



# ABERDEEN, WASHINGTON

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN



**BRUM & ASSOCIATES  
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON**



**BRUM & ASSOCIATES**  
COMMUNITY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING



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## **Acknowledgments**

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the past several decades, cities and towns across the country have taken active steps to preserve their architectural and historic resources. These historic preservation efforts have yielded economic benefits, revitalized downtowns, and an enhanced quality of life for residents. In short, community planning and historic preservation go hand-in-hand as cities pursue sustainability and economic development. As evidence, more and more communities across the nation are developing historic preservation plans.

The Aberdeen Historic Preservation Plan outlines goals and actions to promote downtown redevelopment, encourage investment in residential areas, and increase cultural and recreational opportunities for residents and tourists. As a gateway to Pacific Ocean beaches and Olympic National Park, Aberdeen is easily accessible to travelers seeking cultural attractions, historical sites, and the unique biodiversity of the area. In the wake of losing a large part of its historic maritime, lumber, and milling economic base, Aberdeen experienced a decline in jobs and population. These losses led to the demolition of many of the city's early industrial and downtown buildings in past decades. More recent consideration has been given to preservation of resources significant to the community such as the rehabilitation of the Armory and the D&R Theater. The Aberdeen Historic Preservation Plan intends to build on those efforts, providing recommendations to raise public awareness of historic preservation, promote downtown revitalization and encourage tourism.

Aberdeen has in place a number of financial incentives such as tax abatements and façade loans to stimulate investment downtown and within adjacent neighborhoods. However, other incentives such as the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit also have the potential to provide property owners with opportunities for restoration and adaptive reuse. The use of tax credits and expanding the variety of financial incentives are important recommendations of this plan.

This plan benefited from the input and involvement of citizens through public meetings and direction from the Aberdeen Historic Preservation Commission. A public meeting was held on May 14, 2013 and was attended by over thirty residents. Additional meetings with downtown property owners, neighborhood residents and city officials were conducted during the week of July 8th. The Historic Preservation Commission met on August 1, 2013 to review the draft goals and objectives provided the Consultant. The final plan incorporates comments received during these meetings.

This plan was written to be consistent with the state's overall historic preservation planning directive "Historic Preservation: A Tool for Managing Growth" published in 1994 and updated in 2005. Written by Greg Griffith, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, this report provides an overview of historic preservation efforts in Washington and a blueprint on how communities can move forward in the future.

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The *Aberdeen Historic Preservation Plan* provides the city with specific recommendations for moving forward to preserving, protecting and enhancing its downtown area and neighborhoods. The plan provides an overview of the past and present preservation efforts in the city, available financial incentives and the economic benefits of historic preservation. The plan identifies those areas which contain the largest number of significant buildings, the importance of their listing on the National Register and options for additional enhancements. The primary recommendations of the plan are as follows:

- ⇒ Aberdeen is a historic city with two-thirds of its buildings pre-dating 1960 and it is in the city government's best interest to promote effective management and stewardship of its historic resources by its citizens.
- ⇒ Fund and prepare National Register nominations for the Downtown Aberdeen Historic District, Broadway Hill, Scammell Hill and Arnold Hill Historic Districts to provide property owners in these areas with significant tax incentives for rehabilitation.
- ⇒ Adopt design guidelines in order to reinforce Aberdeen's historic character, boost heritage tourism and continue efforts to be an arts and entertainment destination in the region.
- ⇒ Enhance heritage tourism through the creation of driving tours, marker programs and coordination with regional sites.
- ⇒ Utilize students from Evergreen State College and other institutions to assist with historic preservation projects.
- ⇒ Take advantage of existing history-based programs to increase elementary and high school student awareness of Aberdeen's rich historical legacy.
- ⇒ Provide training for contractors and builders on appropriate historic building repair and maintenance.

These and other recommendations are presented and summarized in "Goals and Actions" section of the plan.

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## II. Aberdeen's Heritage - Historical & Architectural Development

### **Aberdeen's Heritage**

The geography, climate, and natural resources that attracted settlers to the area of present-day Aberdeen supported the native people known as the Chehalis for thousands of years. The rivers, bays, and dense forests of the region provided the Chehalis with sustenance and wood for canoes and shelters. The abundant supplies of fish and timber became the basis of the local economy during settlement and development by European-American and Asian settlers.

The first expedition to explore the region was led by American Captain Robert Gray, aboard the *Columbia* in May of 1792. The inlet and bay that Gray entered was later named Grays Harbor. The next recorded expedition was in 1824 when the men of the Hudson's Bay Company passed through Grays Harbor on the way to Fort Nisqually, the first trading post on the Puget Sound. The U.S. government sponsored a survey of Grays Harbor in 1841 under Charles Wilkes. However, Grays Harbor proved too shallow for large ocean-going vessels, leaving the area sparsely settled for several more decades. During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, England, Spain, Russia and the United States all laid claim to the Oregon Territory which included what is now the state of Washington. Gradually these competing claims were resolved in favor of the United States.

The increased settlement in the region resulted in the creation of the Washington Territory in on March 2, 1853. The next year, Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens attempted to negotiate land treaties at the Chehalis River Treaty Council. Present at this gathering were members of the Lower Chehalis, Upper Chehalis, Chinook, Quinault, Queets, Shoalwater Bay and Cowlitz tribes. Stevens' terms to remove the tribes initially met with resistance, but with the influx of new settlers the tribes agreed to move to reservations in the region.

As the various tribes were moved onto reservations, settlers poured into the area to plant crops and to exploit the fishing and timber resources of Grays Harbor. Local lumber was used to build houses and small watercraft. Timber was processed at Benjamin C. Armstrong's sawmill, established in 1852 where the Cedar River flows into the Chehalis. M.F. Luarck established his sawmill in 1870, cutting between 6,000 and 10,000 board feet each day. As demand rose, production increased over the next two decades to 15,000 board feet per day.

Settlers adapted to the use of streams and rivers in canoes. Flatboats were used to transport cargo on the Chehalis River. The weight of cargo could strand the boats on sandbars, however. Also, log jams were prevalent and could last for years. In the early 1850s, the federal government sent army engineers to the area, who reported back that a canal from the Puget Sound via Grays Harbor to the Columbia River was essential for the development of Southwest Washington.



*Portrait of Samuel Benn from Christmas 1931 at age 100 (Photo courtesy of the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

Perhaps the settler with the most impact on the development of the area was Samuel Benn. With his wife Martha, Benn amassed hundreds of acres of land. Martha's father, Reuben Redman, arrived at Grays Harbor in January of 1862 and purchased key lands to the north and south of the mouth of the Chehalis River. When Martha married Samuel Benn, her new husband traded his farmlands for Redman's river-front lands. Benn envisioned creating one of the region's major cities at the confluence of the Wishkah and Chehalis Rivers. To further this vision Benn granted and sold property to investors in canneries and sawmills, taking advantage of the harbor's abundant natural resources.

On his 740 acres, Benn platted a new town designed to be a center of commerce and shipping. Founded in 1884, Aberdeen was officially incorporated in 1890. Though his first choice for a town name was

Heraville, a letter to a local paper suggested the name Aberdeen, after the city in Scotland. Both cities are located on the mouths of two rivers, as the name Aberdeen means "at the mouth of the river." In Aberdeen, Washington, the Chehalis and Wishkah Rivers empty into Grays Harbor. This geography, including the lush Olympic Mountains, was a major influence on the founding and development of the city. As the "Gateway to the Olympic Peninsula," the city became the economic center of Grays Harbor County. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, timber, shipping, and fishing industries formed the basis of the local economy.



*A view of Aberdeen in 1885 along the Wishkah River (Photo courtesy the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

## Heritage Highlight—Aberdeen’s Maritime Industry

Aberdeen was a city connected to the water - from fisheries, to moving logs to mills, to basic transportation. It is natural that Aberdeen developed a ship-building industry concurrent with logging. Aberdeen’s timber was in demand worldwide. Despite the shallow limitations of the harbor, ships were required to move lumber to market. With dredging and other improvements, Grays Harbor attracted the nation’s best-known ship builders.

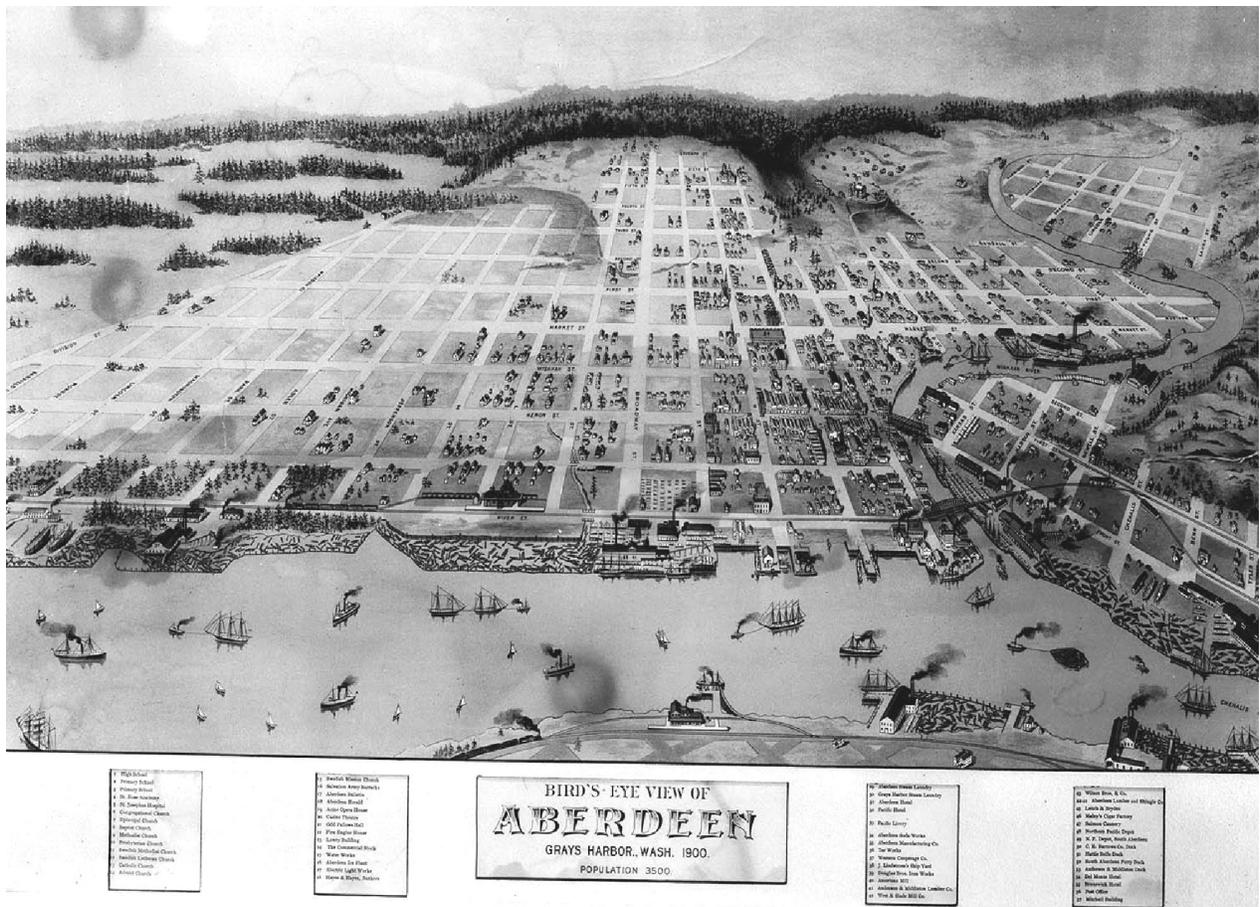
One of the largest shipyards on the harbor was that of John Lindstrom who operated his business in west Aberdeen. He contracted with Wilson Brothers Mill in East Aberdeen to build steam and four-mast schooners in order to transport their lumber. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, some fifty vessels were built at local shipyards. The catastrophic earthquake that razed San Francisco buildings in 1906 resulted in huge demands for Aberdeen lumber and more ships to transport it. There was a brief reprieve in demand prior to World War I, but the war revived the need for new ships. During the war, two major Aberdeen shipyards, Grays Harbor Motorship (Lindstrom) Company and the Grant-Smith Company, together employed some 4,000 workers.



*The Lindstrom Shipyard was one of the major ship building businesses in Aberdeen in the early 1900s (Photo courtesy of the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

After World War I, the demand for wooden ships decreased in favor of larger steel ships and most of the small shipyards began to close. Shipbuilding virtually ceased to exist by the 1920s in Aberdeen. It was at that time that the last steam schooners were built on Grays Harbor. Many of the shipyards were then purchased by the milling companies for their operations.

One of the earliest canneries in the area was founded in 1873 when George W. Hume opened his operation on land from Benn. Eventually, Hume sold the business and property to Aberdeen Packing Company. Benn also managed to entice lumberman A.J. West from Michigan to build a sawmill on lands he owned. It was during the 1880s that J. M. Weatherwax opened his sawmill, and by 1890 Aberdeen had five sawmills producing approximately 30 million board feet of lumber. The city soon contained several stores, a hotel, two door factories, three canneries, two banks, and a shipyard. In 1890, work began on a bridge across the Wishkah River from Heron Street. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Aberdeen provided many employment opportunities, especially for European immigrants. Between 1890 and 1900, the population grew from 1,638 to 3,747 residents. This wave of settlement and construction included two hospitals, three schools, two theaters, and several churches.



*Bird's Eye View of Aberdeen from 1900 shows the busy harbor and waterfront along the Chehalis and Wishkah Rivers (Photo courtesy the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

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When Aberdeen was established it depended largely on water transportation via the harbor and rivers. The poor roads at the time limited settlement and extraction of the region's timber resources. However, Aberdeen's founder Samuel Benn promoted a plan to connect Aberdeen to larger markets by railroad. In 1890, the Tacoma-Olympia-Grays Harbor Railroad had been laid from Tacoma to Montesano, east of Aberdeen. Two years later, the Northern Pacific Railroad Company continued the line west to Junction City, but not all the way to Aberdeen. From Junction



*First train to arrive in Aberdeen on April 1, 1895, (Photo courtesy the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

City, the line turned south across the Chehalis River to the speculative boom town of Ocosta, bypassing Aberdeen. In response, Aberdeen residents banded together to build their own spur line from Aberdeen to the existing Northern Pacific rail line, north of the river. The spur line to Aberdeen was completed in 1895. The coming of the railroad had an enormous effect on growth of the city - from 1900 to 1910, Aberdeen's population increased by almost 10,000 residents. Unfortunately, the rapid growth also brought a high rate of crime, and Aberdeen earned a reputation for vice and murder by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Drinking, gambling, and prostitution contributed to the city's nickname of "Hellhole of the Pacific."

The completion of the railroad in 1895 greatly expanding Aberdeen's timber market. The railroad prompted the building of local logging railroads, accessing previously un-touched forest. The network of rail lines allowed supply to meet an ever-increasing demand for timber. Major mill companies by 1900 included the American Mill along the Wishkah River from "B" to "D" Streets, Leitch & Bryan on the north side of the Chehalis River and the Aberdeen Lumber and Shingle Company on the south side of the Chehalis. The Chehalis and Wishkah Rivers became lined with docks resting on wooden piles to service the milling, lumber and fishing industries.

## Heritage Highlight—Aberdeen’s Canning Industry

The abundance and variety of fish in Grays Harbor made it a center of sustenance for Native Americans for thousands of years. The rivers supplied salmon, while clams, cod, and halibut were harvested from the sea. European settlers from the earliest period of Aberdeen’s history depended on fishing as a livelihood. Aberdeen’s foremost investor, Samuel Benn, first encouraged the development of canneries in 1877, offering land along the Wishkah River to the Hume brothers.

The Hume Brothers established the country’s first industrial cannery in 1864 on a barge on the Sacramento River. Over the next four decades, the Hume canning empire expanded across Oregon and Washington. Canning factories were historically tied to the Asian community. The Hume canneries depended on Native Americans to catch the fish, mainly Chinook salmon, and low-wage Chinese workers as packers. During the 1880s and 1890, anti-Chinese sentiment and legislation influenced their expulsion from Aberdeen and across the Pacific Northwest. Though human trafficking of Chinese immigrants still occurred, ultimately there resulted a labor shortage in the cannery industry. In Aberdeen, many Chinese workers were replaced with workers from the Philippines.

During the 1880s, as Chinook runs declined, cannery fishing turned to other varieties of salmon, including steelhead and sockeye. Seine nets used for catching fish were so successful that the river’s salmon populations were severely diminished by the 1920s. Netting occurred before the salmon could swim upstream to spawn, thus preventing re-population. As with timber, the notion of an inexhaustible supply of natural resources proved unsustainable. Artificial propagation of salmon helped stabilize populations. However, increased development along the rivers and bay introduced pollutants, such as pulp mill waste, into the water, which further reduced the numbers of salmon. Deforestation from logging also created detrimental effects on natural drainage that had supported the life cycle of salmon. Conservation practices initiated during the 1940s and 1950s, in combination with production of small fry in Washington fish hatcheries, prevented the loss of species and industry.



*The Ellmore Packing Company canned clams and salmon in Aberdeen in the early 1900s (Photo courtesy of the University of Washing-*



*A ca. 1910 view of the docks lining the Wishkah River with the railroad bridge in the background (Photo courtesy Aberdeen Museum of History).*

Because of the ample timber resources of the region, most of the city's residential and commercial buildings were made of wood. The city also had many plank sidewalks and sawdust was used to as a street surface. Fires were a continual cause for concern and a devastating fire in October of 1903 destroyed many of the frame buildings in the downtown area. The fire razed ten entire blocks that were home to 140 businesses and numerous residences. Following the fire, the city's building codes were amended to no longer allow wooden structures in the business district. To meet the new codes, buildings of brick, stone and concrete were constructed in the early 1900s in the commercial district along Wishkah and Heron Streets.



*Salmon waiting to be canned on the dock at the end of F Street at the Wishkah River in 1900 (Photo courtesy of the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

## Heritage Highlight—The 1903 Fire

Aberdeen was a city built on the lumber and milling industry, figuratively and literally. With wooden buildings, on wooden pilings, connected by wood plank sidewalks, the city was at high risk of devastation from fire. Aberdeen experienced two fires in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, first in 1887 and again in 1889. Both times, several blocks in the city were destroyed.

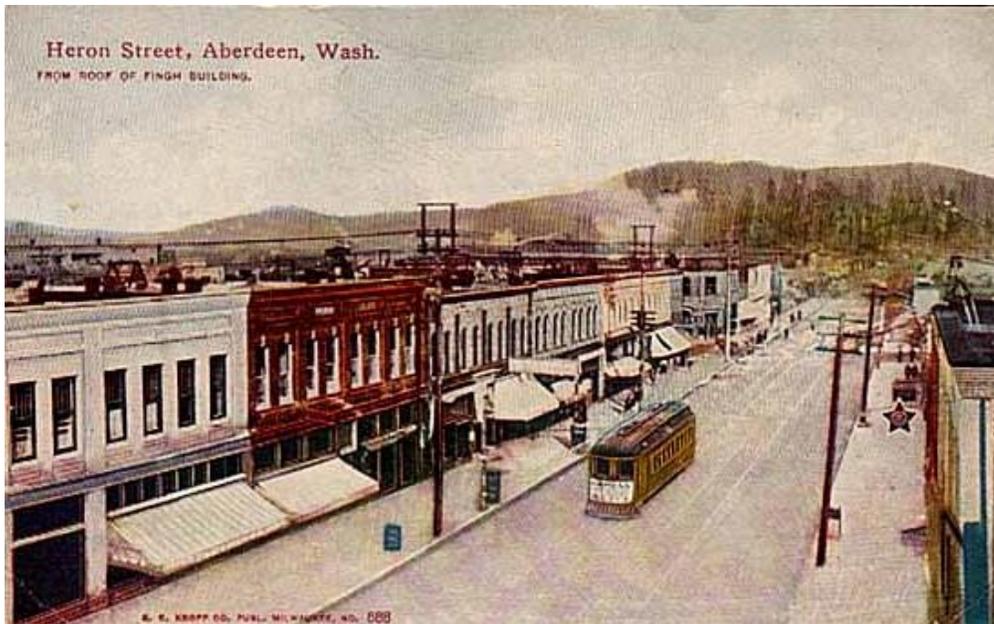
The most devastating fire in the city occurred on October 16, 1903 which caused four deaths and enormous property damage. The fire destroyed the central business district, resulting in losses of over one million dollars. Only half the damaged buildings were insured. The fire began in the Mack rooming house on “F” Street near Hume (now State) Street. The three-story building was a boarding house, where men cooked their own meals on oil stoves. An excerpt from *The Daily Times* of New Brunswick, New Jersey, dated October, 17, 1903, details the extent of the fire and demonstrates the newsworthy value of the city Aberdeen across the country.

*“From this block the fire spread to the fine new hose house and headquarters of the fire department. Great volumes of flames shot into the air, and the heat became unbearable a block distant. In a short time the flames had jumped across the alley to WALKER’S saloon, and every building in the block bounded by Heron and F and H streets, including KAUFMAN’S brick building, went up. Word went along every business street to prepare for the worst, and as far up as the Commercial block there were hurried preparations to get out of danger. On the north side of Heron street the fire jumped from the Anderson Block to the State bank, and every store from that corner to Hays’ bank and all the buildings in the block bounded by Heron, G, Wishkah and H streets were burned, including the Central school building, three stores and the city council chambers.*”

The fire raged for five hours before it was under control but by then had destroyed all or parts of 22 blocks in the downtown and residential areas. As property owners began to rebuild, the city fire codes were amended to require the construction of masonry buildings. Some of the new buildings were constructed of stone such as the Masonic Building on Heron Street but many of the new buildings were erected of poured concrete resting on concrete capped pilings. Aberdeen’s downtown district was largely rebuilt over the next several years reflecting the city’s economic boom of the times.



*The downtown area after the fire was over. (Photo courtesy Washington State Library and Archives).*



*After the 1903 fire, most buildings in the downtown area were rebuilt of brick or poured concrete. This view shows Heron Street ca. 1910. (Photo courtesy Aberdeen Museum of History).*

After the fire, the rebuilding effort spurred a huge spike in population growth. By 1910, Aberdeen had grown to a city of 13,660 residents. The city's waterfront was the location for the shipping, lumber and other industries with the adjacent commercial area extending for several blocks. Residential neighborhoods were built on both sides of the Chehalis and Wishkah Rivers to accommodate the city's rapid growth. Hundreds of millions of board feet of lumber shipped out of Aberdeen to all around the Pacific Rim, while rail lines transported local products east to the Midwest and East Coast. Demand for the region's timber was particularly high following the 1906 earthquake that devastated San Francisco. Aberdeen's sawmills shipped large quantities of lumber to San Francisco as it rebuilt following the earthquake. Timber from Aberdeen was also shipped as far away as Mexico, Chile, and Australia. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built a jetty at Grays Harbor in 1916, improving shipping infrastructure. By the 1920s, Aberdeen was known as the "Lumber Capital of the World."



*The Wilson Brothers Mill was one of many large milling operations in Aberdeen in the early 1900s.*

## **Heritage Highlight—Aberdeen’s Timber Industry**

The forests of western Washington were marveled at by early settlers who thought they would provide an inexhaustible supply of wood. Advances in industrial machinery in the 19<sup>th</sup> century led to massive logging and milling operations throughout the country. Seeing the financial opportunities at Grays Harbor, J. M. Weatherwax moved his entire milling operation from Michigan to Aberdeen in the 1880s. Aberdeen drew many settlers from Michigan, where logging had been a major industry since around 1840. Seeking new employment opportunities, experienced loggers and mill workers migrated from Michigan to Aberdeen.

The arrival of J. M. Weatherwax and fellow mill owner A. J. West was part of the economic boom in the Pacific Northwest’s timber industry. Lumber businessmen from all over the country began to take note of the opportunities surrounding Aberdeen. The West and Slade mill was located at the mouth of the Wishkah River; Weatherwax (later the Anderson-Middleton Mill) was at the foot of Broadway; and Emery and Mack (later the American Mill), was between Market Street and the Wishkah.

By 1890, the mills of Grays Harbor employed 800 workers who produced 250,000 board feet of lumber per day. In 1890, Aberdeen alone had a population of 1,400 residents with six sawmills. Aberdeen was the center of the region’s timber processing and by the early 1900s its daily combined mill output reached over 450,000 board feet of lumber. Additionally, Aberdeen boasted a stave factory, a cooperage, salmon canneries, sash and door manufacturers, and two ship yards. These businesses helped the city grow to 14,000 residents by 1909. Aberdeen was the industrial and commercial center of Grays Harbor and the largest lumber shipping location worldwide. The introduction of logging trucks and completion of forest roads allowed logging to reach higher elevations in the mountains east and north of the city. The logging boom continued through the 1920s and Aberdeen grew to a city of almost 22,000 residents by 1930.

The stock market crash in October of 1929 was followed by the Great Depression and demand for Aberdeen’s lumber and mill products declined. In addition, by the 1930s much of the marketable timber in the region had been clear cut and state forestry personnel predicted that all of the land surrounding Grays Harbor would soon be depleted. This decade was also the time for the establishment of new federal and state conservation and tree planting programs in the region. With the decline of the timber industry the number of major saw mills in Aberdeen fell from thirty-seven to nine and the population fell by over 3,000 by 1940. The mills that remained shifted to products that used less wood such as broom handles and plywood while others turned to producing wood pulp. During the 1940s, a total of 71 wood-derivative manufacturing plants were in operation in Grays Harbor. Aberdeen’s milling industries were further revived following America’s entry into World War II. The city’s sawmills provided lumber, plywood and other products to support the War effort.

After World War II the nation’s housing boom led to renewed demand for the region’s timber products. While the amount of timber harvested never reached the levels of the 1920s, the industry continued to provide steady employment for many Aberdeen workers. Sustainable forestry practices and tree farms also helped to keep the mills running in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Environmental concerns led to restrictions on logging in the region in the 1990s and over the next several decades many mills closed. In 2005, the Weyerhaeuser large-log sawmill was closed as part of the decline of the region’s lumber mills. Despite these closures, several large mills remain in operation in Grays Harbor and its legacy can still be seen in the archeological remains along Aberdeen’s waterfront.



*Above: Men pose by an enormous tree, indicating the scale of the local timber resources (Photo courtesy Aberdeen Museum of History).*

*Below: The E.C. Miller Cedar Lumber Company was one of several large mills in operation on the Chehalis River in 1948.*



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Aberdeen's booming economy attracted new workers; they were predominantly single men who drifted into town with no local family connection. The city's well-known "red light district" continued to thrive under their patronage well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1926, there were thirty so-called lodgings houses or "rooms" in operation as well as a similar number of saloons.

During this economic boom, city's residential areas expanded. Neighborhoods in west and south Aberdeen were platted and developed for the city's many mill workers, and hundreds of frame dwellings were built in these areas. Many of these homes were modest, one-story cottages reflecting Folk Victorian or Bungalow styles of the period. Various immigrant groups, mainly Poles, Finns, and Croatians, settled in these neighborhoods, clustering with family and familiar culture.



*East Heron and South F Streets, in the area known as the "red light district" in 1908 (Photo courtesy of the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

The city's mill owners and middle-class residents built their homes on the hillsides and slopes north of downtown. The wealth of Aberdeen's many millionaires was reflected in the large dwellings built in the Craftsman and Revival styles of the period. The largest concentration of these homes are in the area known as Broadway Hill while more middle-class housing was built on Scammell Hill and Arnold Hill. Most of the dwellings in these neighborhoods were built between 1900 and 1930 and reflect the wealth and prosperity of Aberdeen's boom years.

In its early years Aberdeen's population was two-thirds men but women played an important role in social advancements. Along with other women in the state, Aberdeen's woman suffrage organizations employed a range of tactics to get women the right to vote. Enfranchisement of women finally took place on election day in 1910 with two-thirds of the state's men endorsing the vote for women. Washington became the fifth state in the United States to grant women the vote. This achievement inspired other states to rejuvenate their campaigns during the period from 1911 to 1920. The city's women also formed the Aberdeen Woman's Club to obtain the \$10,000 Carnegie Library buildings fund offered by steel magnate and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. To meet the requirements of his gift, the club successfully raised large sums of money, acquired new volumes and periodicals to circulate, and received governmental support for this effort.

## **Heritage Highlight—Aberdeen’s Ethnic Development**

Aberdeen and the Grays Harbor region boomed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and attracted workers from around the world to its mills, lumberyards, maritime industry and other industries. Many of the menial and strenuous jobs that made the city prosperous were performed by these immigrants. Chinese workers, for example, were the low-wage labor in the lucrative canneries. Scandinavian immigrants from Finland and Sweden supplied unskilled labor in mills and logging camps. Other ethnic groups in Aberdeen at the turn of the century included Poles, Austrians, and Croatians. Many of these immigrants were single males, who resided in boarding houses. This factor helped facilitate segregation of “foreigners” from “native” European-American descendants of settlers.

The Scandinavian community was tightly-knit, with single males residing in boarding houses owned by other Scandinavians. The so-called Finn Towns – the largest being in South Aberdeen – tended to be located close to mills, where these men worked. This neighborhood was bounded by Boone Street on the east, Stockwell Street on the south, Harding Road on the west, and Marion Street on the north. Another such community in East Aberdeen was bounded on the north by Randall Street, on the west by “F” Street, on the south by Market and Heron Streets, and on the east by the Wishkah River.

East and South Aberdeen also had notable Austrian and Croatian populations. These immigrants were attracted to work in the lumber mills along the Chehalis River. Ethnic communities like these included commercial businesses such as meat markets, groceries, and bakeries that perpetuated traditional food and drink in their respective neighborhoods. Several Croatian businesses were located in South Aberdeen.

Separated from these neighborhoods was a significant Polish community in West Aberdeen. This neighborhood was bounded on the south by Market Street, on the east by Park Street, on the north by West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, and on the west by Division Street. St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church, built in 1906, was a social center for the Polish immigrants, as was the Polish American Club, a social hall and tavern.

For Aberdeen’s immigrants, social halls were centers of culture, education, and politics. The Red Finn Hall on East 1<sup>st</sup> Street was known for its radical political persuasion. The influence of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) within the community is evident by the Finnish Workers Association Hall located at 110-112 North “F” Street which was built by that labor union. This building still stands although altered from its original design.

As segregated as these ethnic groups were from “native” Aberdeen, Chinese immigrants bore the brunt of the greatest hostility. Anti-Chinese sentiments ran rampant across the Pacific Northwest during the 1880s and 1890s. These feelings were so strong, Chinese immigrants were expelled from Aberdeen. General anti-foreign feelings persisted into the 1920s, when the Ku Klux Klan enjoyed a brief tenure in Aberdeen’s city administration in 1924-25. However, post-World War I development in industry – mainly mechanization of menial tasks – reduced the need for so many unskilled workers. Also, federal legislation restricting immigration from specific Eastern European countries also influenced a decline in immigrants in Aberdeen and along the west coast. Eventually, these ethnic communities became assimilated in Aberdeen, and the immigrant neighborhoods are barely discernible today.



*The Polish Club was one of several social halls built by Aberdeen's ethnic communities (Photo courtesy the Aberdeen Museum of History).*



*Many of the city's mill workers came from Scandinavian countries such as Finland and Sweden. A large number of these men were single who lived in the city's various rooming and boarding houses (Photo courtesy the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

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In the 1920s, Aberdeen experienced another economic boom. In the downtown area \$3 million was spent on building construction, including the seven-story Becker Building. Properties in Aberdeen benefited from the addition of dredge spoil, mud and sand dug from the Cow Point shoal. This dredging project increased the channel depth from eight to twenty-six feet, allowing deepwater ships to come further into the harbor. The Port used some of this dredged matter to fill marshy lowlands behind Cow Point shoal, creating Port-owned industrial land. It also offered the spoil to property owners wishing to fill marshy lowlands.

By 1930 the city's population reached its peak population of 21,723 residents. However, the coming of the Great Depression had major impact on the local economy. The number of lumber mills in operation dropped from thirty-seven to nine, and mills reduced labor costs by employing low-wage immigrant workers. During the Depression, there arose a new interest in labor organization. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) had attempted to organize workers beginning in 1911, keeping offices at the Lincoln Block building at 208 E. Heron Street. These efforts initially were met with resistance from local authorities and businessmen, aided by anti-radical sentiments in the wake of World War I. However, discontent and economic hardship during the Depression allowed an in-road for organizers.

Conflicts between business and labor, pro- and anti-Communist factions, and even between labor unions against one another, made for a tense climate in Aberdeen. A major strike occurred in 1935, bringing production to a halt at many logging camps and sawmills. The strike lasted three months with minimal results. The most significant consequence of the strike was the massive increase in union membership among mill workers and loggers, from 15,000 to 70,000.

Aberdeen's population declined to 18,846 residents in the 1930s due to the closings of the mills, labor strife and general depressed economic conditions. With the coming of World War II, Aberdeen once again saw its fortunes revived as it produced lumber for the military. During the war, loggers and mill workers were exempt from service, as lumber was in high demand for the war effort. The introduction of logging trucks kept the industry going, despite rations on fuel and rubber. The use of trucks also allowed logging men with families to move into Aberdeen, eventually eliminating the need for logging camps. This development dramatically changed Aberdeen demographics and distribution of population. Middle class families were on the rise, while the number of single male workers declined. Fewer boarding houses were needed downtown.

During the 1950s, the City of Aberdeen exerted a serious effort to improve its downtown area. The City had long turned a blind eye to the red-light district, even appointing a two-block area along Hume (now State Street) and F Streets for saloons and brothels. By the late 1950s, however, local authorities worked to close down these businesses that had been historically associated with the community.

## Heritage Highlight— The Red Light District

As a milling and lumbering center, Aberdeen attracted many single immigrant men to work in its many industries. Grays Harbor was also a major seaport in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and these factors led to the establishment of a large “red light” district in the downtown area. Aberdeen’s so-called “Sailor’s Paradise” was the concentration of saloons, brothels, workmen hotels, marine out-fitting stores, and shipping offices and docks mainly along Heron Street but also west to “H” Street, north to Wishkah Street, and south to Hume (State) Street. Commercial buildings in the district housed retail stores on the ground floors and hotels, boarding rooms, and bordellos on upper floors. The buildings along Heron and Wishkah Street were estimated to house nearly 2,000 single men who worked in the city in the early 1900s. Of Aberdeen’s 13,660 residents in 1910, nearly two-thirds were single men.



*One of Aberdeen’s many saloons, ca. 1900 (Photo courtesy the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

The red light district became well known as one of the liveliest on the west coast. Like most red light districts Aberdeen had its share of crime and mayhem including the many murders committed by serial killer William “Billy” Gohl. Arrested in 1910, Gohl was found guilty of numerous deaths and was committed to an asylum where he died in 1927. These and other murders added to the city’s reputation for crime and prostitution.

The red light district was tolerated by Aberdeen’s citizens in large part for the revenue it provided. In 1910 there were 34 saloons concentrated in the red light district which contributed \$20,000 of the city’s \$25,000 tax revenue. When prohibition was enacted in 1920, many of the city’s saloons continued to operate illegally or became private clubs with easily obtained memberships. The red light district began its decline in the 1930s when many industries closed and several thousand workers left the Grays Harbor area. The decline accelerated after World War II when the lumber and milling industries continued to reduce workers and city officials undertook downtown improvement projects. By the 1960s, Aberdeen’s red light district was largely a thing of the past. Today, a number of downtown buildings remain from this colorful heritage and continue to be the home of restaurants, bars and apartments.

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During the 1950s, a new group of mills arrived to Aberdeen, buying up the existing industrial water and increasing the city's tax base. The commercial district was expanded, and several of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings were modernized with new facades or replaced. A major improvement of the 1950s was the construction of a new Chehalis River highway bridge which opened up the Washington coast for increased tourism. In 1956, the bridge was completed at a cost of \$5 million and dedicated by Governor Arthur B. Langlie. Beaches began to attract visitors from the Puget Sound and Portland.

The Regional Planning Commission, established in 1959, began to see some results of a coordinated effort to improve conditions around the harbor. Projects included new roads and reconstruction of jetties. The Corps of Engineers built a one-acre model of the harbor and tidal flats for small-scale reproduction of currents and tides under various experimental conditions, all aimed at harbor improvement. The Corps also produced a feasibility report concluded that a proposed dam on the Wynoochee River could supply Aberdeen with enough water to attract more industry. However, the project would not reach completion for a full decade.

During the 1970s, another dredging project helped keep Grays Harbor and Aberdeen internationally prominent as a shipping port. In 1979, over 4 million tons of cargo and 296 vessels were recorded to pass through the Port of Grays Harbor. The need for greater electrical power resulted in a partnership between the Public Utility District and a coal-fired plant under construction in Centralia. Air pollution control and stricter water quality standards were imposed.

By the late 1970s, the timber industry had logged most of the readily available lumber in the region and many of the city's mills closed by the 1980s. The loss of jobs is reflected in an 11.6% drop in Aberdeen's population, to 16,565 by 1990. Also, development of the Southshore Mall in 1986 drew businesses away from the historic downtown core. Loss of retail activity in downtown resulted in deterioration of vacant historic buildings. While new buildings were going up, many former architectural icons were lost, including the National Register-listed Finch Building. Designed by A Warren Gould, the five-story building was commissioned in 1910 for \$100,000, a large sum at the time. It housed a variety of professional offices. The building began losing occupants with the completion of Chehalis River Bridge off-ramp in the early 1970s. After many years of vacancy, it was demolished in 1999.

Another architectural loss for the City's was the Ninemire and Morgan Building. The building originally occupied an entire block on E. Market Street and included the city post office. Originally, the three-story building housed the Lenoir Hotel on the top floor in the 1920s, but a fire required the removal of the third story in 1949. Retail businesses did well in the Ninemire and Morgan Block into the 1960s. However, over time, sections were dismantled until the building was completely razed by the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Aberdeen struggled with a changing downtown landscape and economy during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The loss of buildings prompted an interest in historic preservation, and the end of traditional industries has spurred the recognition of a need to



*The Chehalis River Bridge following its opening in 1956 (Photo courtesy of the Aberdeen Museum of History).*



*The Aberdeen Federal Savings and Loan on Wishkah Street was one of many new buildings constructed or remodeled in the downtown area in the 1950s (Photo courtesy the Aberdeen Museum of History).*

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diversify the local economy. Though downtown Aberdeen lost architecture from its historic boom period, other well-known buildings were given new life. The old Armory was gifted to the city to become a Senior Citizen's and social center and the U.S. Post Office was converted into private offices. During the 1980s, two new groups were formed for the purpose of economic development. These were the Grays Harbor Tourism Promotion Committee and Grays Harbor Opportunity 80s.

While shipping continues to have a role in Aberdeen's economy, the city and region have been forced to consider diversification. Though Grays Harbor Paper LLC closed in 2011, new major employers include an Ocean Spray cranberry cooperative, Walmart, and Washington Crab Products. Tourism is a new industry the area has come to embrace. Aberdeen's unique history and diverse population contribute to the city's tourism possibilities.

One facet of tourism is based in Aberdeen's traditional fishing industry. Today, charter-boat fishing is available on Grays Harbor and along the Pacific coast. Additionally, local resorts offer clamming and crabbing activities. The City has developed a riverfront park, and there is also a nearby state park. Morrison Riverfront Park was developed with a grant from Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, which aims to conserve wildlife habitat. Bottle Beach State Park is a 75-acre park located on the south side of Grays Harbor. Vast tidal flats that support an abundance of food for migrating shorebirds earned this park designation as an Important Bird Area by the Audubon Society. These two sites highlight the diverse marine ecology that was directly responsible for the robust local economy for many decades.

Another source of tourism is derived from the Aberdeen's famous citizens, among them musicians, artists, and writers. Emergence of the "grunge" music genre in the Pacific Northwest around 1990 put a national spotlight on the region. Aberdeen, specifically, became known as the hometown of the band Nirvana and its guitarist and singer, Kurt Cobain. The band broke through to mainstream music audiences in the early 1990s. Nirvana's 1991 album *Nevermind* sold over ten million copies and the band was catapulted to national recognition. When Cobain died in 1994, Aberdeen's newspaper *The Daily World* eulogized Kurt Cobain as "the most famous person in the history of Aberdeen." Today, visitors can stroll the Kurt Cobain Walking Tour of various dwellings associated with the late singer.

Other famous residents of Aberdeen include Alexander Calder, the American sculptor best known for his asymmetrical mobiles. Born in 1898, Calder held a variety of draftsman/engineering, including as a mechanic on the passenger ship *H.F. Alexander*. The ship traveled to Pacific Ocean ports, and Calder left the ship at San Francisco to visit his sister and her husband where they lived in Aberdeen. Calder took a job as a timekeeper with a logging camp and found the scenery artistically inspiring. It was during this time spent among the mountains, rivers, and forests surrounding Aberdeen that Calder determined to revive his pursuit of a career in art. His kinetic sculptures are known worldwide, and his name is associated with the Avant Garde movement of the 1930s.

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Many more “Harborites” have hailed from or passed through Aberdeen on the path to personal, artistic, or business success. While Seattle is known as the home of Boeing Company, manufacturer of passenger planes, war jets, missiles, and satellites, William Boeing’s history in lumber industry is less known. As an engineering student, Boeing dropped out of Yale in 1903. Boeing’s family had made fortunes in logging and mining, and he followed family holdings to Aberdeen. He spent five years learning the trade and became president of the Greenwood Logging Company, head-quartered in the Aberdeen-Hoquiam area. Even after his airplane company took off, Boeing was still listed as manager of the logging company through the 1920s.

Aberdeen offers a history that is simultaneously common and unique. Its heritage speaks to working-class roots and American individualism, and its natural landscape, once a source of livelihood, today beckons nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts. The potential of the proposed Grays Harbor Historical Seaport and other tourism and historic preservation initiatives, point to new economic development strategies and opportunities in the years to come.

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## Aberdeen's Architectural Legacy

### Overview

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Aberdeen began its existence as a lumber and milling center through the promotion of its founder, Samuel Benn. The city's earliest buildings were of frame construction and included one- and two-story industrial buildings lining the Wishkah and Chehalis Rivers, false front commercial buildings along the main streets, and one- and two-story dwellings and boarding houses providing housing for families and single working men. During the boom years from 1890 to 1910, business activity centered on the shipping docks and the adjacent two-block area on lower Heron Street. By 1900, Aberdeen had eight salmon canneries, six clam packing plants, and numerous saw, shingle, and lathe mills. To accommodate the single men who worked in these plants and in nearby logging camps, as well as port-to-port traveling sailors, the business district included buildings for service businesses, lodging, and entertainment.

A devastating fire in October of 1903 destroyed much of Aberdeen's earliest buildings. In response to this significant loss, the City adopted strict building codes banning frame buildings in the downtown core. A new construction technique that used friction-supported concrete-capped pilings allowed Aberdeen to re-build a more stable downtown. Over the next several years the downtown area was transformed through the construction of multi-story brick and poured concrete buildings. Residential areas arose to the west, north and east of the commercial area and an additional residential section evolved across the Chehalis River in South Aberdeen providing worker housing for the mills on that side of the river. The working class housing consisted of modest frame dwellings in West Aberdeen and South Aberdeen while the larger and spacious homes of the mill owners and middle-class were built on the hillsides north of the commercial district. Hundreds of dwellings were built in the early 1900s in these areas reflecting the Craftsman and Revival styles of the period. All of this architecture collectively reflects the economy, history, and culture of Aberdeen as an important west coast port city that flourished during several decades before and after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



*Residences in the Broadway Hill neighborhood ca. 1905.*



*Broadway Hill continues to reflect its early 20<sup>th</sup> century architectural heritage. This streetscape is within the 1100 block of N. K Street.*

Aberdeen's boom years continued through the 1920s when hundreds of additional buildings were constructed throughout the community and residential areas expanded further to the west. With the Great Depression in the 1930s, Aberdeen suffered as mills closed and the population declined by several thousand residents. World War II provided a new economic boost for the city as it produced timber and products for the war effort. The 1950s were another time of additional growth and development as the timber industry revived to provide lumber for America's housing boom. New residential areas were platted in the hills above the city and many commercial buildings were constructed or remodeled in the downtown area in these years. The late 20<sup>th</sup> century was an era of difficult years for the economy as Aberdeen experienced the closing of mills and other industries in the harbor. In these decades many of the city's mill buildings closed and were razed along with other industries. The downtown area suffered neglect and vacancies and many early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings were removed for parking lots and new development.

Today, Aberdeen's historic architecture makes up almost two-thirds of its building stock. The 2005 U.S. Housing Census recorded that 4,473 of the city's 6,995 dwelling units (64%) were built prior to 1960. Similarly the majority of the city's commercial buildings were built prior to 1960. While the historic character of the downtown area has suffered in past decades, a core area remains which reflects the city's early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial development. The city's maritime industries have largely disappeared except for a notable collection of buildings along F, Huron and State Streets near the Wishkah River. The most significant architectural loss is the razing of the city's industrial heritage – almost all of the original buildings associated with Aberdeen's lumber, milling, canning and shipping industries are no longer extant. In many cases only the hundreds of wooden piles in the Chehalis and Wishkah Rivers are indicative of this significant heritage of the city.



*Aberdeen's waterfront along the Chehalis (above) and Wishkah Rivers have hundreds of abandoned wood pilings reflective of the city's industrial heritage.*

In contrast to the loss of important buildings in the city's commercial and industrial areas, Aberdeen's older neighborhoods retain much of their identity. New construction has been limited in most older neighborhoods with the historic housing stock remaining visible along the streets. In recent decades East Aberdeen has lost a number of houses to commercial development along E. Wishkah Street but there are still numerous houses remaining from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The neighborhoods of West, South and North Aberdeen still retain much of their historic origins as middle-class and worker housing. While these neighborhoods contain hundreds of pre-1960 homes, alterations have been extensive such as added synthetic sidings, porch alterations and replaced windows.

The most intact neighborhoods retaining their architectural character and integrity are the blocks within Broadway Hill, Scammell Hill and Arnold Hill north of downtown. These three neighborhoods were sited on hillside slopes above the city where they could be some distance from the noisy and smoky industries along the harbor. By the 1920s these neighborhoods contained hundreds of dwellings built in the Bungalow, Craftsman, Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival styles. Many of these were architect-designed homes for the city's prosperous mill owners and merchants. Broadway Hill contains the largest concentration of architecturally significant dwellings in the city. Scammell Hill and Arnold Hill have more modest homes but many retain a high degree of integrity. These three neighborhoods appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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The historic and architectural resources of Aberdeen were first inventoried in a systematic fashion in 1988 through the publication "Historic Resources Survey and Inventory of the Cities of Aberdeen and Hoquiam, Washington" by David Harvey and Katheryn Krafft. This survey inventoried approximately 844 properties in these two cities and a survey report was also produced for this project. This survey identified a number of individual properties and potential districts in Aberdeen as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. A more recent inventory in the West Aberdeen area was completed in 2010 by ICF Jones and Stokes as part of a proposed transportation project. The surveyors reviewed a large section of this neighborhood but determined that the area did not retain its architectural character due to changes and alterations to many of the dwellings. Both of these surveys identified a number of properties as potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Future survey efforts should review these reports and provide an updated analysis of those properties in the city that have particular architectural or historical significance.

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## PROPERTY TYPES - INDUSTRIAL ARCHITECTURE

Most of Aberdeen's industrial buildings from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries have been demolished or replaced. Large lumber milling, canning and shipping operations once lined the city's riverfronts but almost all of the large industrial plants from this period were closed and razed by 2000. Other mills such as Weyerhaeuser have replaced many of their original buildings with new ones in the past fifty years. Various lumber and milling sites are now home to developments such as the Gateway Mall and the proposed Seaport Landing will be at the site of a mill and shipping yard in South Aberdeen.

Despite these losses, Aberdeen's downtown still retains an area which retains remnants of its industrial heritage. This district spans the blocks encompassed by State Street along the Chehalis River on the south, K Street on the west, First Street on the north, and F Street along the Wishkah River on the east. Several early-20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings associated with the local logging industry are still extant along the river front. These include the A. F. Coats-Fordney Logging Company Building at 400 South F Street, N. Nelson and Son Machine Shop at 408-410 South F Street, and Grays Harbor Logging Company Building at 412-414 South F Street. All three buildings were constructed in 1910. The first is a concrete building typical of industrial offices of the period. The machine shop is representative of vernacular false-front commercial buildings. It has an exterior of corrugated metal, and its façade has a stepped parapet roofline. The Nelson family business occupied the building until 1976. The third building is typical of utilitarian industrial architecture of the early-20<sup>th</sup>-century riverfront. This false-front, frame building retains its original wood exterior beneath added corrugated metal siding. The building's original windows and doors are also intact.



*A few industrial and warehouse buildings remain along the waterfront adjacent to the Chehalis River Bridge.*



*Although remodeled, these buildings were constructed for the city's maritime and logging industries along the Wishkah River in the early 1900s.*

Several equipment buildings dating from between 1904 and 1909 are located along South F Street. These buildings housed businesses that supported Aberdeen's maritime and logging industries. One riverfront building features influences of the Mission style. Built in 1904, the building at 504 South F Street has a red tile roof and stucco exterior. The original occupant was the C. E. Burrows Logging Company. The oldest remaining warehouse in this industrial district is at 415 South G Street. Historically this parcel was within the Sea Beach Packing Works between South F and G Streets along the riverfront. Over time, this two-story brick warehouse building, known as the Goldberg Warehouse, was home to several different businesses. During World War II, Boeing manufactured tail sections for fighter planes here, employing local female workers.

The remaining concentration of historic warehouse and industrial buildings along S. F Street and the waterfront are an important part of the city's heritage and have the potential for commercial and tourist development. Buildings in these blocks should be preserved and adapted for new uses. This area also has several parcels of open space which can be used for new construction or parks with interpretive signage.



*Spanish Mission-style building at 504 South F Street built in 1904.*



*Near the waterfront are buildings with traditional industrial uses such as this blacksmith shop.*

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## PROPERTY TYPES - COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

Aberdeen's downtown has lost many of its early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings but retains an important core grouping of commercial architecture in the 100 and 200 blocks of E. Heron and Wishkah Streets. One of the most notable is the seven-story Becker Building. Located at 200 E. Wishkah Street, the building was constructed in 1926 by businessman and speculator Frank J. Becker. The parcel on which it is located was originally tidal flats and Becker had 672 friction-capped pilings installed to support the building. The building's exterior features Beaux Arts-style influences with large, ground-floor rounded arches, classical motifs and terra cotta decorative work. In the years following its construction, the building created healthy competition with the Finch Building (no longer extant) for occupancy by business professionals.



*The Becker Building constructed in 1926.*

The Hotel Morck stands at 217 South K Street and the design of this five-story building combines the Spanish Colonial Revival and Mediterranean styles. Construction began in 1923 by its namesake, Ernest A. Morck, a former Danish Navy commander. Morck and his wife came to Aberdeen from Seattle in search of a small-town port city. The hotel cost \$440,000 to build and \$60,000 to furnish. Various shops and businesses occupied the ground floor space. The hotel, with its

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fine dining rooms and ballrooms, was a thriving business into the 1970s. The building was converted into low-income apartments in the 1990s. Today it is vacant and awaits a new use. Its intricate architectural details, including maritime motifs, eight-over-eight wood sash windows, and exterior are still intact.



*Hotel Morck, then and now (May 2013).*

Many general purpose commercial buildings remain in downtown Aberdeen. Though ground-floor facades have experienced alterations, most upper facades display a good deal of original architectural fabric. An example is the Masonic Temple at 200 E. Heron Street. The Masons purchased this lot from Samuel Benn and built the Romanesque Revival-style building in 1905. They held meetings on the second floor and rented out the retail space on the street level. The building retains its rusticated stone exterior, jack arch lintels over windows on the upper facade and parapet roofline. Late 20<sup>th</sup>-century storefront alterations have been reversed in recent years.



*The Masonic Building constructed of stone in 1905.*

In the 200 block of E. Wishkah Street is a nearly continuous row of commercial buildings built from the early 1900s to the 1950s. Many of these buildings have altered storefronts but retain upper floor detailing. Many of these buildings were constructed of poured concrete resting on concrete piling foundations. They have various exterior materials such as brick, terra cotta and cast concrete.



*The three-story Hotel Turner built in 1911 (left) and the three-story Hotel Gray built in 1926 (right) are prominent buildings in the 200 block of E. Wishkah Street.*

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One of the most important buildings in the downtown area is the Electric Building at 100 E. Heron Street. This building was constructed in 1913 by the Grays Harbor Railway and Light Company. The building was designed to be an advertisement for the light company and over 100 electric lights were installed on the exterior to outline the windows, cornice and sign. The exterior retains its terra cotta decoration while storefronts on the street level have been altered with glass and metal display windows and doors. The building illustrates the prosperity of Aberdeen in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when the city was in the middle of a boom in growth and development.



*The Electric Building constructed in 1913 at 100 E. Heron Street.*



The D & R Theater at 207 S. I Street is notable for its Art Deco design. Ed Dolan and William Ripley built the late vaudeville-era theater in 1924. During the 1930s, the theater was remodeled into its Art Deco design. The theater was in use until the 1980s, when it was closed, and the building fell into disrepair. Vacant for many years, the building retained its distinctive vertical pilasters on the upper façade, its 1930s neon marquee, and a streamline stainless steel and glass ticket booth. In 2009, the building was renovated and reopened as a live music performance venue.



*The D & R Theater ca. 1940 and in 2013.*

Another theater building survives as a church building. The original Roxy Theater at 111 W. Wishkah Street was built in 1930 by Dominic Constantini at a cost of \$200,000. The original marquee has been removed, and the façade of the first floor has been largely closed in. However, the upper façade retains features that convey its original Spanish Mediterranean/ Moorish architectural style. Over the central entrance, the upper façade retains a series of three arches with corkscrew columns. The majority of the upper façade's exterior is brick in a poly-chromatic diamond pattern. Flanking the three central arches are geometric window screens. The building ceased being used as a theater in 1986.



*The Roxy Theater in 1930 and in 2013.*

New construction in the downtown area was limited during the 1930s and 1940s but resumed again in the decades after World War II. Several new buildings were built while others were remodeled with new materials such as glazed tile or porcelain panels. An example of this is the three-story Elks Building at 101 E. Wishkah Street which was built in 1926 and remodeled in the mid-1950s with a new exterior. During the late 20<sup>th</sup> century several blocks of historic commercial architecture were razed for the construction of new buildings and parking lots. However, the 100 and 200 blocks of E. Heron and Wishkah Streets form a core grouping of significant commercial buildings worthy of preservation.



*The Elks Building at 101 E. Wishkah Street was built in 1926 and remodeled in the 1950s with a new façade.*

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## PROPERTY TYPE - PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Aberdeen has several notable public buildings constructed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century including the city armory, post office and several schools. The Armory dates from 1922 and is located at Third and I Streets. The two-story concrete building was designed with Spanish and Colonial Revival influences by architects C. A. Haynes of Aberdeen and Lewis Svarz of Seattle. Its main entrance is in a slightly projecting tower with an arched vestibule. Above it on the upper floor is a shallow balcony with a repeated arched opening. This bay is flanked by square pilasters. Below the cornice are dentils across the entire façade. The armory's original occupant was the 489<sup>th</sup> Company Coast Artillery Corps. The vast interior space also hosted dances, basketball games, and other public events. The City of Aberdeen purchased the building in 1981 and it is now used as the Aberdeen Museum of History and a Senior Citizen Center.



*The Aberdeen Armory built in 1922.*

The most architecturally significant school in Aberdeen is the Charles McDermoth School built in 1930 and located at 409 N. K Street. The two-story brick building's facade has a gable-roofed, projecting entrance bay with Beaux Arts-style, terra cotta features. At the corners of this bay are concrete quoins. The entrance has a terra cotta surround with paired pilasters and scrollwork. Other features include a dentilled cornice, and engaged columns and pilasters in the entrance bay. The building continues to be used as an elementary school and is located in the proposed Broadway Hill Historic District boundary.



*The Charles McDermoth School was built in 1930.*

Another important public building is the Aberdeen Post Office at 216 N. G Street. Built in 1916, the two-story, Colonial Revival-style, brick building has a slightly projecting entrance bay with three rounded arch openings. The central arch has the main entrance to the building with ca. 1970 glass and metal doors. Above the doors is an original fluted frieze and original fanlight. The building has an original concrete cornice at the roofline and it retains many of its original windows. A new post office was built for the city in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and the building is now used for private offices.



*Aberdeen Post Office, laying the corner stone in 1915, and its appearance in 2013.*

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## PROPERTY TYPES - RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Aberdeen's residential areas date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and some two-thirds of the city's housing stock was built prior to 1960. The neighborhoods of West and South Aberdeen are composed largely of modest worker housing while the Broadway Hill and adjacent areas were the homes of Aberdeen's business and middle-class. The dwellings in these neighborhoods are representative of popular architectural styles during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, including Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival/Dutch Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Craftsman, Spanish Mission, Prairie, International and Minimal Traditional.

### Architectural Styles – Folk Victorian

Folk Victorian is a term describing various vernacular designed dwellings at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Typically these houses were not designed by an architect but reflected local builder designs or from builder catalogs. These dwellings were often built in plans commonly described as gable front, gabled ell or pyramid square. These simple dwellings are modest in scale but generally were built with decorative porches of milled or classical columns, eave vergeboard and window hood molding.



*Two-story Gabled Ell at 406 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street (above) and Pyramid Square at 109 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street, both built in 1900.*



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## Architectural Styles – Queen Anne

The Queen Anne style was popular for domestic architecture beginning in the mid-to-late 19<sup>th</sup> century. During this period, mass production of wooden features allowed for elaborate decorative details, as seen on Queen Anne-style dwellings. Local forests supplied ample timber for production of wooden materials for home design. A notable Queen Anne dwelling in this neighborhood is located at 619 North 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Built in 1895, the corner tower on this dwelling is a signature feature of the style. Queen Anne dwellings may feature multiple wood siding materials, in this case weatherboard and shingles. The wrap-around porch is also a common trait of this style. Another excellent Queen Anne dwelling is the Hulburt House built in 1895 at 807 North M Street. This dwelling also has a corner tower and wrap-around porch. It features elaborate wood detailing such as decorative brackets under eaves, dentils under the porch eave, Tuscan columns and railing, and a roof dormer with a distinctive scrolled pediment.



*Queen Anne style dwellings at 619 North 1<sup>st</sup> Street and 807 North M Street.*

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## Architectural Styles – Colonial Revival/Dutch Colonial

Colonial Revival-style design became popular around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Inspired by the Chicago Exposition of 1893, the Colonial Revival style became a popular house still by the early 1900s. This style was simple and orderly, eliminating flamboyant details of Victorian house designs. Also the floor plans and facades were often symmetrical, a clear movement away from the asymmetry found in Victorian period dwellings. Many of the homes in the Broadway Hill area were built in the Colonial Revival style such as the two-story frame dwelling at 1115 North K Street built in 1920. The house has a symmetrical façade and its central entrance has a one-story porch with Tuscan columns and an entrance flanked by sidelights. Its flat-roof porch has a simple, wrought-iron balcony railing.



*Colonial Revival style dwelling at 1115 N. K Street built in 1920.*

The Dutch Colonial Revival-style is similar to that of Colonial Revival but differs in its gambrel roof plan. The gambrel roof was a popular roof form in the Dutch architecture of the Hudson River Valley and this design was used for many homes in the neighborhoods of Broadway, Scammell and Arnold Hills. The dwelling at 118 East 2nd Street built in 1929 is an example of this style and has decoration consisting of a one-story porch with Tuscan columns and an entrance with an arched transom and sidelights.

*This Dutch Colonial Revival dwelling at 118 East 2nd Street has a gambrel roof and elaborate one-story entry porch with Tuscan columns.*



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## Architectural Styles - Craftsman

The Craftsman style was one of the most common architectural styles in America during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The style is characterized by low pitch gable or hipped roofs, often with dormers on the main façade. Dwellings typically have large broad porches that usually extend across the front façade and are often supported by tapered columns resting on stone, brick or frame piers. This Craftsman style has an emphasis on horizontality with wide roof eaves. In many examples, rafter tails and knee braces are visible below the eaves. The terms "Craftsman" and "Bungalow" are often used interchangeably but Craftsman houses are typically two-stories in height while Bungalows are one- to one-and-one-half stories. This style originated in California and quickly spread throughout the country in the early 1900s.

The Broadway Hill neighborhood possesses a large number of notable Craftsman style dwellings. Among these are the Charles Wilson House at 320 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street and the Almerion Stockwell House at 102 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Both of these houses are illustrative of the dwellings built by the city's industrial leaders. Almerion Stockwell owned large tracts of timberland and had investments in various lumber mills in the city. His house was built in 1904 and features a large two-story bay window and entry porch with brick piers. Charles Wilson owned the Wilson Brothers Saw Mill which was a large operation on the Wishkah River. He had this house built in 1915 using a combination of brick and wood. It has a prominent projecting gabled bay on the main façade.



*The Almerion Stockwell House was built at 102 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street in 1904.*



*The Craftsman House at 320 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street built in 1915 for the Charles Wilson family.*

More modest Bungalows can be found throughout the city but are especially concentrated in the Broadway, Scammell and Arnold Hill neighborhoods. The Bungalow at 2011 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street built in 1921 is a typical example and has a side-gable roof, gable dormer at the roofline, and a recessed porch. Another excellent example is the dwelling at 112 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Built in 1902, this frame dwelling retains its original weatherboard siding, Craftsman-light windows, and decorative porch post brackets.



*Bungalow style dwelling at 2011 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street.*

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## Architectural Styles – Tudor Revival

The Tudor Revival design is loosely based on Medieval English architecture and became a popular architectural style across the country from the 1910s to the 1950s. Typically Tudor Revival-style dwellings have steep-pitched roofs with multiple gables. Often, the entrance bay projects from the façade, and has its own gable roof, as at 1309 Arnold Street. This dwelling was built in 1926 and features a crenellated parapet wall at the roofline. Another variation places the entrance in a tower and an example of this design is at 200 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Built in 1926, this dwelling has a stucco exterior. Sometimes half-timbering is incorporated into the stucco surfaces of this style of dwelling. Tudor Revival dwellings may alternately be constructed with brick, stone, or wood siding.



*Tudor Revival dwellings at 200 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street (above) and 1309 Arnold Street (below).*

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## Architectural Styles – Prairie

The Prairie style had its origins in Chicago in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and was popularized by architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The style was primarily built in the Midwest but examples can be found across the country. In Aberdeen is the Hood House built in 1903 at 903 North L Street. It was later the home of Leonard G. Isaacson, president of L.G. Isaacson Logging Equipment Company. The Prairie-style dwelling was designed by Aberdeen architects Reid and Burrows. The firm also designed another Prairie influenced house at 804 North K Street in 1916. Both dwellings retain original carriage houses.



*The Prairie style dwelling at 903 North L Street was built in 1903.*

## Architectural Styles – Spanish Colonial/Mission

The Spanish Colonial and Mission styles were built throughout the country after the 1910s, especially in the West and South. These styles are based on Spanish architecture of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and typically features stucco exteriors and terra cotta roof tiles. This style is less common in the Northwest but several examples can be found in Aberdeen. The most notable of these is dwelling at 1003 North 1<sup>st</sup> Street built in 1913. The dwelling has a prominent arched arcade on the main façade and a curvilinear parapet wall at the roofline.



*Spanish Mission style dwelling at 1003 North 1<sup>st</sup> Street.*

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## Architectural Styles – International

Another rare house style in Aberdeen is the International style. The International style originated in Europe and had an emphasis on flat roofs, angularity and minimal decoration. A notable example of this style is the dwelling at 1280 Arnold Street built in 1939. This dwelling features the style's emphasis on geometric shapes. The design appears as if composed of asymmetrically-stacked boxes with various projecting surface walls. The entrance has a flat, streamlined roof. At several corners, the windows wrap around to the next wall surface.



*The dwelling at 1280 Arnold Street is an example of the International style.*

## Architectural Styles – Minimal Traditional

A common house design between 1925 and 1950 was the Minimal Traditional style. These dwellings were modest interpretations of Tudor and Colonial Revival styles. Generally, they are one-story or one-and-one-half stories in height and may feature gable front bays, as commonly found on Tudor Revival-style dwellings. Exteriors are generally restrained with minimal detailing. Numerous examples can be found in the West and South Aberdeen neighborhoods. The gable front plan dwelling at 2215 Pacific Avenue was built in 1927 and reflects the Tudor Revival style in its form and roof pitch.

*Minimal Traditional dwelling at 2215 Pacific Avenue.*

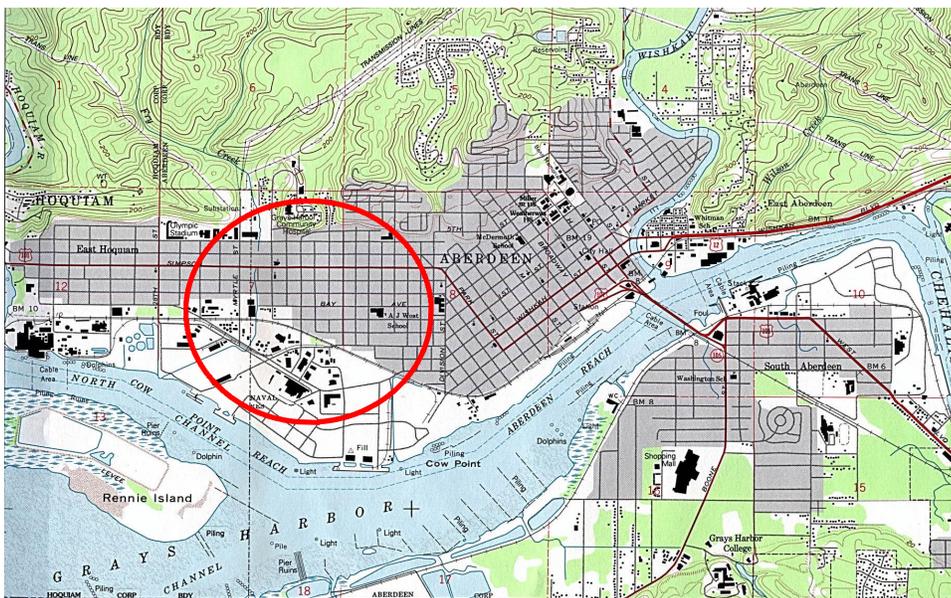


## Neighborhoods—West Aberdeen

The West Aberdeen neighborhood encompasses the area from Market Street on the south, Park Street on the east, Cherry Street on the north and Myrtle Street on the west. This large area was home to several different ethnic groups, especially those from Eastern Europe. The most prominent ethnic group in this neighborhood were the Poles and St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church at 815 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street has been a center of Polish life since 1906. The West Aberdeen neighborhood developed in the early 1900s and most dwellings in this area are modest, one-story frame houses built in Folk Victorian, Bungalow or Revival styles. Some commercial buildings remain in the area, primarily what were originally small corner grocery stores.



*This gable front dwelling is located at 411 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and was built in 1906.*





*The dwelling at 2220 Pacific Avenue in West Aberdeen was built in 1946 and is an example of the Minimal Traditional style.*



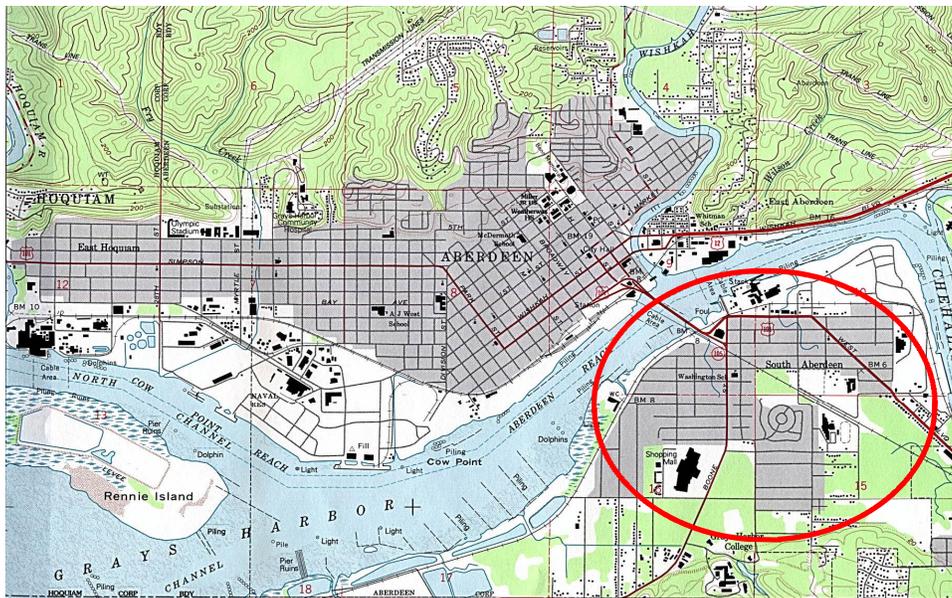
*This Tudor Revival influenced dwelling at 2221 Pacific Avenue built in 1925 on a raised foundation.*

## Neighborhoods—South Aberdeen

The South Aberdeen neighborhood is located on the south side of Chehalis River and includes all of the streets within the city limits. The Chehalis River was lined with shipyard and lumber mills in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and many of the workers lived in boarding houses or modest frame homes on the streets south of the river and mills. A significant remaining example of this type of early boarding house is the two-story dwelling at 103 Marion Street which has been well preserved. South Aberdeen became the home to many Finns and Croatians who worked in the area's mills and shipyards.

South Aberdeen never developed a business district comparable to the main business district on the north side of the river. Commercial buildings providing groceries, hardware companies and other neighborhood services concentrated along Curtis and Boone Streets. Additional residential development occurred following the construction of the first steel automobile bridge over the Chehalis River ca. 1920 which opened up additional plats for development. Most of the homes built in South Aberdeen were modest, one-story frame dwellings built in Folk Victorian plans such as gable front and Bungalows. Much of South Aberdeen is on low ground and the threat of flooding from the Chehalis River resulted in many of the homes built on raised foundations of brick, concrete block and poured concrete.

Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of the frame dwellings in South Aberdeen have been altered through the addition of synthetic siding materials, replacement windows and porch modifications. These alterations have reduced the architectural character of the neighborhood and it does not appear to possess a cohesive area meeting National Register criteria. Several new developments in recent decades such as the South Shore mall and Leisure Manor have also been added into the neighborhood.





*The dwelling at 1012 Marion Street is a well preserved home built in 1910.*



*The 900 Block of Cushing Street shows the types of typical changes and alterations to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century housing stock in South Aberdeen.*



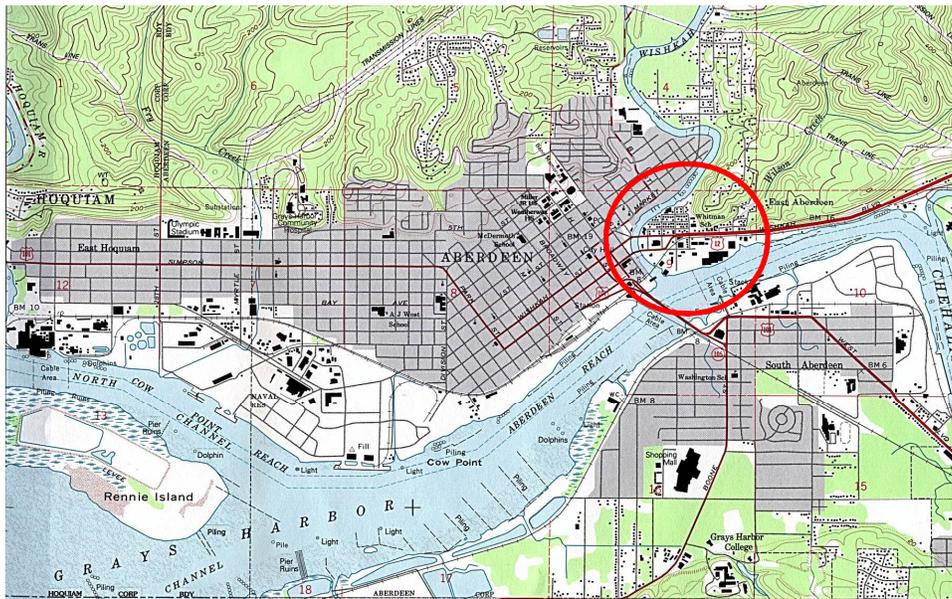
*The dwelling at 222 Cushing Street in South Aberdeen reflects the Bungalow style and was built in 1913 on a raised concrete basement.*



*A similar example of the raised basement plan is the dwelling at 918 Cushing Street built in 1921.*

## Neighborhoods—East Aberdeen

East Aberdeen is a small residential and commercial area located on the east side of the Wishkah River. This was one of the first residential areas developed in the Grays Harbor region and it was originally known as the “Town of Wishkah” platted in 1884. The community of Wishkah then joined by Samuel Benn’s 600-acre plat to become Aberdeen. The Wishkah and Chehalis Rivers soon became the home to numerous mills, lumber yards and canneries. Residential areas arose next to these industries but expansion was hemmed in by bluffs to the north and the rivers on the west and south. East Aberdeen became home to several ethnic groups among them Finns and Swedes. With the closing of the mills and other industries this area was targeted for redevelopment in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The construction of the Wishkah Mall and numerous other commercial businesses have replaced many of the older industries and commercial buildings in this section of Aberdeen. Some older homes remain in the area north of E. Wishkah Street especially along Summit and Harbor Streets. Most of these were designed in Folk Victorian plans or Bungalow designs. Due to the amount of new construction and changes and alterations to older structures, this area no longer possesses integrity of its architectural character.





*811 E. Summit Street in East Aberdeen built in 1903.*



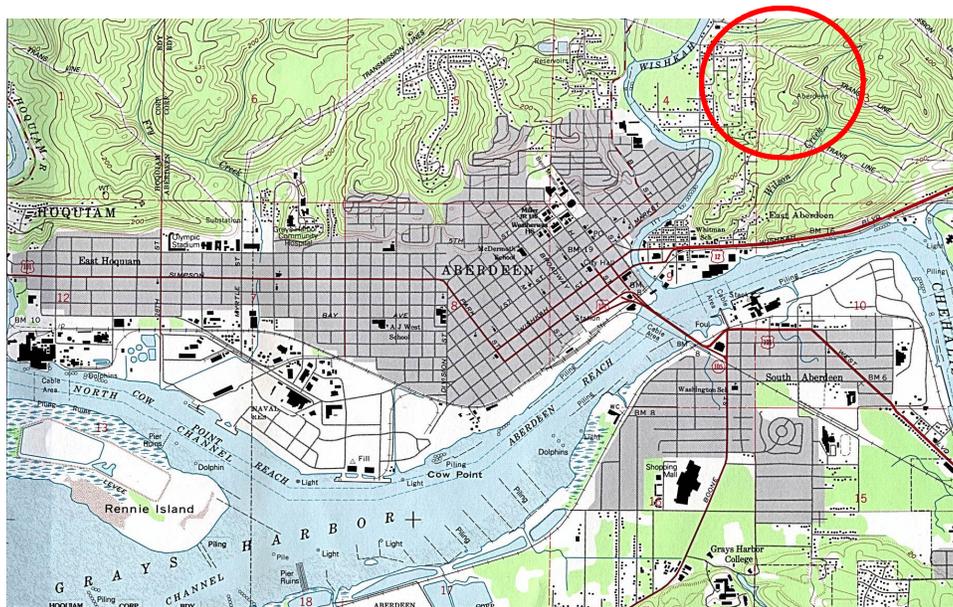
*This Folk Victorian dwelling at 113 Cottage Way was built in 1900 and retains much of its original design.*

## Neighborhoods—North Aberdeen

The North Aberdeen Neighborhood is located on the east side of the Wishkah River and is defined by high bluffs on the north, east and south. Many of the dwellings built in this area were built after 1950 but a few early 20<sup>th</sup> century homes remain extant. The most notable of these is the Italianate style influenced dwelling at 1001 Lafayette Street built in 1900. This well-preserved house features original porch columns and a hipped roof with eave brackets.



*The hipped roof dwelling at 1001 Lafayette Street in North Aberdeen was built in 1900.*

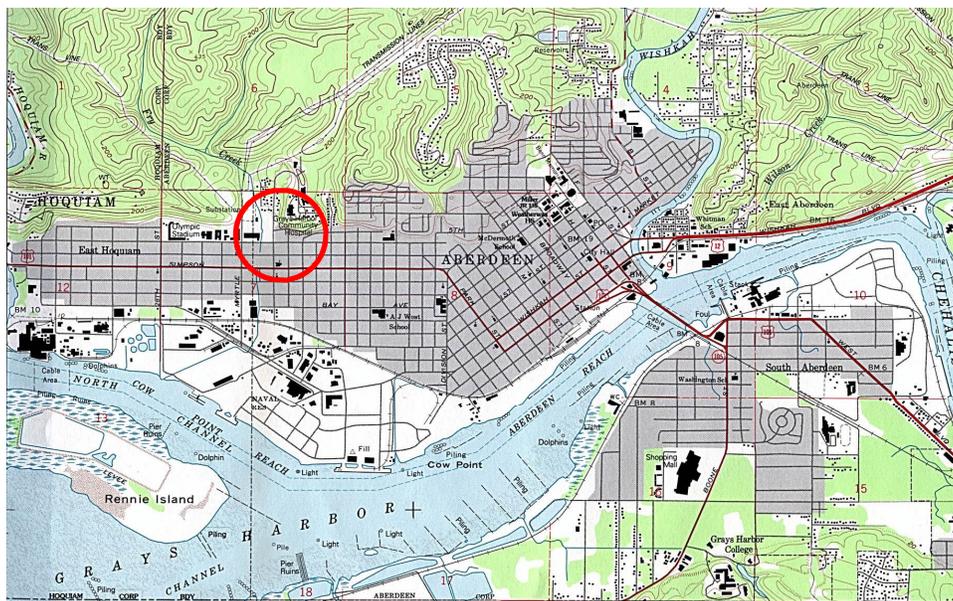


## Neighborhoods—Scammell Hill

Scammell Hill is a neighborhood on the ridgeline above the city and contains approximately 20 blocks. It is bounded by Division Street on the east, 8<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street on the south and a steep ravine on the west. Much of this area was platted in the early 1900s as the city's West End Addition. The neighborhood was largely developed in the 1910s and 1920s and features a cohesive grouping of dwellings designed in the Bungalow, Craftsman, Revival and Minimal Traditional styles of the period. The houses have been well maintained and new construction in the neighborhood has been minimal. Because of the neighborhood's historic and architectural character it appears to meet National Register of Historic Places criteria as a district.



*1700 block of W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street in the Scammell Hill Neighborhood.*





*Bungalow dwelling at 2000 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street built in 1925.*



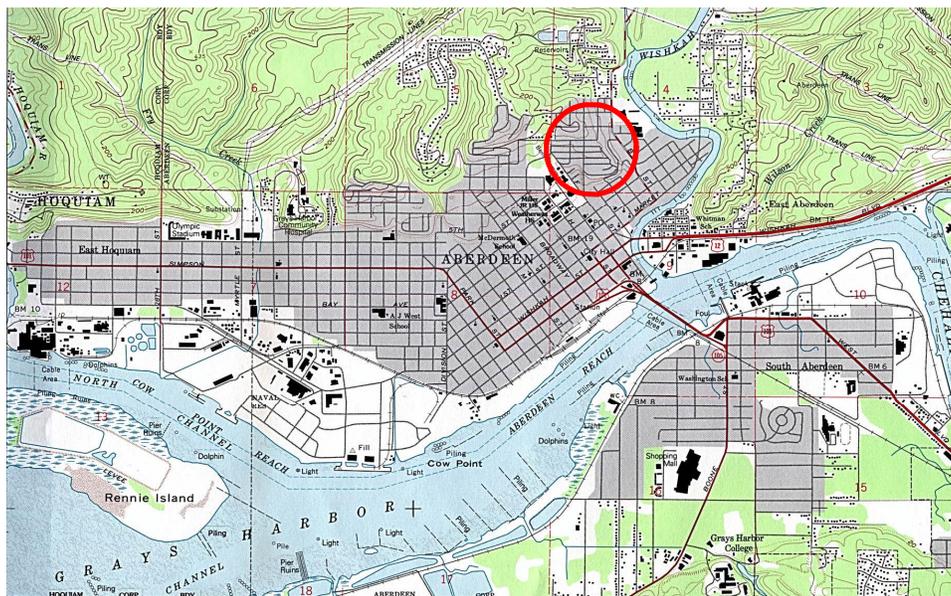
*Minimal Traditional dwelling at 2002 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street built in 1925.*

## Neighborhoods—Arnold Hill

Arnold Hill is another neighborhood on the ridgeline above the city and contains approximately 18 blocks. It is bounded by F Street on the west, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue on the north, Terrace Avenue on the east and Greenway Avenue on the south. This area was platted in the early 1900s with most of the neighborhood part of the Pacific Land Company's addition. Most of the dwellings in the neighborhood were built from the 1900s to the 1920s but numerous examples of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century houses also are evident. The most prominent house styles in the neighborhood are Bungalow, Tudor Revival and Minimal Traditional. The houses have been well maintained and the neighborhood retains much of its mid-20<sup>th</sup> century character. Another feature of the neighborhood is its curvilinear streets which follow the topography of the hill. The neighborhood's historic and architectural character makes it eligible to meet National Register of Historic Places criteria as a district.



*Gable front, Folk Victorian dwelling at 614 Essex Avenue built in 1904.*





*Bungalow style dwelling at 516 McKinley Avenue built in 1917.*



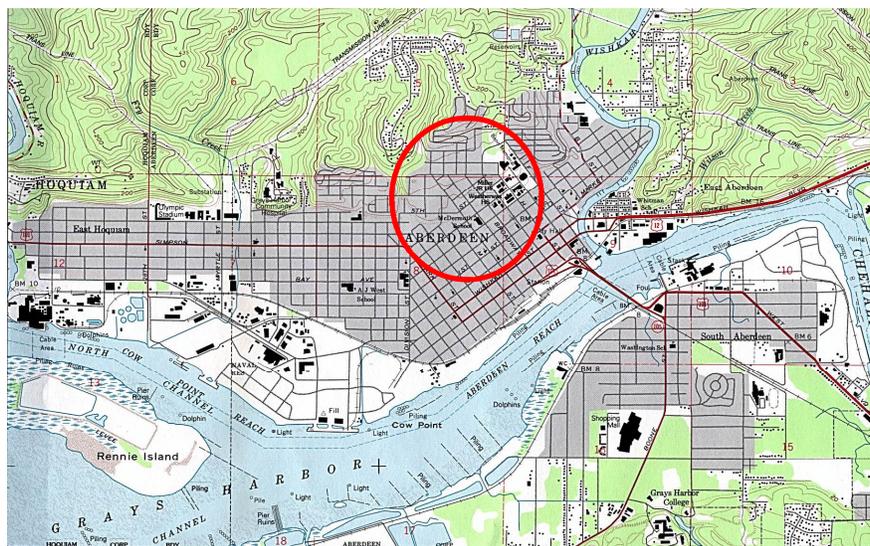
*Colonial Revival style dwelling at 510 Burleigh Avenue built in 1912.*

## Neighborhoods—Broadway Hill

The most significant concentration of historic residential architecture in the city is in what is known as Broadway Hill. This large area encompasses approximately 40 blocks north of the downtown area. The most cohesive grouping of intact historic buildings is within the area bounded by Alder Street on the west, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets on the south, N. H Street on the east and W. 11<sup>th</sup> Street on the north. Most of this area was platted in the 1890s as part of the Weatherwax and Benn's Addition to Aberdeen. This area has some of the city's oldest intact dwellings and it was the preferred residential area of the city's industrial, civic and business leaders in the early 1900s. Prominent house styles in the neighborhood include Queen Anne, Craftsman, Tudor Revival and Colonial Revival. The houses have been well maintained and the neighborhood retains much of its mid-20<sup>th</sup> century character. The neighborhood features many original stone and concrete retaining walls and other landscape features. The neighborhood's architectural character makes it eligible to meet National Register of Historic Places criteria as a historic district.



*100 Block of W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street in the Broadway Hill Neighborhood.*





*500 block of E. 5<sup>th</sup> St. in Broadway Hill.*



*200 block of W. 9<sup>th</sup> in Broadway Hill.*

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## III. PREVIOUS PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Aberdeen has conducted planning efforts in recent years that recommended specific actions affecting historic building rehabilitation and new construction. These include plans for the entire community, the downtown area and particular neighborhoods. In some of these plans, issues surrounding historic preservation efforts are examined in detail while in others historic preservation is a peripheral issue. The most relevant planning efforts are presented in this section along with summaries of their impact on historic preservation.

### **A. Previous Survey and Identification Projects**

The WISSARD Washington State Data Base indicates that there are 1160 surveyed properties in the database for Aberdeen. Several hundred were surveyed in 1987, including both residential and commercial properties. A total of 732 properties were added as part of the Assessor's data project in 2011.

The first comprehensive survey of Aberdeen and Hoquiam's historic resources was completed in 1988 by preservation consultants Katherine Kraft and David Harvey. The survey was conducted in two phases between 1987 and 1988, the consultant team documented 529 buildings constructed in Aberdeen prior to 1938. The final report, "Historic Resources and Inventory Cities of Aberdeen and Hoquiam Aberdeen, Washington," provides a comprehensive overview of Aberdeen's historical development. This document is a well-researched study of numerous themes and contexts associated with the city's history, including Euro-American Exploration and Settlement, Early Hoquiam, Railroad, Early Aberdeen, Industries, Labor-Ethnic Community, Physical Development, Architects, Builders and Contractors. The study has remained a valuable resource for studying Aberdeen's history.

Phase I of the survey included the central business district of Aberdeen, approximately 125 square acres and two substantial residential districts, North Broadway, with approximately 175 square acres and East Aberdeen, with approximately 150 square acres. Phase II of the survey was primarily residential and covered all of the areas not surveyed in Phase 1. Properties that were included in the survey were those that "clearly appeared to be at least fifty years old, exhibited physical integrity and had only minor alterations to windows, cladding or porches, etc."

Kraft and Harvey found 18 individual buildings outside of potential districts which appeared to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. These include the following: Electric Building, Becker Building, Wolff Building, Warner Brothers Aberdeen Theater, Randall Street Hall, Aberdeen Armory and eleven additional buildings. Of these buildings, none were individually listed on the National Register subsequent to the survey.

Kraft and Harvey found that there were four areas with a concentration of significant intact buildings that may comprise National Register Historic Districts: Lower East Heron and Upper North Broadway (Broadway Hill), "Finn Town" in South Aberdeen, and the Polish/Eastern European neighborhood in West Aberdeen. Of these areas, because of subsequent alterations that impacted the architectural integrity of residential buildings, only Broadway Hill appears to retain sufficient integrity to meet National Register District criteria.

**National Register of Historic Places  
And  
Aberdeen Register of Historic Places  
What's the Difference?**

**Properties meet the criteria for historic designation if they are:**

- More than 50 years old
- In good condition and relatively intact
- Historically and/or architecturally significant

**What does it mean to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places?**

A property can be listed on the National Register of Historic Places either individually or as a contributing structure in a district.

Controls: None

Design Review: None

Owner Consent: Yes. A listing on the National Register of Historic Places can be stopped by petition of the property owner.

Financial Incentives: Commercial properties listed on the National Register, if appropriately renovated, are eligible for the Federal Investment Tax Credit, a dollar-for-dollar federal income tax credit equal to 20% of the construction costs for rehabilitating an income-producing building.

**What does it mean to be listed on the Aberdeen Register of Historic Places?**

A property can be listed on the Aberdeen Historic Register either individually or as a contributing structure in a district.

Controls: Aberdeen Historic Register designation is accompanied by an agreement with the owner that if rehabilitation work is undertaken on the exterior it will be reviewed prior to the start of work.

Owner Consent: Yes. A listing on the Aberdeen Register of Historic Places is only by consent of, and in partnership with, the owner of the property.

Design Review: In the process called Design Review, Historic Preservation Office staff and/or the Historic Preservation Commission review the work to be done in reference to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation to insure that any alterations to the property do not adversely affect the building's historic character and appearance.

Financial Incentives: Properties listed on the Aberdeen Register are eligible for Special Valuation, a the reduction of the assessed value of an historic property that subtracts from the assessment, for ten years, rehabilitation costs as approved by the Aberdeen Historic Preservation Commission.

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The survey report concludes with a list of recommendations of future community concerns. Their recommendations include public education and awareness, additional research on the community's ethnic and labor heritage. The report also notes a lack of historic interpretive students to better evaluate the significance of the community's history, and recommends the development of driving and walking tours of historic residential and commercial neighborhoods.

A more recent inventory in the West Aberdeen area was completed in 2010 by ICF Jones and Stokes as part of a proposed transportation project. The surveyors reviewed a large section of this neighborhood but determined that the area did not retain its architectural character due to changes and alterations to many of the dwellings. Both of these surveys identified a number of properties as potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Future survey efforts should review these reports and provide an updated analysis of those properties in the city that have particular architectural or historical significance.

## **B. Previous Historic Register Nominations**

To recognize and designate historic properties, here are three registers of historic places: the National, State and Local. The National Register is the nation's official list of properties that are important in the history, architectural history, archaeology, engineering, and culture of the United States. The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service, and expanded through nominations by individuals, organizations, State and local governments, and Federal agencies. The state Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation maintains a state register of historic places, the Washington Heritage Register, which documents significant historic and prehistoric resources throughout Washington at the state level. The City of Aberdeen maintains a local register, the Aberdeen Historic Register, which documents historic resources at the local level. On any of the three registers, historic properties can be listed individually or in districts.

Four properties in Aberdeen have been individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places, including the Union Pacific Railroad Depot, listed in 1972; the Sierra Motor Ship, listed in 1978; the Finch Building, listed in 1983; and the Chehalis River Bridge, listed in 2002. The Finch Building and the Union Pacific RR Depot have been demolished. No districts have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

One property, the Liberty Tavern, was listed on the Washington Heritage Register in 2001. No districts have been listed on the Washington Heritage Register.

The City of Aberdeen established the Aberdeen Historic Register in 2011, and to date several have been individually listed on the Aberdeen Historic Register. No districts have been listed on the Aberdeen Historic Register.

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### C. Creation of the Aberdeen Historic Preservation Commission

The Aberdeen Historic Preservation program plays a vital role in the city's historic preservation efforts. The Aberdeen City Council established the program in 2010 to promote and regulate historic preservation efforts in Aberdeen. The Aberdeen Historic Preservation program is administered by the City of Aberdeen's Community Development Department under the direction of administrator Lisa Scott.

The mission is "to safeguard the heritage of the City of Aberdeen as represented by those buildings, districts, objects, sites and structures which reflect significant elements of City of Aberdeen History; foster civic and neighborhood pride in the beauty and accomplishments of the past and a sense of identity based on City of Aberdeen history; stabilize or improve the aesthetic and economic vitality and values of such site, improvements and objects; assist, encourage and provide incentives to private owners for preservation, restoration, redevelopment and use of outstanding historic buildings, districts, objects, sites and structures; promote and facilitate the early identification and resolution of conflicts between preservation of historic resources and alternative land uses; and conserve valuable material and energy resources by ongoing use and maintenance of the existing built environment."

In 2011 the City of Aberdeen became a Certified Local Government ("CLG") for Historic Preservation in Washington State, designated by the United States Department of the Interior. One of the benefits of being a CLG is eligibility for grant funds each year. Ten percent of a state's annual preservation appropriation by Congress must be available in the form of CLG grants. CLG's are required to attempt to appoint preservation-related professionals to their historic preservation commissions, to the extent available in the community. The Aberdeen Historic Preservation Ordinance 6496 was adopted in 2010, and created an Aberdeen Historic Preservation Commission consisting of five members.



An important role of the HPC

*The Historic Preservation Commission can consult with homeowners on rehabilitation "best practices" such as preserving and restoring original, old-growth wood windows (613 N. K. Street).*

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is to advise and assist owners of historic properties on aspects of preservation, renovation, rehabilitation, and reuse as well as on procedures for listing properties on the National Register of Historic Places. The Commission is responsible for maintaining an inventory of historic properties, establishing an Aberdeen Register of Historic Places, administering the Special Valuation property tax incentive, reviewing and submitting nominations to the state and national registers of historic places and reviewing and issuing Certificates of Appropriateness for changes to historic register property or properties in a district, including demolition. The primary powers, duties, and responsibilities of the HPC, in accordance with Aberdeen Ordinance 6496, are as follows:

- ⇒ Conduct and maintain a comprehensive inventory of historic resources within the boundaries of the city and periodically update inventory results.
- ⇒ Initiate and maintain the Aberdeen Register of Historic Places.
- ⇒ Review nominations to the Aberdeen Register of Historic Places.
- ⇒ Review proposals to construct, change, alter, modify, remodel, move, demolish, or significantly affect properties or districts on the register.
- ⇒ Provide for the review of all applications for development approvals, permits, environmental assessments or impact statements pertaining to listed historic resources or adjacent properties.
- ⇒ Review and submit nominations to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.
- ⇒ Serve as the Special Valuation local review board.
- ⇒ Participate in, promote, and conduct information and education programs.
- ⇒ Serve as the city's liaison with federal, state and local government historic preservation programs.
- ⇒ Review and comment to the Mayor and City Council on planning and programs as they relate to the historic resources of the city.
- ⇒ Advise the Mayor and City Council on history/historic preservation matters.
- ⇒ Provide information to the public on methods of rehabilitation.
- ⇒ Officially recognize excellence in the rehabilitation.
- ⇒ Distribute information to the public and city departments on incentives.
- ⇒ Investigate and report to the Mayor and Council on the use of funding sources to promote historic preservation.

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## D. Previous City Planning Efforts & Their Impact on Historic Preservation Aberdeen 2001 Comprehensive Plan

The purpose of Aberdeen's Comprehensive Plan is "a document that indicates how the City wants to grow and function within a designated future time frame. It contains broad statements of community goals and policies, as well as specific direction for achieving them."

Aberdeen's 2001 Comprehensive Plan was prepared under the framework of Growth Management. Aberdeen, like most Washington cities and counties, had prepared comprehensive plans for many years; however, growth management in Washington took on new meaning with the passage of the Growth Management Act (GMA) by the Washington Legislature in 1990. The GMA provides a framework for regional coordination, and counties planning under the GMA are required to adopt countywide planning policies to guide plan adoption within the county and to establish urban growth areas (UGAs).

Historic Preservation was one of the 13 goals of Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA), specifically to "identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical, cultural, and archaeological significance" [RCW 36.70A.020\(13\)](#). Cities and counties planning under the GMA must *consider* and *incorporate* the overall goal of historic preservation.

Local comprehensive plans must include the following elements: land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, transportation, and, for counties, a rural element; a specific chapter on historic preservation is not required.



*Aberdeen's Comprehensive Plan promotes the rehabilitation of the city's historic building stock (509 E. 2nd Street.).*

Aberdeen's Comprehensive Plan does not include the optional chapter or element on historic preservation; however, its policies and goals do support historic preservation. The following goals and policies refer to historic preservation values and principles of rehabilitating, redevelopment, renovation, repair, preservation, compatible new infill design and revitalization:

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## LAND USE POLICY

L-096 Facade improvements should be encouraged on the building fronts and sides facing those streets defined as existing or potential pedestrian pathways. Special emphasis should be placed on facilitating improvements to public infrastructure, such as sidewalks and lighting, and to the exteriors of privately owned structures located along the state routes.

## REDEVELOPMENT POLICIES

The redevelopment of sites with full infrastructure service is essential to the economic diversification strategy of the City.

E-070 Continuing economic development should be encouraged in existing commercial and industrial areas to maintain the economic and employment base, safeguard private investments, and make use of existing public improvements. This policy recognizes that the type and intensity of uses appropriate to a commercial or industrial area may change over time and beneficial and appropriate changes should be encouraged.

E-071 Redevelopment of distressed commercial and industrial areas should be encouraged through development incentives and public improvements.

E-072 Redevelopment efforts should be planned in cooperation with the businesses, property owners, and residents of the area and the community.

E-073 The City should actively seek available state and federal funding to encourage the revitalization of distressed areas by stimulating private sector investment, and should consider the use of private sector mitigation funds as the local match required for grants and loans.



*Downtown revitalization is a key component of the Comprehensive Plan. The Turner Hotel at 217 E. Wishkah Street has many opportunities for adaptive reuse through tax credits and abatements.*

## IV. Current Status of Historic Resources

This section describes the issues and challenges that are affecting historic preservation policy direction and cultural resources in Aberdeen, based on the community's perception of what is working and what is not. Three months were spent gathering information and feedback, including discussions at meetings of the Aberdeen Historic Preservation Commission, a community open house, and feedback from key leaders. Additionally, residents participated in a walking tour of downtown Aberdeen and a House History workshop, where they were encouraged to directly engage in historic preservation issues and provide feedback for the Plan.

As in many communities, the status of historic preservation in Aberdeen is mixed. On the positive side there is a tremendous pride of ownership in preserving the historic homes in neighborhoods and the commercial buildings in downtown Aberdeen. However, in the past, Aberdeen has not had the kind of support for historic preservation that its rich heritage deserves. Considering the number of historic resources in Aberdeen, the city is woefully underrepresented on the National Register of Historic Places, and the Aberdeen Register has just been established. Of the only four properties that were previously listed on the National Register, two have now been demolished. This is detrimental not only because of the resulting lack of recognition of historic resources but also because it denies property owners the economic incentives of federal and state tax credits for rehabilitation. Opportunities for tourism efforts are also diminished.

Now that a sense of momentum has begun to build, people are beginning to recognize the positive aspects of Aberdeen's heritage, as well as the potential for revitalizing the city through historic preservation. With this positive new energy, and building on what is already working, there is an opportunity to change the course of Aberdeen's future.



*Aberdeen's residential areas contain a wide variety of architectural styles built of old-growth lumber in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (118 W. 6th Street).*

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## A. What's Working Now and What Are the Challenges?

### *What's Working Now?*

*This summary of comments from the community reveals on what is currently working in historic preservation. More detailed comments are included at the end of this section.*

### ***There is good Social Capital and Community Commitment to Historic Preservation***

People in Aberdeen believe that good partnerships between organizations are starting to develop. Additionally, many people in leadership positions in Aberdeen are passionate about its history, and are working hard to insure that the community does not lose the knowledge of its heritage. Groups like the Historic Preservation Commission, the Aberdeen Planning Commission, the Downtown Parking and Business Improvement Association and Aberdeen Revitalization Movement are beginning to work together towards the common goal of revitalization. The current groundswell of political support will only bolster the efforts of the myriad of groups that have started to work together.

*A core area of buildings in the 100 and 200 blocks of E. Wishkah Street meets the criteria for listing in the National Register.*



### ***Downtown has Opportunities for Revitalization***

Despite the loss of some key buildings resulting in vacant lots, downtown Aberdeen still retains significant commercial properties. In just the last year, the D&R Theater has been rehabilitated and was the first Special Valuation project approved by the Landmarks Commission. Several more underutilized buildings, such as the Electric Building and the Morck Hotel, represent good commercial investment opportunities if historic tax incentives are utilized. In addition to individually notable buildings downtown, Aberdeen also possesses a cohesive collection of historic architecture in the several blocks that meet the criteria of the National Register as a historic district.

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## ***Older Houses Can Be Readily Adapted To Meet Today's Standards***

Aberdeen has a large inventory of well-built housing stock, and the quality construction of these homes allows them to readily adapt to the needs and requirements of 21<sup>st</sup> century families. Issues regarding the rehabilitation of older houses include:

- Updating of mechanical features such as electrical, plumbing and HVAC.
- Weatherization of the house to conserve energy.
- Retrofitting houses to accommodate smaller families.

Many of the houses in Aberdeen are now fifty years old or older and more will reach this milestone in the next two decades. During the past century common upgrades to these dwellings included the replacement of original knob and tube electrical wiring with modern wiring. Basements, crawl spaces, and attics all afford room for continued retrofitting of modern mechanical upgrades to insure that the houses last at least another one hundred years.



*Many of the city's dwellings are over or nearing one hundred years in age and can be readily updated to last another one hundred years (1119 Broadway).*



*The Hotel Grey at 209-211 E. Wishkah Street was built in 1926 and reflects Aberdeen's commercial prosperity during the 1920s.*

### ***Aberdeen has a Rich History with Multiple Layers***

Many people in Aberdeen are proud of their rich and layered history. Aberdeen has a significant heritage related to the timber and fishing industries, and was once considered the timber capital of the world. Aberdeen had a rough and tumble history as a seaport town, with a vibrant Red Light district and a flourishing downtown crowded with impressive multistory brick buildings. Wealth generated from timber and fishing industries created extensive neighborhoods of historic homes. Aberdeen also has a significant cultural history, and was home to many notable artists and musicians, including nationally known artists such as photographer Lee Friedlander, Abstract Expressionist painter Robert Motherwell, and prominent sculptor Alexander Calder. More recently, Aberdeen was the birthplace of Nirvana lead singer Kurt Cobain. There remains an appreciation for all of the history that Aberdeen has to offer, perhaps just a lack direction as to which of the many historic themes would best be used to shape promotional and outreach efforts.

### ***Certified Local Government Program has been Established***

People in Aberdeen are proud of achieving Certified Local Government status for the historic preservation program in 2010. Subsequently, dedicated volunteers worked with city staff to make swift progress, and after just two years quickly established the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), created the Aberdeen Register of Historic Places, established a process for design review, and processed the first Special Valuation application. HPC activities are now closely linked with other city processes. The Plan Commission chair also serves on the HPC, and provides important linkage between the two city boards. Permitting processes for historic buildings have been streamlined, thanks to the work of city staff members who work together to facilitate development.



*As a Certified Local Government, Aberdeen can receive additional funds for projects such as design guidelines to assist property owners with standards for rehabilitation (122 E. 2nd Street).*



*The ribbon cutting for the proposed Seaport Landing took place on July 3, 2013. The Seaport Landing is one of several heritage tourism initiatives underway in Aberdeen.*

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## What Are the Challenges?

*This summary of the comments from the community reveals on what is currently not working in historic preservation, including challenges and obstacles. More detailed comments are included at the end of this section.*

### **Tax Incentives Not Utilized due to Lack of Historic Register Listings Downtown**

People know that there are properties in Aberdeen that possess sufficient architectural and historical significance to meet historic register criteria and utilize historic tax incentives, yet they report that the community attitude seems to be one of “waiting and hoping” rather than active historic property development. While organizations that maintain a mission to revitalize Aberdeen continue to multiply, developers with the financial resources to take on big projects seem to be bypassing the city. The identification of properties eligible for listing on the Local or National Register is an essential component of economic development. The possibility of the federal 20% federal tax credit or the local Special Valuation property tax reduction often makes the difference in the economic viability of a project. The many civic organizations could work hand in hand with private property owners and the City to facilitate the mixed development that is needed to bring downtown back to life.



*Most upper floors of downtown buildings are vacant and underutilized. Listing in the National Register would provide tax credits for substantial rehabilitation projects (118 W. Heron Street).*

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## **Lack of Awareness of the Positive Benefits of Historic Preservation and the Importance of the Historic Preservation Commission**

In the past decade there has been an increase in the appreciation and understanding of the positive role historic preservation plays in Aberdeen. However, people think that historic preservation has yet to be as fully integrated into community development and overall civic goals as it has in similar communities in Washington. The perception of historic preservation as a positive factor in economic development rather than a hindrance is still evolving. There should be more outreach and promotion regarding heritage and there should be more research and recognition of local historic properties.

The importance of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in Aberdeen's development is also not fully understood by the community. The HPC is a volunteer board and members have limited time and resources to devote to the many duties the positions require. The Aberdeen Community Development Department provides a part-time staff member to work with the HPC and coordinate their work but this time is also limited. Because of these limitations, the public presence of the HPC in the community is hindered and much of its work goes underreported and underappreciated. There is a need to focus public outreach on the CLG program and how historic preservation processes can save property owners money.

## **Lack of Awareness of Aberdeen's History and Historic Assets**

People in Aberdeen see their city as a potential stopping point for the many hundreds of visitors who pass through each month on their way to the coast. However, as cars enter the "Gateway to the Olympic Peninsula," traffic moves too quickly, and few travelers stop in Aberdeen. People speculate that this could be because of Aberdeen's reputation as gritty small town. Not all of Aberdeen's past was rosy, and it was once even known as the "Hellhole of the Pacific" because of the number of brothels, saloons and gambling establishment downtown. Although these establishments are gone and Aberdeen now has a respectable downtown, to some people the unsavory reputation remains. Other people believe that visitors don't stop because of the lack of a marketing theme, or because there simply aren't enough of the small local shops and restaurants that typically attract tourists. There's an awareness and appreciation of the revitalization efforts undertaken by cities like Walla Walla and Wenatchee, and the way that they have capitalized on their local history, but not a detailed understanding of where to start such efforts in Aberdeen.

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## ***Buildings and Structures are being Demolished, and Damaged by Natural Disasters***

Severe weather has damaged and destroyed many historic buildings in Aberdeen. Rainfall is extremely high in the fall and winter, and dampness and water damage, as well as high winds, have been destructive to historic structures. Additionally, vibration from heavy traffic has been damaging to historic buildings. As buildings sit vacant and vulnerable to the elements, they start to deteriorate and diminish their status as good candidates for rehabilitation.



*Several buildings in the downtown area have been neglected and are now threatened with demolition. (400 block of E. Heron Street).*

## ***A Work Plan is needed for the Preservation Program***

Although Aberdeen has achieved Certified Local Government status and made considerable progress, people are somewhat overwhelmed with the volume of work that needs to be done, and don't have the time to prioritize items or put them on a long term timeline. The City of Aberdeen doesn't have the capacity to accomplish all of the historic preservation goals with existing staffing levels, so there needs to be an historic preservation work plan for the community that includes a timeline for implementation. Also, there isn't necessarily knowledge of the "why" behind historic preservation, which will come when the community starts to witness the positive benefits of rehabilitated buildings and revived areas of town.

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## **B. Public Engagement**

### *Stakeholder Outreach*

An important part of the planning process is outreach to stakeholders, asking for their input to shape the plan, and their understanding, buy-in and support for the final goals and objectives. In a variety of venues, citizens were asked to generate perspectives and ideas, including issues and opportunities for the preservation of historic resources. Stakeholders were consulted through public meetings, an open house, and a meeting with the Aberdeen Historic Preservation Commission.

### *Outreach Strategy: Historic Preservation Commission Discussion*

In an open public meeting on May 13, 2013, the Aberdeen HPC met with consultants to discuss historic preservation issues. Commissioners discussed current historic preservation conditions in Aberdeen and options for the Historic Preservation Plan:

### **Important Historic Themes in Aberdeen**

- ◆ Timber capital of the world
- ◆ Largest metro area on the Olympic peninsula
- ◆ Aberdeen invented marine plywood
- ◆ Aberdeen invented celluloid
- ◆ Aberdeen is: Past is Present
- ◆ Home of Nirvana singer Kurt Cobain
- ◆ Home of nationally known photographer Lee Friedlander
- ◆ Home of nationally known Abstract Expressionist painter, Robert Motherwell
- ◆ Home of nationally known sculptor Alexander Calder
- ◆ Red light district downtown; nicknamed "Hellhole of the Pacific"
- ◆ Cranberry growing
- ◆ Home of the oldest remaining hospital in the Northwest

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## What's Working in Historic Preservation?

- ⇒ Certified Local Government (CLG) status
- ⇒ CLG processes are in place: Special Valuation, an Aberdeen Register
- ⇒ Some groups work together
- ⇒ Some elected officials support preservation
- ⇒ Staff is knowledgeable and well connected to other city systems (i.e. Plan Commission, building permitting)
- ⇒ HP has a Facebook page
- ⇒ Planning has a Facebook page
- ⇒ Chapter 8 of the Comp Plan (downtown and waterfront) is being updated and is compatible with historic preservation
- ⇒ Several eligible National Register Historic Districts in the residential areas and downtown



*On S. F Street horse hitching rings can still be seen that speak of the days of animal drawn vehicles in the downtown area.*

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## What isn't working in historic preservation?

- There needs to be a common theme for Aberdeen's identity
- They don't have big picture, long-term goals for preservation; they don't necessarily know the "why" behind the processes
- Need to prioritize work and create a work plan
- Need more public participation in preservation
- Need to focus public outreach on the CLG program and how it saves money in the process. And isn't necessarily all bureaucratic
- Buildings are collapsing
- Severe weather has damaged and destroyed many historic buildings
- Vibration from traffic is destroying historic buildings
- Poor construction methods are destroying historic buildings
- Some buildings have been plundered and the pieces are taken to other cities
- Downtown needs to be more like Wenatchee or Walla Walla
- Need to honor the buildings that were lost, i.e. with a plaque or on the web
- Future of the waterfront is uncertain; should it become a third place or stay industrial.

*Although only a shell of this building remains, it still holds promise for adaptive reuse within its walls. This building is significant for its association with Aberdeen's historic fishing and canning industry and its reuse would be an important addition back to the Wishkah River waterfront (404 S. F Street).*



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## **Outreach Strategy: Public Meetings**

*People from the Aberdeen community gathered at an open public meeting in Aberdeen City Hall on May 14, 2013. They heard a presentation from consultants and discussed current historic preservation conditions in Aberdeen as well as options for the Historic Preservation Plan:*

### **What's working?**

- \* Pride in the neighborhoods of historic homes
- \* Use of Special Valuation has started
- \* Potential Seaport
- \* Lady Washington, reconstructed Tall Ship
- \* Parks Director is working on entrance signs
- \* Rich history with multiple layers
- \* There's an inventory of historic buildings
- \* Human capital: two 501©3 organizations; museum, volunteers
- \* Local Historic Register has been established
- \* Strong social capital
- \* Deeper per capita history than any other county
- \* The unique stainless steel house designed by John McDonald



*Aberdeen has a number of buildings significant in the recent past for their architectural or historical significance. This dwelling at 919 Arnold Street built in 1981 features a unique stainless steel roof as part of its overall design.*

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## **What's not working?**

- ◇ Perception of bureaucracy
- ◇ Aberdeen's reputation
- ◇ Travelers don't stop; "Gateway to the Olympic Peninsula"
- ◇ Traffic moves too quickly
- ◇ Lack of identity
- ◇ Attitude of "waiting and hoping"
- ◇ Developers avoid the city, and downtown buildings sit vacant
- ◇ People need education on City's assets
- ◇ Parking concerns

## **What should be the first priorities?**

1. Education
2. Inventory
3. Need a couple of easy victories, "eye candy"
4. Need example of best practices of preservation programs
5. Mayor just established a vacant buildings task force for downtown
6. Get the pride back
7. Create a list of top 10 reasons not to demolish
8. Electric Building: list on the state and national register by the end of the year
9. Maybe also list the Morck Hotel by the end of the year
10. Maybe also list the Reiner's Building
11. Identification of history/what's the most significant
12. Put together a 1920's tour
13. More social media presence, specifically Facebook
14. Establish Quick Response (QR) code for walking tour or signs for homes
15. A "fair" telling of downtown's entertainment history

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## V. Goals and Action Steps

### A Work Plan for Creating Aberdeen's Future in Historic Preservation

As one of the oldest cities in Washington, Aberdeen's rich and layered history is still evident today in the variety of historic and cultural resources that still exist in the city. And although Aberdeen's historic preservation program is relatively new, there is a strong community commitment to its heritage. Building on this foundation of support, Aberdeen can enhance its historic resources hand in hand with overall civic improvements and economic development. There is already a base of support in the goals of Aberdeen's Comprehensive Plan. Integrating historic preservation more fully into future planning efforts will be of mutual benefit as the community moves forward.

A spreadsheet of goals and objectives is included in the Appendix, while this section outlines the work plan accompanying the four major goals:

- Goal 1: Enhance Rehabilitation and Preservation of Aberdeen's Historic Neighborhoods.
- Goal 2: Enhance Rehabilitation and Preservation of Aberdeen's Downtown Buildings.
- Goal 3: Support heritage tourism, for visitors and local residents.
- Goal 4: Build Awareness, Support and Capacity for Historic Preservation.

Local organizations can work together to accomplish the goals of the preservation plan. Organizations include:

ARM = Aberdeen Revitalization Movement nonprofit organization

BPID=Downtown parking improvement district

City=Aberdeen city staff

GGH=Greater Gray's Harbor

GHT=Gray's Harbor Tourism

HPC = City Historic Preservation Commission

LOA=Ladies of Aberdeen

Museum = Aberdeen Museum of History

NG = Neighborhood Group

OA = Our Aberdeen nonprofit organization

PC = Aberdeen City Planning Commission

SPT=Historic Seaport

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## **Goal 1: Enhance Rehabilitation and Preservation of Aberdeen’s Historic Neighborhoods.**

This goal focuses on enhancing the protection of Aberdeen’s historic neighborhoods in a variety of ways. By participating in two fundamental historic preservation tools, historic surveys and historic register nominations, the city can provide citizens with more ways to preserve historic properties. It is important to remember that historic recognition is voluntary and can be stopped by property owners who do not wish to proceed.

1. Build organizational capacity in the neighborhood by supporting the formation of a neighborhood group (NG) of residents in the Broadway Hill Neighborhood.  
Who: HPC & NG                      When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Through ongoing neighborhood meetings.
2. Support historic preservation by facilitating more individual Aberdeen Register nominations.  
Who: HPC & NG                      When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Conduct a workshop on how to research homes and prepare nominations.
3. Insure respect for the historic character of streetscape and public parks by informing Public Works and Parks Department of appropriate infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks, concrete color/compatibility, etc.  
Who: HPC                                  When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Review with Public Works.
4. Preserve the neighborhood streetscape by informing Public Works and Parks Department of importance preserving of existing street grid.  
Who: HPC                                  When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Review with Public Works.
5. Build organizational capacity in the neighborhood by supporting the formation of a neighborhood group (NG) of residents in the Arnold Hill Neighborhood  
Who: HPC & NG                      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Through ongoing neighborhood meetings.
6. Build organizational capacity in the neighborhood by supporting the formation of a neighborhood group (NG) of residents in the Scammel Hill Neighborhood.  
Who: HPC & NG                      When: 3<sup>rd</sup> year  
How: Through ongoing neighborhood meetings.
7. Apply for funding to prepare Broadway Hill Neighborhood National Register Historic District nomination.  
Who: City & HPC & NG              When: 3<sup>rd</sup> year  
How: Apply for CLG Grant.





*Residential design guidelines would assist property owners with “best practices” as they rehabilitate historic dwellings back to their original character. A sensitive restoration was completed at this dwelling at 700 E. First Street in 2011 (Photo courtesy of Edith Carter).*

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12. Hire a professional to prepare Arnold Hill Neighborhood National Register Historic District nomination.  
Who: City & HPC & NG      When: 5<sup>th</sup> year  
How: Use funds from CLG grant.
  13. Apply for funding to prepare Scammel Hill Neighborhood National Register Historic District nomination.  
Who: City & HPC & NG      When: 5<sup>th</sup> year  
How: Apply for CLG Grant.
  14. Hire a professional to prepare Scammel Hill Neighborhood National Register Historic District nomination.  
Who: City & HPC & NG      When: 6<sup>th</sup> year  
How: Use funds from CLG grant.
  15. Hire a professional to update 1988 historic survey of entire city.  
Who: City & HPC              When: 5<sup>th</sup> year  
How: Use funds from CLG grant.

*The residential areas of Broadway Hill, Arnold Hill and Scammel Hill possess significant collections of architectural styles from the late 19th and early 20th centuries (122 W. Fifth Street).*



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## **Goal 2: Enhance Rehabilitation and Preservation of Aberdeen’s Downtown Buildings.**

This goal focuses on facilitating rehabilitation of commercial buildings downtown. Local governments can make the rehabilitation of commercial buildings more financially feasible by packaging and promoting incentives and by looking for creative ways to approach regulatory processes that impact historic preservation. Downtowns can be revitalized through the Main Street program’s national model, which emphasizes design, organization, promotion and economic restructuring. Additionally, the identification of properties eligible for listing on the Local or National Register is an essential component of economic development. The possibility of the federal 20% federal tax credit or the local Special Valuation property tax reduction often makes the difference in the economic viability of a project.

1. Start to build organizational capacity in downtown by investigating the State Main Street program.  
Who: BPID, City and ARM      When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Invite speaker, begin working on a Main Street application.
2. Apply for funding to prepare a downtown National Register Historic District nomination.  
Who: City, HPC, ARM & BPID      When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Apply for CLG grant.
3. Support preservation downtown by facilitating Electric Building National Register nomination.  
Who: HPC & LOA      When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Work with DAHP for assistance.
4. Learn about WA State building codes interpretation for historic rehabilitation.  
Who: City      When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Attend training or view videotaped version of the training.
5. Develop new property development standards.  
Who: City      When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Establish a moratorium.
6. Preserve and enhance connectivity between downtown and F Street waterfront and development of Benn’s landing area.  
Who: Plan Commission      When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Comp Plan Update, Ch. 8.



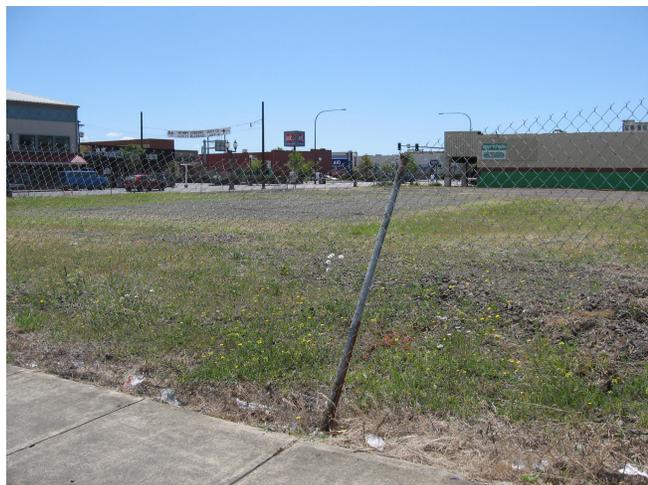
*Downtown has an eligible National Register Historic District which would include this building at 214 E. Wishkah Street. Listing would provide substantial tax credits and incentives for rehabilitation..*



*Benn's Landing at the confluence of the Wishkah and Chehalis Rivers offers a unique opportunity for recreational and heritage tourism development through the creation of a park and interpretive walkway.*

7. Hire a professional to prepare downtown National Register Historic District nomination.  
Who: City, ARM, HPC & BPID      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Use CLG grant funding.
8. Apply for funding to prepare downtown design guidelines for renovation and in-fill.  
Who: City, ARM, HPC & BPID      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Apply for CLG grant.
9. Support restoration work on the Electric Building.  
Who: HPC, Owner & LOA      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year (deadline is 10/15)  
How: apply for WTHP Valerie Sivinski grant for exterior rehabilitation work.
10. Examine building codes to determine if there are any impediments to historic rehabilitation and look for ways to streamline permit processes for restoration.  
Who: City      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Review with Code Official.
11. Promote the development of historic commercial buildings by creating a local process to waive design review of commercial buildings if property owner is applying an Investment Tax Credit.  
Who: HPC      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Create a form & change bylaws.
12. Promote the development of historic commercial buildings with an historic preservation incentive.  
Who: City & ARM      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Revive existing façade improvement program for commercial properties.
13. Reduce the rate of demolition of historic properties.  
Who: City & HPC      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Adopt mitigation measures for demolition of historic buildings, based on City of Olympia's.

*Demolition has resulted in many vacant lots in downtown and negatively impacted the cohesiveness of the commercial district (corner of E. Wishkah and S. F. Streets).*





*Downtown Aberdeen has many vacant upper floor spaces which can be readily adapted into apartments. These types of projects have been developed throughout the country as illustrated above and Aberdeen's historic commercial district offers many such opportunities.*



*The development of downtown design guidelines would provide property owners with "best practices" for preserving original storefronts such as this early 20th century design with structural glass blocks (413 E. Wishkah Street).*

- 
14. Start accepting Main Street B&O Tax Credits as revenue for ARM.  
Who: ARM                      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Submit final application for Main Street program.
  15. Protect the historic character of downtown with downtown design guidelines.  
Who: City & HPC & ARM      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Using CLG funds, hire a professional to write downtown design guidelines.
  16. Facilitate preservation by adopting design standards for CDBG commercial rehabilitation loans  
Who: City                              When: 3<sup>rd</sup> year  
How: Incorporate design standards      into the loan process for commercial rehabilitation.
  17. Create new local financial incentive for commercial property restoration.  
Who: HPC & City      When: 3<sup>rd</sup> year  
How: Create a Façade Improvement Program for commercial restoration.
  18. Increase opportunities for housing in upper floors of commercial downtown buildings.  
Who: City & ARM                      When: 4<sup>th</sup> year  
How: Target CDBG funds to downtown housing redevelopment.
  19. Support creation of arts district downtown, including studios and live/work space.  
Who: City & OA                      When: 4<sup>th</sup> year  
How: In partnership with Our Aberdeen and Gray's Harbor Community College Art Program.
  20. Promote the development of historic commercial buildings by providing a new loan program for assisting with financing for commercial properties.  
Who: City & ARM & GGH      When: 5<sup>th</sup> year  
How: Set up new revolving loan program.
  21. Create new funding stream by forming Tax Increment Financing district (historic preservation is an eligible TIF expense).  
Who: City & ARM & GGH      When: 5<sup>th</sup> year  
How: Form TIF district

Aberdeen Planning Commission  
 Essential Aberdeen: A conversation  
 July 24, 2013



*Connecting downtown with waterfront improvements would assist with downtown building rehabilitation and heritage tourism development (Courtesy Aberdeen Planning Department).*

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### **Goal 3: Support Heritage Tourism, for Visitors and Local Residents.**

This goal highlights the development of historic resources in Aberdeen that would be appealing to visitors. Heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing industries across the country, and historic resources are among the strongest assets for attracting visitors. More and more tourists are interested in visiting small towns and cities, and the things they most want to see and experience are the places and sites that make a community unique – its historic sites, buildings, and neighborhoods.

1. Increase awareness of maritime history.  
Who: HPC & Museum & SPT      When: 1<sup>st</sup> year  
How: Partner on Seaport development to promote use of markers, wayside exhibits, interpretive panels.
2. Promote downtown as a destination for local residents and visitors.  
Who: GHT & HPC & Museum      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Create a new, more concise walking tour brochure by editing existing brochure. Fund the brochure with Lodging Tax revenue.
3. Build appreciation for the value of heritage tourism.  
Who: GHT & HPC & Museum      When: 2<sup>nd</sup> year  
How: Supply GHT with information on Aberdeen tourism (including the walking tour) for the GHT website.
4. Accurately represent Aberdeen’s history by building a collection of accurate research on Aberdeen’s history; this is an ongoing process as new information comes to light with the themes of Maritime history, Industrial history, Bordello history, Recent Past, Ethnic history  
Who: Museum      When: 3<sup>rd</sup> year  
How: start a collection of National Register and Local Register nominations, online and in the museum.

*The Chehalis River waterfront holds many opportunities for the development of walkways and interpretive exhibits detailing the city’s maritime and industrial heritage.*







- 
11. Create directional signage to direct visitors to the city's residential historic districts.  
Who: Public Works                      When: 3rd year  
How: City funding
  
  12. Create prototype materials to communicate the economic impact of preservation.  
Who: HPC & ARM & GGH      When: 4<sup>th</sup> year  
How: Use state economic impact report as model for economic impact reports and Special Valuation statistical report.
  
  13. Increase awareness of and pride in local history by proposing local participation in the State History Day Program.  
Who: Museum & HPC              When: 4<sup>th</sup> year  
How: Make presentation to the public school district.
  
  14. Support ongoing renovation of Armory Building.  
Who: City, HPC & Museum      When: 5<sup>th</sup> year (deadline is 10/15)  
How: apply for WTHP Valerie Sivinski grant for exterior rehabilitation work.



*Directional signage should be added to inform visitors of the historic neighborhoods and touring opportunities only a few blocks from Wishkah Street.*

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## VI. Historic Preservation Plan Implementation: Tools for Achieving Goals

### A. Historic Preservation Program Assistance

Two state programs in Washington provide historic preservation assistance to local governments: the Washington State Certified Local government program and the Washington State Main Street program. The programs are popular with cities of all sizes in Washington, from very small towns to Washington's largest cities.

#### **Washington State Certified Local Government Program**

The Washington State Certified Local Government (CLG) program helps local governments to actively participate in preserving Washington's historic and cultural resources. Responsibilities of a CLG include maintaining a historic preservation commission, surveying local historic properties, enforcing state or local preservation laws, reviewing National Register Nominations, and providing for public participation in historic preservation activities.

The City of Aberdeen achieved CLG status in 2010, and is beginning to use the benefits of the program. As a CLG, Aberdeen may apply for special grants; offer Special Tax Valuation to locally listed properties; receive recognition for their preservation expertise by local, state, and federal agencies; obtain technical assistance and training from the SHPO; participate in the review of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places; participate in the national historic preservation assistance network; regularly exchange information with the SHPO; and participate in statewide preservation programs and planning.

#### **Washington State Main Street Program**

Since 1984, the Washington State Main Street Program has been helping communities revitalize the economy, appearance, and image of their downtown commercial districts using the successful National Main Street 4-Point Approach® that includes design, organization, promotion, and economic restructuring. Main Street is a comprehensive, incremental approach to revitalization built around a community's unique heritage and attributes.

The City of Aberdeen previously participated in the Main Street Program, and could benefit from participating again in the new four-tiered program. Aberdeen is eligible to apply at the Tier 2 Main Street Tax Credit Level, which is designed to provide access to resources, networking opportunities and training to communities that have a non-profit organization dedicated solely to downtown revitalization. Many Washington cities with a population similar to or smaller than to Aberdeen's already participate in this program. Some examples include Centralia, with a population of 16,432 and Monroe with a population of 17,493.

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## **B. Program and Infrastructure Funding**

A variety of funding mechanisms exist to assist with the implementation of historic preservation programs. Additionally, related programs that indirectly fund historic preservation that can provide assistance, such as infrastructure for downtown revitalization and tourism programs. Listed below are some of the most relevant program funding sources for the City of Aberdeen.

### **Community Economic Revitalization**

The Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) program was created by the State of Washington to be responsive to community infrastructure needs. The CERB's ability to be flexible and respond to an aggressive application timeline has led to many successful projects statewide. CERB is a conduit for funding that supports healthy and viable communities and job creation. The CERB Board works to enhance public infrastructure and facility development that lead to economic development by providing loans at low interest rates with favorable terms to port districts, counties, cities, towns, special purpose districts and federally recognized Indian tribes. CERB funds a variety of projects that create jobs including domestic and industrial water, storm and sewer water projects, telecommunications and port facilities, all of which can enhance historic sites and districts.

### **Hart Family Fund for Small Towns**

The Hart Family Fund for Small Towns is a national grant program. Grants from the Hart Family Fund for Small Towns are intended to encourage preservation at the local level by providing seed money for preservation projects in small towns. These grants help stimulate public discussion, enable local groups to gain the technical expertise needed for particular projects, introduce the public to preservation concepts and techniques, and encourage financial participation by the private sector. Grants from the Hart Family Fund for Small Towns generally range from \$2,500 to \$10,000. The selection process is very competitive. The review process is generally completed within three months of the application deadline, and applicants are notified via email once the review process is complete. The next application deadline will be in the spring of 2014.

### **Community Development Block Grants for Planning and Economic Development**

The state Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is administered through the Washington State Department of Commerce. CDBG provides funds to local governments on a competitive basis for public facilities, community facilities, economic development, affordable housing, public services and planning projects that principally benefit low- and moderate-income persons. Communities can use CDBG to improve their local economies, enhance their quality of life and revitalize their neighborhoods while preserving their cultural and natural heritage. Historic preservation and heritage tourism are two prominent economic and community development strategies to accomplish these objectives.

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## Grants to Certified Local Governments

Aberdeen is one of 63 local governments in Washington to achieve Certified Local government (CLG) status. As an established CLG, Aberdeen is eligible to apply for a pool of matching grant funds available annually for CLG communities. These grants may be used for surveys of historic buildings, the preparation of National Register nominations, the development of design review guidelines, and a wide variety of outreach including brochures, workshops, and education programs.

## Lodging Tax Revenue

Washington State Lodging Tax is a consumer tax on lodging charges for periods of less than 30 consecutive days for hotels, motels, rooming houses, private campgrounds, RV parks, and similar facilities, not to exceed two percent on the sale of or charge made for furnishing of the lodging. The funds may be used for promotion of tourism or construction and operation of tourism-related facilities.

"Tourism promotion" includes activities intended to attract visitors for overnight stays, arts, heritage, and cultural events, and recreational, professional, and amateur sports event and can include capital or operating programs that promote tourism and attract tourists to the county.

*Tourism development could include the addition of wayside exhibits along the walking trail next to the Wishkah River detailing the city's industrial heritage.*



## State Main Street Program Tax Credit

If designated a Tier 2 city in the multi-tiered State Main Street program, Aberdeen would be eligible for the Main Street Tax Incentive Program, which allows a portion of State Business and Occupation tax revenue to be designated to a downtown organization. Through the program, if a business makes a donation to a downtown association, in the following year the business receives a tax credit equal to 75% of their donation. The downtown organization can receive up to \$133,333 per calendar year in revenue. Revenue from the program is flexible and can be used for any expenditure that meets the mission of the downtown organization.

## National Trust Preservation Funds

Grants from National Trust Preservation Funds (NTPF) are intended to encourage preservation at the local level by providing seed money for preservation projects. These grants help stimulate public discussion, enable local groups to gain the technical expertise needed for particular projects, introduce the public to preservation concepts and techniques, and encourage financial participation by the private sector. Grants from the National Trust Preservation Funds encourage preservation at the local level by providing seed money for preservation projects. Grants are awarded annually in three competitive rounds: February 1, June 1, and October 1.

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## **C. Financial Incentives for Individual Building Rehabilitation**

A number of financial incentives exist to aid and encourage individual business and property owners who wish to improve historic properties. These include various tax advantages as well as low-interest loan programs and other forms of financial assistance. These incentives are excellent tools that allow property owners to enhance their investment and add to overall revitalization. Eligibility for these different incentives depends upon property type and other requirements. Listed below are some of the most relevant programs for the City of Aberdeen.

### **Building for the Arts**

The Washington Legislature created Building for the Arts in 1991 to award grants to 501(c)(3) nonprofit performing arts, art museum, and cultural organizations. The program awards grants to performing arts, art museum, and cultural organizations for up to 20 percent of eligible capital costs for acquisition, construction, and/or major renovation of capital facilities. The program has funded the restoration of historic theaters, including the Harrington Opera House in Harrington.

### **HOME Program**

Created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 (NAHA), HOME is a federally funded, large-scale grant program for housing. The intent of HOME is to:

- expand the supply of decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing
- strengthen the abilities of state and local governments to provide housing
- assure that federal housing services, financing and other investments are provided to state and local governments in a coordinated, supportive fashion.

The HOME Program must be used to promote low-income, affordable housing activities (defined as 80% or less of area median family income, adjusted for family size).

### **Federal Investment Tax Credit**

The Federal Investment Tax Credit is a dollar-for-dollar federal income tax credit equal to 20% of the construction costs for rehabilitating an income-producing building; the credit may be used by the building owner or "sold" to a tax credit investor. A Federal income tax credit may be granted to commercial properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and on which "substantial rehabilitation" is performed. Rehabilitation must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The minimum investment is 100% of the building's "adjusted basis"; that is, the purchase price minus the land cost and depreciation, plus prior improvements. For non-contributing properties in a National Register Historic District constructed prior to 1936, a 10% Federal rehabilitation tax credit is also available.



*The Federal Investment Tax Credit and a façade easement donation could assist in the rehabilitation of downtown properties such as the Becker Building.*

### **Facade Easement**

A Façade Easement program is a locally adopted program. Under a façade easement, the fair market value of the property after the granting of the preservation easement is subtracted from the property's fair market value prior to the easement donation. The difference is the value of the preservation easement for federal income, estate and gift tax purposes. An easement is a legal agreement whereby the private owner gives up certain privileges with regard to controlling the appearance of his or her real property. Once imposed, it "runs with the land," obligating future owners to abide by its terms and thus providing effective long-term protection for an historic property in private ownership. In addition, preservation easements can offer potentially significant federal income, estate and gift tax consequences. In exchange for the donation of an easement, consisting of either a portion of land or a building's facade, an owner may: a) claim a one-time Federal income tax deduction, and b) realize a permanent property tax reduction based on the value of the donated property. The easement must be granted to a qualified entity; and in exchange, the owner must agree to maintain the donated property. The preservation easement is drafted to prohibit alterations to significant features of a building, changes in usage of the building and land, topographical changes, subdivision, or further development without the prior review and approval of the easement holder. By limiting changes to an historic site, the owner alters the property's market value, while benefiting the general public. This change in market value can be treated like any other charitable contribution deduction. The Internal Revenue Service has recognized the "before and after" valuation test as the approach to be utilized in placing a value on preservation easements. A qualified appraiser should determine the actual value of a preservation easement.

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### **Heritage Capital Projects Fund**

The Heritage Capital Projects Fund (HCPF) is a Washington state program administered by the Heritage Resource Center (HRC). Since 1997, the HRC has administered the roughly \$40 million in HCPF grants given biennially to heritage organizations and projects across the state. Grant funds have been used to build museums, restore historic structures, and interpret and preserve the heritage of the state in other ways, enhancing the local economy through job creation and purchasing while adding to the unique character of Washington's varied towns and cities. Recipients of HCPF grants need to provide two dollars of match for each dollar of state funding. The deadline for submission is in early May of each even-numbered year.

### **Historically Underutilized Business Zone**

Aberdeen is a federally-designated Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone). The HUBZone program was enacted into law as part of the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 1997. The program falls under the auspices of the U.S. Small Business Administration. The program encourages economic development in historically underutilized business zones - "HUBZones" - through the establishment of preferences.

SBA's HUBZone program is in line with the efforts of both the Administration and Congress to promote economic development and employment growth in distressed areas by providing access to more federal contracting opportunities. The program's benefits for HUBZone-certified companies include:

- Competitive and sole source contracting.
- 10% price evaluation preference in full and open contract competitions, as well as subcontracting opportunities.
- The federal government has a goal of awarding 3% of all dollars for federal prime contracts to HUBZone-certified small business concerns.

### **Special Valuation County Property Tax Reduction**

Special Valuation is a Washington program that provides a property tax reduction for rehabilitated historic properties. Special Valuation is the revision of the assessed value of an historic property that subtracts from the assessment, for up to ten years, rehabilitation costs as approved by a local Historic Landmarks Commission. Properties must be listed on a local register of Historic Places prior to application to qualify, and rehabilitation must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Rehabilitation costs must total 25% or more of the assessed value of the structure (not the land) prior to rehabilitation.

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### **National Trust Small Deal Fund**

The National Trust Small Deal Fund (SDF) is a national program which provides a unique service within the historic tax credit industry by investing in credit eligible projects that generate as little as \$500,000 in tax credit equity (equaling total development costs of approximately \$2.5 million). Projects of that size are typically overlooked by conventional tax credit investors despite the sheer number of them. Since 2002, more than 70 percent of the rehabilitations certified by the National Park Service earned less than \$500,000 in credits. Investments in these smaller deals are often considered undesirable because their transaction costs are typically just as high as larger projects' yet the credit value is much lower, making the investment's cost-benefit ratio unattractive. The National Trust Small Deal Fund is structured to specifically address this issue. It uses standardized investment terms and documents, reduces its due diligence requirements, and keeps its closing costs very low. All types of properties are eligible, including boutique hotels, offices, restaurants, entertainment uses, cultural and nonprofit facilities, retail and mixed-use projects.

### **New Markets Tax Credit**

The New Markets program is designed to encourage investments in low-income communities that traditionally have had poor access to debt and equity capital. The New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) is a 39 percent federal credit that is earned on a Qualified Equity Investment (QEI) into a certified Community Development Entity (CDE), such as NTCIC. It is claimed over a 7-year compliance period (5 percent over the first 3 years and 6 percent over the last 4 years). The CDE must make a Qualified Low-Income Community Investment (QLICI) in the form of equity or a loan to a Qualified Active Low-Income Business (QALICB) within a 12-month period. All NMTC investments must be made to entities located in qualified low-income census tracts. Visit the Novogradac New Markets Tax Credit Resource Center to determine whether your property is located in a qualified census tract. Most commercial and mixed-use real estate development projects in these qualified census tracts can be qualified as QALICBs. Residential projects without a commercial component do not qualify.

### **Valerie Sivinski Washington Preserves Fund**

The Valerie Sivinski Washington Preserves Fund is an annual grant program administered by the state nonprofit Washington Trust for Historic Preservation that provides up to \$2,000 to organizations involved in historic preservation. The goal of the fund is to provide small yet meaningful amounts of money to help promote historic preservation at the community level. Examples of eligible projects include purchasing materials or services for "bricks and mortar" projects to preserve a property or producing publications and/or interpretive elements that promote historic preservation of a specific resource. Highest priority will be given to projects that are urgent in nature, contribute significantly to the development of community preservation organizations, and/or are included in the Washington Trust's Most Endangered Historic Properties list. In addition, priority is given to bricks and mortar rehabilitation projects. Project work must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and must comply with local design guidelines when applicable.

## APPENDIX A—Acronyms

<b>ACHP</b>	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
<b>APA</b>	American Planning Association
<b>ARPA</b>	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
<b>AWA</b>	Association for Washington Archaeology
<b>CLG</b>	Certified Local Government
<b>COA</b>	Certificate of Appropriateness for Design Review
<b>COM</b>	Washington State Department of Commerce
<b>DAHPP</b>	Washington State Department Archaeology & Historic Preservation
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information System
<b>GMA</b>	Washington State Growth Management Act
<b>GMS</b>	Washington State Growth Management Services
<b>HPO</b>	Historic Preservation Officer
<b>IBC</b>	International Building Code
<b>IEBC</b>	International Existing Building Code
<b>ITC</b>	Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit
<b>LEED</b>	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
<b>NHL</b>	National Historic Landmark
<b>NHPA</b>	National Historic Preservation Act
<b>NRHP</b>	National Register of Historic Places
<b>PAW</b>	Planning Association of Washington
<b>Section 106</b>	Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
<b>Section 4(f)</b>	Section 4(f) provision in the Dept. of Transportation Act
<b>SV</b>	Washington State Special Valuation Property Tax Incentive
<b>TCP</b>	Traditional Cultural Place/Property
<b>THPO</b>	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
<b>WHR</b>	Washington Heritage Register
<b>WMA</b>	Washington Museum Association
<b>WSHS</b>	Washington State Historical Society
<b>WTHP</b>	Washington Trust for Historic Preservation

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## **APPENDIX B— The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation**

The Standards (Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67) pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

- 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.**
- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.**
- 3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.**
- 4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.**
- 5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.**
- 6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.**
- 7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.**
- 8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.**
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.**
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.**

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## APPENDIX C— Frequently Asked Questions Special Valuation for Historic Properties

### How does the Special Valuation tax exemption work?

- The exemption is not automatic and is not a grant or a loan: property owners must spend at least 25% of the assessed value of the property in two years, and must follow federal guidelines for rehabilitation.
- The credit is not for every historic property: it is only for property owners who enter into a contractual arrangement with a local government agreeing to oversight of the property *in perpetuity*.

### Does Special Valuation provide any *short-term* benefits to taxpayers to offset the property tax shift?

- Sales Tax: local and state government generate sales tax revenue from the money spent on rehabilitation.
- Jobs: local labor market construction workers are hired and most of the construction supplies are purchased from area suppliers. Rehab is also more labor-intensive than new construction, thus creating more construction jobs.

### Does Special Valuation provide any *long-term* benefits to taxpayers?

- After the ten year exemption has expired, the properties will be re-assessed and the taxpayers are “paid back” in increased taxes, usually in less than ten years following the exemption.
- Rehab usually has a domino effect--surrounding properties are more likely to be rehabilitated. A vacant building harms the property values of surrounding properties, thus negatively impacting a decline in tax revenue. A National Association of Home Builders study determined “the presence of abandoned buildings in the neighborhood reduces the price more than 30%.”
- As a result of rehabilitation, the character of the area is retained, high quality structures are redeveloped, and neighborhood pride increases.
- Recycling old structures makes sense because infrastructure such as water and sewer is already in place for older buildings.

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**Are there other tax incentives available for property tax reduction? How significant is the historic preservation tax credit?**

- In Washington state, there are numerous exemption programs for county property tax reduction. The largest exemption for private property is for retired senior and disabled homeowners with low incomes. A 1993 study estimated that more than one-half of the total value of all property in Washington is exempt from taxation. Historic property exemptions make up a very small fraction of the total amount exempted (00.056 percent for the state in 1991).

All property is subject to taxation unless specifically exempted by law, however there are several major categories of exempt property in addition to Special Valuation, including:

- Intangibles, such as currency, bank deposits, stocks and bonds;
- Public property owned by federal, state, or local governments;
- Household goods and personal effects;
- Churches and cemeteries;
- Non-profit organizations;
- Business inventories and agricultural products;
- Certain agricultural, timber, mineral or metallic products being shipped out of state;
- Agricultural crops prior to sale;
- Two exemptions for elderly or disabled citizens;
- Owners of open space, farm or timberlands; and
- Owners of eligible historic properties can apply for a ten-year exemption.

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## APPENDIX D—Federal Investment Tax Credit

The Tax Code of 1986 allows owners of depreciable residential, commercial, and industrial buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places to elect a 20 percent investment tax credit in conjunction with the certified rehabilitation of certified historic structures.

In order to obtain the historic preservation tax credit, the following requirements must be met:

the property is listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#)

- the property will be depreciable residential, commercial or industrial property after completion of the rehabilitation project
  - the property is a certified historic structure
  - the work to the building is a certified rehabilitation
- the project costs qualify as a substantial rehabilitation

Applications are submitted to the Washington State Historic Preservation Office for review and comment and forwarded to the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior for certification action. Property owners interested in utilizing the investment tax credit program should consult with the Commission, preferably prior to the implementation of any rehabilitation work. The Commission assists property owners in identification of historic structures and provides technical advice with respect to appropriate rehabilitation treatments. The National Park Service uses the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation](#) as the guidelines for its review of historic preservation projects.