



*Michigan Association of Planning  
A Chapter of the American Planning Association*

Adopted by the MAP Board on May 19, 2006

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES POLICY**

Historic resources contribute significantly to the quality of life, economic well-being, and cultural vitality of our communities. Planners should assume greater responsibility in the area of historic preservation and use the range of preservation techniques and options available to them. At all levels of government, planners need to work with the private sector, independent organizations, and citizens to increase awareness of, and to protect and enhance, national, state, and local historic resources. Ideally, this should occur at the earliest possible stage of a comprehensive planning process, before deterioration and neglect create an insurmountable burden for the community and property owners. To that end:

1. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages communities to recognize the value of historic resources because they create a sense of place and provide a stimulus to economic vitality and the potential for increased tourism.
2. The Michigan Association of Planning supports funding of programs for the preservation of historic resources at all levels of government. This means providing adequate appropriations to implement federally-mandated processes, to support state historic preservation offices, to hire qualified staff or consultants for local historic preservation commissions, to provide on-going training to historic district commissioners, and to provide funding for the certified local government program.
3. The Michigan Association of Planning supports efforts by local governments to integrate preservation into the land planning process, including incorporating preservation goals into the community master plan and reconciling and coordinating preservation policies with local development policies. Local governments should consider local designation and promote voluntary or regulatory preservation efforts and work with citizens and local interest groups to make preservation part of the overall effort to foster and promote the general welfare of the community. Local governments should work to establish an organizational structure in the community that will facilitate the use of preservation.

4. The Michigan Association of Planning encourages historic preservation programs that are comprehensive in nature and are holistic in scope, meaning that they include:

- a. an ongoing survey and evaluation process;
- b. financial incentives to encourage rehabilitation and restoration;
- c. historic preservation plan development;
- d. adequate budget allocations for qualified staff in public agencies;
- e. cooperative educational efforts with the private sector and citizen groups;
- f. interdisciplinary participation and alliances of planners with other professionals in fields related to historic preservation.
- g. coordination of preservation initiatives with education, citizen participation, history, public art, economic development, public works programs, and other local, state, and federal programs.
- h. implementation strategies capable of protecting, enhancing, and extending the benefit of cultural resources for future generations.
- i. provisions (in the form of ordinance or policy) to secure temporary delays to the alteration or demolition of designated cultural resources until their preservation or protection may be fully explored.
- j. adaptive reuse policies supported by tax or other incentives.
- k. efforts to involve all elements of the community in planning, development, implementation, and feedback.
- l. attempts to interpret history and cultural heritage in the most inclusive sense possible, reaching across barriers of race, ethnicity, religion, class, or income.
- m. efforts to protect not only the resources themselves, but their context in the larger community by ensuring that preservation of significant structures is not limited to preservation of a building's "skin" without adequate consideration of its other component parts and history.
- n. efforts to work proactively with federal, state, and local agencies to provide adequate information mechanisms, processes, or protocols for the review of projects involving historic resources.

5. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the establishment and implementation of historic preservation in local communities that:

- a. is expressed in clear and reasonable standards;
- b. authorizes single or multiple resource nominations;
- c. is pursuant to state and federal laws;
- d. is implemented by either a voluntary individual resource nomination basis or majority owner district methods;
- e. is based on local, qualified expert opinion or acknowledged resources in the field;

6. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the equal application of preservation laws on cultural and historic resources without regard to form or nature of ownership, religious or cultural affiliation.

7. The Michigan Association of Planning supports state enabling legislation to provide tax incentives to encourage the rehabilitation of historic resources, including tax credits, tax increment financing, and tax abatements.

8. The Michigan Association of Planning supports budget allocations that will ensure state involvement in integrating tourism considerations as appropriate with historic preservation efforts, particularly in the assessment and sensitive adaptation of viable resources.

9. The Michigan Association of Planning believes that an understanding of cultural resource issues is integral to the practice of planning, and therefore supports the inclusion of preservation and cultural resources as a core component of urban and regional planning curricula.

10. The Michigan Association of Planning believes that historic preservation and cultural resources should be required elements in a comprehensive master plan.

11. The Michigan Association of Planning recognizes that neighborhoods are dynamic objects that evolve rather than remain fixed in time and therefore supports preservation strategies that respect the heritage, context, design, and scale of older neighborhoods while recognizing the evolution of those neighborhoods' built form.

12. The Michigan Association of Planning supports the coordination of comprehensive planning programs and implementation tools (zoning, subdivision, and land

development) with state preservation legislation (Act 169 of 1970, design controls, tax incentives, and other tools).

13. The Michigan Association of Planning supports an enhanced role for the private sector to bring its resources and talents to bear in forming effective historic preservation and cultural resource strategies.