

ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY, INVENTORY, AND BEST PRACTICES

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Survey & Inventory: Definitions

- Survey – Documenting resources
- Inventory – Documentation on known resources

****Survey builds an inventory****

- Section 106 – Same methods, different structure
- Usually the first step in successful NRHP / MPDF nominations

What is Survey?

- Identifying and Evaluating Resources
- “Resource” is anything that can be listed in the National Register, and is usually over 50 years of age
- Involves photography, site assessments, and archival research



Survey – When To Do It

- When resources have not been evaluated
- When unsure if resources are present or not
- When entering an area not previously surveyed



What is Inventory?



- The documentation compiled on resources
- Record of evolution of resource(s)
- Critical for local governments to maintain for research, education, and regulatory purposes

Survey Plans as a Tool

- A plan for future survey or inventory
- Prioritizes where to look and what projects to undertake
- Road map for use of limited funds and staff time

Literature Review and Limited Historical Narrative of the City of Henderson, Nevada.



Photograph of the Basic Magnesium Townsite, date unknown (Image courtesy of the Henderson Public Library digital collection, Henderson).

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Survey Planning: What to Consider

- What resources are most important to your mission/community?
- What does your public care about?
- What is threatened?
- What are your abilities?

Planning a Survey



- Things to consider:
 - ▣ Goals and purpose of survey
 - ▣ Available resources
 - ▣ Resource types
 - ▣ Geography

Survey Project – Key Components

- Before beginning, every survey project should:
 - ▣ Determine the purpose of the survey (research questions)
 - ▣ Establish a justified boundary for project area
 - ▣ Conduct preliminary research about project area
 - ▣ Develop survey methodology



Levels of Survey



1. Windshield

2. Reconnaissance



3. Intensive

Windshield Survey

- No survey forms
- No formal data collection
- Brief report (or memo)
- Best for:
 - ▣ First look at unknown area
 - ▣ Rapid condition check



Reconnaissance Survey



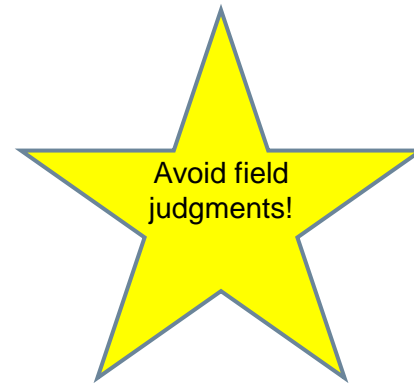
- Possible survey forms (not required)
- Basic data collection
- Formal report
- Best for:
 - ▣ First look before more staff time and resources available
 - ▣ District-level evaluations
 - ▣ ***Evaluations of post-war housing***
- Can recommend future intensive

Watch out
for
Criterion
C!



Intensive Survey

- SHPO or Agency Evaluation Forms
- Detailed data collection
- Formal report
- Best for:
 - ▣ Evaluations for individual eligibility
 - ▣ Compliance survey
 - ▣ HABS documentation (Level 1 only)



Intensive Evaluations

- Every state/agency has different methodology
- All intensive survey forms should include:
 - ▣ Basic identification information
 - ▣ Description of resource
 - ▣ Evaluation of eligibility for NRHP
 - ▣ Map & location information
 - ▣ Shapefiles (optional but VERY helpful)

Don't
Forget
Districts!



Intensive Evaluation Terminology

- “Eligible” = individually eligible for the NRHP
- “Not Eligible” = not individually eligible for the NRHP
- “Contributing / Non-contributing” – refers to a larger historic district
- “Unevaluated”

Activity: Brainstorm Your History

Take 1 minute and write down up to 5 areas within your jurisdiction that might benefit from a targeted survey project.

Survey Reports

- Must follow SOI Standards & Guidelines for:
 - ▣ Identification
 - ▣ Evaluation

- Should always include:
 - ▣ Historic/architectural/archaeological context
 - ▣ Methodology for evaluation
 - ▣ Findings/Results
 - ▣ Recommendations

HUGH E. TAYLOR,
LAS VEGAS MID-CENTURY ARCHITECT



Hugh E. Taylor Research and Paradise Palms Units 1 & 2 Historic District Inventory and Survey

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Architectural Classification



- Style
- Type
- Vernacular



PHAT TATZ
TATTOO

OPENSIDE
SADDLERY

COWBOY GEAR

WESTERN WEAR

OPENSIDE SADDLERY

OPENSIDE SADDLERY



Style vs. Type

- Common to exclude building type
- Many properties do not have a style but usually have a type



Style

- Fashion
- Ornamentation
- “Skin” of the building



Type

□ Form

□ Floorplan

□ Roof
Type



Vernacular Architecture

- Combination of design, workmanship, and material features that are unique to a particular geographic area.
- Influenced by environment and culture
- Not a bucket for resources without style



In Defense of Good Data

Common Data/Survey Problems

- ❑ Incomplete or unclear survey forms
- ❑ No or vague justification for eligibility
- ❑ No maps/shapefiles or vague maps
- ❑ Poor descriptions of character-defining features

Long-term Problems

- ❑ Confuses/fails to help future researchers
- ❑ Slows down resource mgmt./planning process
- ❑ Slows down data entry into databases
- ❑ Makes HTC projects difficult to manage
- ❑ Makes local design review difficult to structure/manage

Summary



- Survey vs. Inventory
- 3 levels of Survey
- Survey Planning
- Architectural Classification