Pearl Street/Clinton Square, Downtown Albany, Elberon Triangle, Fort Orange/Downtown Albany Archaeological Review District and Secondary Downtown Albany Archaeological Review District, Lafayette Park, Lark Street, Mansion, Pastures, South End-Groesbeckville, South Pearl Street Commercial Row, Ten Broeck Triangle and Washington Park designated as Local Historic Districts

1984 South End-Groesbeckville Historic District listed in the National Register

1986 Tricentennial of the Albany City Charter

1987 744-750 Broadway Historic District listed in the National Register

1988 Broadway-Livingston Avenue and Clinton Avenue/North Pearl Street/Clinton Square Historic Districts listed in the National Register

1991 South Lake Avenue Historic District designated a Local Historic District

1992 Upper Madison Avenue Historic District designated a Local Historic District

1993 Fort Orange Archaeological Site listed a National Historic Landmark

2002 Rapp Road Community Historic District listed in the National Register

2008 Knox Street Historic District listed in the National Register

2009 Lustron Houses of Jermain Street Historic District listed in the National Register

2015 Washington Park National Register and Local Historic District expanded

2017 Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance adopted; Bleecker Stadium-Swinburne Park listed in the National Register;

Washington Avenue Historic District designated a Local Historic District

2018 Lincoln Park Historic District and St. Casimir's Church Complex listed in the National Register

2019 Normanskill Farm Historic District listed in the National Register;

Washington Avenue Corridor Historic District pending National Register listing



Aerial View of Albany SUNY Campus Center

Key Issues and Observations

Historic Resource Surveys

While only five survey and documentation initiatives have been conducted in the last forty years, two were more recent resulting in one National Register District and one recommendation for National Register district status. Since the adoption of the historic preservation ordinance in 1983, twenty-nine local landmarks and seventeen local historic districts have been designated; additionally, forty-six individual properties and nineteen historic districts have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Prior to 1983 two surveys were completed for smaller commercial areas near the downtown, resulting in one local historic district. Although the majority of the city was built after 1900, few 20th century architecture has been surveyed. Additional survey and documentation work in these neighborhoods will identify and prioritize for preservation the city's important 20th century historic resources.

District Integrity

Deteriorating properties, lack of sufficient code enforcement, demolition by neglect and emergency demolitions are all contributing factors to declining historic integrity in many of Albany's older historic districts. Many districts have seen the loss of historic buildings through the emergency demolition process following decades of abandonment and decline. Updating local historic district inventories can provide a clearer picture of the district's integrity and inform future planning initiatives. In addition, seeking to address the root causes of property neglect and abandonment could slow neighborhood decline and reduce demolitions.

Vacant Buildings and Demolition

Lack of property maintenance on Albany's historic and older buildings is the result of property owners who either lack sufficient resources or are absent altogether along with the need for additional code enforcement efforts. Potentially higher costs for maintaining a property in line with local historic district guidelines may also be a factor. Often buildings will sit vacant and deteriorating until their condition is such that an emergency demolition is scheduled. Those properties where interior access is limited are often branded with a red and white X placard, meant to warn emergency responders that

it may not be safe to enter. Unfortunately, the proliferation of the placement of X placards throughout the economically disadvantaged areas of the city such as West Hill and South End has the unintended consequences of highlighting vacant or abandoned buildings to the public, suggesting that these areas may not be where you would want to live or invest, and often lead to emergency demolition. There is a perception that additional measures could be taken to address stabilization and building retention rather than demolition, and programs geared towards identifying vacant buildings early on, such as the existing Vacant Building Inventory as well as a future early warning system, could lead to preventing further deterioration until a developer is found for rehabilitation and reuse.

Some of the city's most important and highly visible properties have sat vacant and deteriorating for years, such as Bath House No. 2 (1905, 90 Fourth Avenue), Central Fire Alarm Station (1917, 25 Delaware Avenue), St. Joseph's Church (1860, Ten Broeck Street) and the Church of the Holy Innocents (1850, 498 Clinton Avenue) among others. Addressing these issues is of vital importance for the future of Albany's historic resources.

Neighborhood Revitalization and Adaptive Use

Most cities have discovered over the years how the loss of historic buildings and significant portions of neighborhoods can negatively impact its attractiveness, health and vitality. By reusing historic buildings for existing or new uses – looking at old buildings and neighborhoods as assets for positive growth rather than impediments – a community can prosper by fostering improved housing choices, creating new and localized economic opportunities, promoting sustainability and improved health and well-being. Physically, old buildings are well suited for adapting to new uses through their solid construction materials and methods, prime locations and craftsmanship that provides its architectural character. The National Trust for Historic Preservation refers to this as ReUrbanism, and provides a number of resources and tools for utilizing older and historic resources for future use. In Los Angeles, the city adopted an Adaptive Use Ordinance that provides incentives to rehabilitate and reuse historic buildings. The revitalization of older and historic neighborhoods is reliant on the rehabilitation and adaptive use of its older buildings. Albany is well-suited to

capitalize on the benefits of adaptive use as a neighborhood revitalization tool. A number of Albany buildings are either currently undergoing restoration and reuse or have been completed recently, including the former Kenwood Hotel and YMCA building on North Pearl Street, the Albany Distillery at 75 Livingston Avenue and the former Phillip Schuyler High School, converted into apartments at 69 Trinity Place. Institutional and industrial buildings are well-suited for reuse, and the Warehouse District on North Pearl and Broadway could be key in the City's ongoing revitalization strategy. Additional resources and incentives will provide focus to this and other areas where revitalization is necessary.

Diversity and Underrepresented Populations

Albany has been a city of immigrants from its founding by the Dutch in 1624 and later the British. Major ethnic groups that helped to populate and grow Albany include the Irish, German, Italians, Greeks, African Americans and others. Inclusive representation within the city's built environment, including future preservation efforts, is vital to telling a broader range of stories using place, memory and association with buildings and sites to share difficult or underrepresented stories. Diverse groups should be engaged to help interpret and preserve sites that are important to underrepresented communities including people of color, women, Native Americans and the LGBTQ community. Many communities have been striving to broaden the scope of how they recognize, interpret and share their heritage stories by including ethnic, racial and cultural groups that contributed to their development but have long been undervalued and underrepresented. Cities such as San Francisco, Chicago and New York have created historic contexts that may now be used to identify and protect associated historic resources, highlighted how they contributed to a greater understanding their history and development. For example, San Francisco developed a historic context for its Japantown neighborhood, providing the important history of the Japanese community in that city. Additionally, San Francisco has also prepared historic contexts for the African American community and the LGBTQ community. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has provided leadership in promoting inclusion and diversity in preservation, publishing

Organizational Needs

reports such as Preserving African American Historic Places and a 2017 Preservation Forum Journal edition on Preserving Difficult Histories. In addition, achieving diversity and inclusion in the participatory process – actively incorporating people of different races, cultures, backgrounds and perspectives – can help to build a community that values and embraces its diverse history and significant places.

Design Review

The Historic Resources Commission undertakes design review responsibilities for alterations, new construction and demolition of properties within local historic districts and for local landmarks. Current design standards are codified within the Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance (USDO) and are mostly suitable for current design review purposes. Creating a stand-alone design guidelines manual for historic properties and conservation districts would be beneficial to the Historic Resources Commission and the community. A design guidelines manual provides guidance for those looking to make improvements to historic properties, and can include information about the review process, Albany’s historic architecture, historic district information, property maintenance and other topics. Design Guidelines assist the Commission in reviewing applications, and properties in preparing for their submittals. Typically, design guidelines are based on the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and are codified within the local preservation ordinance.

Preservation Education and Advocacy

Providing information to community stakeholders regarding historic preservation programs, policies and incentives is a vital part of any effective community preservation program. An engaged community who is informed about the advantages and benefits of historic preservation is a critical element to a successful historic preservation program at the local level. Therefore, going forward, promoting the importance of historic preservation and the stewardship of Albany’s historic resources should be a high priority for the City, the Historic Resources Commission and its preservation partners.

Engaging Youth in Preservation

Today’s youth are the next generation of preservationists, yet many communities do little to involve students in their local preservation programs. Most young children take school trips to visit a local house museum but rarely is their interaction with preservation maintained. High school students likely would have a lot to say about how their community and its history is portrayed and interpreted, but often aren’t consulted. There has been progress, however, in involving youth in preservation through organizations such as We Are The Next, a California non-profit that works with youth in underserved and overlooked communities to learn how to be active citizens and understand the value of preserving their neighborhoods and communities. Their programs include placemaking, public outreach, community storytelling and a youth heritage summit. Additional means of involving youth can be achieved through after school programs, youth-serving agencies, educational institutions and community organizations. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation provides resources on engaging youth in preservation and the Preserve America Youth Summit, a program of Conservation Legacy, engages young people across the country through field-based summits focusing on history, archaeology, heritage tourism and preservation.



Clinton Clinton Avenue/North Pearl Street/Clinton Square Historic District

The Planning and Development Department is located at 200 Henry Johnson Boulevard and is comprised of a Planning Director, Deputy Director, a Principal Planner, two Senior Planners, two Planners, a City Historian and a GIS Services/Data Management specialist. The Department of Buildings and Regulatory Compliance includes a Building Official, a Neighborhood Stabilization Coordinator, seven Building Inspectors and eight Property Maintenance Inspectors.

There is one full-time City staff person assigned to the overview and management of the historic preservation program; there are twenty-nine local landmarks and seventeen local historic districts comprised of over 3,600 properties that fall under the historic preservation ordinance requirements for review of alterations, new construction and demolition. Reviewing Certificate of Appropriateness applications comprises the majority of City staff duties, which pushes other work to the side, such as education and outreach, historic resource surveys and designation of landmarks and districts, commission training and others. Additional full- or part-time staff is necessary to be able to fulfill the duties necessary for a successful preservation program. In addition, only seven building inspectors and eight code enforcement officers is insufficient for current code enforcement needs covering thousands of buildings over fifty years old. Consider assigning one inspector to historic preservation to deal with specific historic district issues.

The position of Neighborhood Stabilization Coordinator was created in 2018 in the Department of Buildings and Regulatory Compliance to monitor, record, and evaluate vacant buildings within City limits. The position facilitates a task force of various city departments and outside organizations whose goal is to reduce the number of vacant buildings and improve city processes that handle vacant buildings, as well as evaluates existing city processes, systems, and relationships to make the City’s approach to vacant building management more efficient and effective. The creation of this position was an important step forward in the City’s work towards managing vacant and abandoned buildings and is crucial for ongoing success. Improved coordination with and support for this position is crucial.

Historic Resources and Historic Preservation Defined

Historic resources include buildings, sites, structures, objects and landscapes of architectural, historical, engineering and cultural value. They are also places of economic activity, community identity, and collective memory – places that tell the story of Albany. Historic preservation is the process of preserving historic resources and managing appropriate change so that their character-defining architectural and design features are maintained, as well as promoting the adaptive reuse and long-term maintenance of such resources for the benefit of future generations. In the United States, historic preservation is undertaken through public efforts in landmarking and historic district designation at the federal, state, or local levels, and private actions that underwrite and facilitate the maintenance, rehabilitation, and preservation of historic buildings, structures, sites, and objects.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register is the most commonly referred to – and the most commonly misunderstood – historic designation tool in most communities. There are rigorous standards that a property or neighborhood must meet in order to be eligible for listing in the National Register, and being listed as a National Register property is a great honor that provides opportunities for recognition and promotion, as well as being eligible for federal, state and local economic incentives for rehabilitation, such as the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. Listing a property or historic district in the National Register requires a detailed physical description of the property or area, as well as an explanation of how it meets the criteria for significance. National Register nominations are submitted to the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, with final approval by the National Park Service. Properties listed in the National Register have no protections against alteration or demolition and are not reviewed by a local historic preservation commission.

Local Historic Districts and Landmarks

Local designations are slightly less common in many communities because they include a means for regulating exterior alterations, demolition and new construction for Local Landmarks and Local Historic Districts, typically through the review of a Certificate of Appropriateness by a local preservation commission. In Albany, this review process is managed by the Historic Resources Commission (HRC) and the Department of Planning and Development. In a local historic district, a property owner who wishes to make a significant change to the exterior of the property should review the design standards in the USDO, submit a Certificate of Appropriateness application to the Department of Planning and Development, and then present their application to the HRC. The Commission has the authority to approve the application as submitted, approve it with recommended changes, or deny it based on the design guidelines. A denial may be appealed to the Common Council. Locally designated properties are eligible for the Albany Tax Abatement program.

Local Conservation Districts

The regulations for Conservation Districts are typically less stringent than those for Local Landmarks and Local Historic Districts, which follow strict preservation standards defined by local design guidelines and the National Park Service. A Conservation District is designed to regulate certain characteristics that are considered important to preserve the specific character of a neighborhood, rather than enforcing historic preservation standards. For example, a neighborhood of one-story homes such as bungalows may wish to control the appearance of the neighborhood through height restrictions. A neighborhood that includes many 19th century homes that have significant architectural character as well as numerous vacant lots may wish to regulate architectural style and new construction. While the City of Albany does not currently have regulations to create Conservation Districts, this type of review process is typically completed by local government staff. While properties in Conservation Districts are not eligible for federal and state historic tax incentives, local communities can funnel various local incentives towards these areas.



The François Stahly Labyrinth in Empire State Plaza

Benefits of Historic Preservation

Albany's historic resources are key to the community's visual appeal and physical environment, economic diversity and sustainability, heritage tourism and overall quality of life. Historic preservation is also an effective tool for revitalizing downtowns, stabilizing older neighborhoods and maintaining the quality and affordability of the existing housing stock. A vibrant, historic downtown will attract new businesses and encourage reinvestment in a community's streets, sidewalks and other infrastructure. Many people look to a community's downtown when deciding to move, and place a high standard on its historic character, attractiveness and walkability, as well as the mix of retail stores, services, restaurants, bars and entertainment that are available. Most of today's younger generation, known as Millennials, understand that historic preservation is an important tool to protect culture and diversity, and a recent survey by the National Trust for Historic Preservation found that 97% appreciate the value of historic preservation (The Future of Historic Preservation: Connecting People With Places, Forbes, September 18, 2018). It is for these reasons that many municipalities in New York and around the country have created and maintained local historic preservation programs that use a local preservation ordinance and commission to identify historic resources, designate landmarks and historic districts, create design review procedures, and provide incentives for property maintenance and adaptive use.

Economics

The benefits of preservation are substantial and contribute to the local economy in many ways. The rehabilitation of historic or older buildings, either for continued use or adapted for a new use, creates new jobs as the rehabilitated buildings are occupied by new businesses, especially in historic downtowns and traditional commercial districts. There have been multiple studies around the country that document the use of tax incentives for historic commercial properties in a traditional downtown stabilizes or increases property values, brings more local jobs and puts more money back into the local economy than would a national chain store in a strip mall or an out-of-town developer. Additional studies indicate that residential property values are stabilized and/or improved when historic districts are created and maintained.

Housing

Historic neighborhoods typically are comprised of many different housing types, including single-family homes, coach houses, rowhouses, two-flats and apartments. The multiple building types and architectural styles increases the character and attractiveness of a neighborhood and historic housing that is rehabilitated – often using tax incentives – increases housing choices. Historic tax credits may be used in conjunction with Low Income tax credits to rehabilitate or adapt historic buildings into affordable housing. Multiple building types typically found in historic neighborhoods can be reused as housing.

Heritage Tourism

The tourism industry has grown in the recent past and many studies have shown that most travelers are interested in visiting historic places and will make them their destination. Called heritage tourism, it capitalizes on the restoration and preservation of significant historic buildings, sites and districts in order to bring people to visit, stay in hotels, eat in restaurants and spend money in stores. According to the Albany Cultural Heritage Tourism Strategic Plan prepared in 2018, Albany has great potential for the city and region to become a top international cultural heritage tourism destination based on its long history of continuous settlement since 1624, being the longest continuously chartered city in America (1686) and as the capital city of New York. Designating the historic landmarks and districts that define Albany's historic character and sense of place, as well as ensuring their long-term maintenance, creates a special environment for residents and visitors alike, and encourages people to visit and experience Albany's special character.

Sustainability

There is a saying that the greenest building is the one that already exists. The construction of a building requires energy – people, vehicles, construction materials, resources – and when you preserve, rehabilitate and reuse an existing historic building you are conserving that embodied energy. When a building is demolished, you are wasting that embodied energy, as well as sending construction materials to the landfill and expending new energy and resources in the process. New construction has a much higher impact on the environment despite the advances in green technology, as new buildings are typically much larger than historic buildings.

How to Use this Historic Preservation Plan

The City, preservation advocates and other public and private sector entities will use this Plan to direct future preservation planning efforts focused on survey and landmark designations, preservation incentives, education and outreach activities, Downtown and neighborhood revitalization, and other historic preservation-based economic development initiatives. The Plan should also be used to monitor short and long-term preservation initiatives, adjust preservation policy when needed and warranted, and integrate preservation goals and policies into other plans and studies the City government may undertake in the future. Overall, this Plan seeks to balance the community's broader planning and community-development objectives, while also seeking to advance the mission of preservation and its benefits.

What is a Historic Preservation Plan?

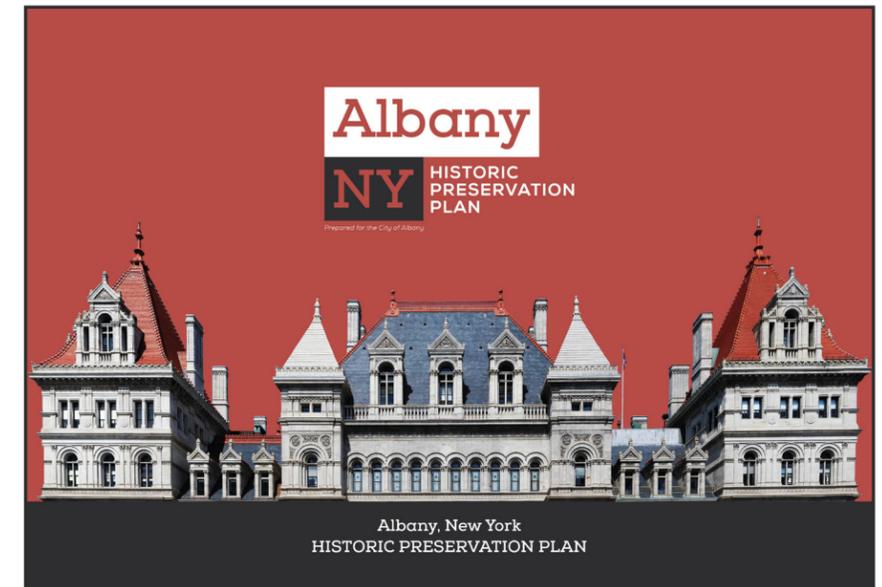
A historic preservation plan identifies and outlines the vision, goals, and strategies for enhancing and strengthening a local historic preservation program, recognizing that effective long-range planning can help identify, protect, and manage significant historic resources and key elements of the city's built environment. Creating a historic preservation plan is also an opportunity to engage, educate, and inform local stakeholders on the community's history and heritage, preservation's benefits, and the roles and responsibilities of a local historic preservation commission and other public and private entities in ongoing implementation of the preservation program. Traditionally, historic preservation plans focused on the identification and documentation of important historic resources and future landmarks and districts. Today, municipal leaders, preservation advocates and community planners view historic preservation as an essential tool for encouraging reinvestment activity in traditional commercial districts and older neighborhoods, attracting and promoting heritage tourism, achieving placemaking and urban design objectives, and in promoting community sustainability.

Historic preservation plans are prepared for local historic preservation commissions, municipal staff, and other commissions, departments, and elected leaders, serving as the key policy document for local decision-making regarding

preservation issues and priorities. Non-profit preservation advocacy organizations and other preservation partners also use historic preservation plans to guide local advocacy and outreach efforts, educational initiatives, and survey and property documentation activities. In many communities, community comprehensive plans address local preservation planning with an identification of key preservation issues and planning goals, objectives, and strategies. However, in the case of Albany and other cities, comprehensive plans may recommend the creation of a stand-alone preservation plan that identifies key historic resources worthy of preservation and additional policies and guidance relative to the local preservation program.

Many historic preservation plans, including this one, are prepared using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation Planning. The three Standards are based on the following principles:

- Important historic properties cannot be replaced if they are destroyed. Preservation planning provides for conservative use of these properties, preserving them in place and avoiding harm when possible and altering or destroying properties only when necessary.
- If planning for the preservation of historic properties is to have positive effects, it must begin before the identification of all significant properties has been completed. To make responsible decisions about historic properties, existing information must be used to the maximum extent and new information must be acquired as needed.
- Preservation planning includes public participation. The planning process should provide a forum for open discussion of preservation issues. Public involvement is most meaningful when it is used to assist in defining values of properties and preservation planning issues, rather than when it is limited to review of decisions already made. Early and continuing public participation is essential to the broad acceptance of preservation planning decisions.



Albany NY Historic Preservation Plan Cover Page

The Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan, as part of its strategies and action items for land use and architectural character, recommends that the city, "Pursue a plan for historic preservation that balances the preservation of designated historic resources and historic districts with the rehabilitation of non-designated buildings and new construction" (Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan, 2011, p. 42). Following the 2030 Comprehensive Plan's adoption, the City of Albany sought to create a historic preservation plan. Therefore, this Albany Historic Preservation Plan serves as a supplemental policy document for local decision-makers and augments the planning strategies and recommendations already incorporated within the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation Planning

Standard I. Preservation Planning Establishes Historic Contexts

Decisions about historic properties are most reliably made when their relationship to other similar properties is understood. Information about the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture associated with historic properties must be collected to define these relationships. This information, called a "historic context," is organized based on a cultural theme, its geographical location and corresponding time period. Contexts describe the significant broad patterns of development in an area that may be represented by historic properties. The development of historic contexts is the foundation for decisions about historic properties.

Standard II. Preservation Planning Uses Historic Contexts to Develop Goals and Priorities for the Identification, Evaluation, Registration and Treatment of Historic Properties.

A series of preservation goals and priorities are developed for each historic context to ensure that the range of properties representing the important aspects of each historic context is identified, evaluated and treated. The goals for each historic context may change as new information becomes available, altering the overall goals and priorities. The actions recommended to meet the goals and priorities must be designed for implementation within a reasonable period of time. The scope of each action should be defined so the work can be completed with available budgeted program resources.

Standard III. The Results of Preservation Planning Are Made Available for Integration Into Broader Planning Processes.

The preservation of historic properties is one element of larger planning processes. Preservation planning results must be transmitted in a usable form to those responsible for other planning activities. Historic preservation planning is most successfully integrated into local planning processes at an early stage. This can be achieved by making the results of preservation planning available to other governmental planning bodies and to private interests whose activities affect historic properties.



Aerial View of the City of Albany

Planning Process

To facilitate the preparation of the Historic Preservation Plan, the City of Albany engaged The Lakota Group, a multi-disciplinary planning firm based in Chicago, Illinois. A Preservation Plan Steering Committee, representing a broad-based segment of community stakeholders, including Historic Resources Commission members, local and state preservation partners, civic institutions, City leaders and officials, private business owners, contractors and other organizations and entities, was formed to help guide the Plan's development. The Plan's creation was underwritten by a CLG grant provided by the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The planning process to date has involved the following steps:

Project Start Conference Call

The City's Planning and Development Department staff conducted a project start meeting with The Lakota Group to discuss key preservation planning goals and objectives, local preservation issues, and project schedule and timeline.

1

April 15, 2019

Project Website

The City of Albany and The Lakota Group created a project website to help inform local stakeholders on the preservation planning process, key milestone dates in the process, and upcoming community meetings and open houses. Draft and final plan documents are also posted for public access and review.

2

May 2019

Field Work and Stakeholder Listening Sessions

Lakota visited Albany to photograph and document the community's historic resources, including various landmarks, historic districts, neighborhoods and commercial districts. The City of Albany and The Lakota Group conducted focus group and key stakeholder listening sessions.

3

May 20-23, 2019

Community Open Houses (Round 1)

More than 108 Albany participants attended the first Historic Preservation Plan Open Houses providing input on preservation issues through a series of exhibits and interactive exercises. The workshops also included exhibits on Albany's historic architecture and "voting boxes" to determine preservation planning priorities.

4

July 9-11, 2019

Online Workshop and Questionnaire

The Lakota Group created an online survey covering the Community Open House materials in order to gain community feedback on local historic preservation issues. The survey was accessible via links on social media and project website. The Community Speaks section of this Historic Preservation Plan summarizes the online workshop results.

5

July 16- August 16, 2019

First Draft Historic Preservation Plan

The City's Planning and Development Department staff conducted a project start meeting with The Lakota Group to discuss key preservation planning goals and objectives, local preservation issues, and project schedule and timeline.

6

August 26, 2019

Community Open Houses (Round 2)

A second round of community open houses were held to present the draft preservation planning concepts and strategies. Open House exhibits included future survey areas and potential districts and landmarks, outreach and educational initiatives.

7

September 11-12, 2019

Online Workshop and Questionnaire

The Lakota Group created the second online questionnaire version of the Community Open House (Round 2) exhibits and voting exercises in order to gain additional community feedback on plan recommendations.

8

September 12-22, 2019

Final Historic Preservation Plan

The final Historic Preservation Plan was prepared and delivered to the City of Albany on September 27, 2019 for approval by the Historic Resources Commission and the Common Council.

9

September 27, 2019