


# THE NEW NASHVILLE

A STUDY OF THE IMPACTS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION | PREPARED FOR THE METRO HISTORICAL COMMISSION

PREPARED BY PLACEECONOMICS

APRIL 2019



**Development around Ryman Auditorium**


3A 209
BIRTH OF BLUEGRASS
In December 1945, Grand Ole Opry star Bill Monroe and his mandolin brought to the Ryman Auditorium stage a band that created a new American musical form. With the banjo style of Earl Scruggs and the guitar of Lester Flatt, the new musical genre became known as "Bluegrass." Augmented by the fiddle of Chubby Wise and the bass of Howard Watts (also known as Cedric Rainwater), this ensemble became known as "The Original Bluegrass Band," which became the prototype for groups that followed.
TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION
TROLLEY STOP
IMAGINED BY
OM | SE
OliverMcMillan Spectrum | Emery
SKANSKA

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study evaluated the impact of historic preservation in Nashville.[1] The pages that follow demonstrate the remarkable contribution that historic preservation makes to the economy, the character, the culture, and the environment of Nashville.

- Historic preservation and conservation overlay districts make up just 12% of parcels and 6% of the land area in Nashville.
- 10% of Nashville's population lives in historic districts attracting both baby boomers and millennials.
- Between 2010 and 2016, historic districts accounted for 20% of the city's total population growth.
- Nashville's historic districts are diverse in household income and race.
- Historic district residents, homeowners and renters, are less cost-burdened than the rest of Nashville.
- Over the last fifteen years, property values in both historic preservation and neighborhood conservation overlay districts outperformed the rest of the city.
- Between 2007-2018, historic districts experienced half the foreclosure rate than elsewhere in Nashville.
- 3% of jobs are located in historic districts, yet 11% of all job growth in the city has gone to historic districts. Historic districts also saw 24% of all job growth in accommodation and food service jobs, playing a key role in the tourism industry.
- In the last 5 years, historic districts have seen an average of $62.8 million in permit investment and 373 projects per year.
- The expenditures of heritage visitors are responsible for nearly 20,000 local jobs and $588 million in local earnings.
- Nashville's sites of art, culture, and social capital are disproportionately located in historic districts.
- Historic districts are accessible—they have more intersections per square mile, greater access to public transit and parks, and higher walkability.

As Nashville's economy and built form rapidly changes, historic preservation is both a tool for anchoring a sense of place as well as an engine for economic development.

1 This study specifically looked at the area within the 1963 city boundaries, the area that made up Nashville before the Metro consolidation. See Methodology.


1400

# Contents


1 **INTRODUCTION**
Nashville's Commitment to Equity
Overview of Historic Preservation in Nashville
Methodology

10 **BE NASHVILLE**
Music as Living Heritage
Social Impacts of Historic Preservation

20 **ENSURE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL**
Demographics
Population by Race
Cost-Burdened Households
Millennials

28 **FOSTER STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS**
Homeownership
Property values
Foreclosures
Building Permit Investment

34 **CREATE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY**
Job Growth and Entrepreneurs
Tourism

62 **EXPAND ACCESSIBILITY**
Intersection Density
Walkability

68 **ADVANCE EDUCATION**
Historic Markers
Proximity to Educational Sites
Civil Rights Heritage

74 **CHAMPION THE ENVIRONMENT**
Embodied Energy
Proximity to Parks
Smart Growth

80 **CONCLUSION**
Methodology
Acknowledgements
About the Team





# INTRODUCTION

By any measure, Nashville is one of America's hottest cities. In 2017, it was estimated that 100 people a day were making Metro Nashville their new home. That same year, Nashville's job market grew 4%—more than any other city of over a million people. The 20 plus cranes soaring over downtown on any given day reinforce these statistics—Nashville is the place to be.

Nashville was one of the first cities to climb out of the recession. By 2012, real estate closings were up 28 % over the previous year.[1] In February of 2018, Nashville's unemployment rate was at a historic low of 2.7 %, compared with 4.1 % nationally, and job growth is predicted to rise by 18 % in next five years.[2] There are many reasons for the city's prosperity including the diversified mix of employers in fields like health care management, tourism, the music industry, publishing, car manufacturing, and particularly higher education. It is those many educational institutions that gave Nashville its title as the Athens of the South.

The reasons for Nashville's popularity are as cultural as they are economic. Nashville has developed a reputation for its distinctive neighborhoods, creative industries, its budding restaurant and bar scene, and its relaxed Southern vibe. A progressive Southern city, Nashville combines all the charm of the South, with the fast-paced momentum and opportunity of much larger cities. What's more, Nashville is a city that nurtures compassion—city leaders have made inclusion and equity central to plans for Nashville's future. Nashville is booming, and it's looking to do so equitably.

In 2015, the Metropolitan Planning Commission approved NashvilleNext, a guide how and where its community grows through 2040. The process took 3 years and engaged over 18,000 participants. NashvilleNext is now being implemented by the city leaders and citizenry with efforts to keep track underway. The plan has numerous guiding principles each with its own vision statement, goals, and measurements.

This analysis was commissioned to answer two key questions: what is the impact of historic preservation in Nashville and how does historic preservation advance the goals of NashvilleNext? The findings reveal that historic preservation in general, and Nashville's historic neighborhoods in particular, are not only compatible with the goals of NashvilleNext, but are indispensable components towards achieving them.



1 https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/09/us/nashville-takes-its-turn-in-the-spotlight.html
2 Ibid.


S-2nd Ave-N
ONE WAY
DO NOT BLOCK INTERSECTION
S-3rd Ave-N
Capitol Hill
ROAD WORK AHEAD
Hard Rock Cafe

# Nashville's Commitment to Equity



Nashville has a strong commitment to equity. Equity and equality are not the same—equality ensures equal opportunity, but it assumes that all participants start on a level playing field. Equity considers that participants begin with differing and unequal access to wealth, resources, and networks. In order to achieve the greatest good, policy cannot be blind to the difference.

Nashville's commitment to equity is driven in part by how the city is changing. Davidson County's population is projected to increase by 7% between 2010 and 2020; its white population is projected to grow by 2% and its black and Hispanic populations by 13% and 51%, respectively, in the same period. By 2020, blacks are projected to comprise 30% and Hispanics 12%, of Davidson County's population.

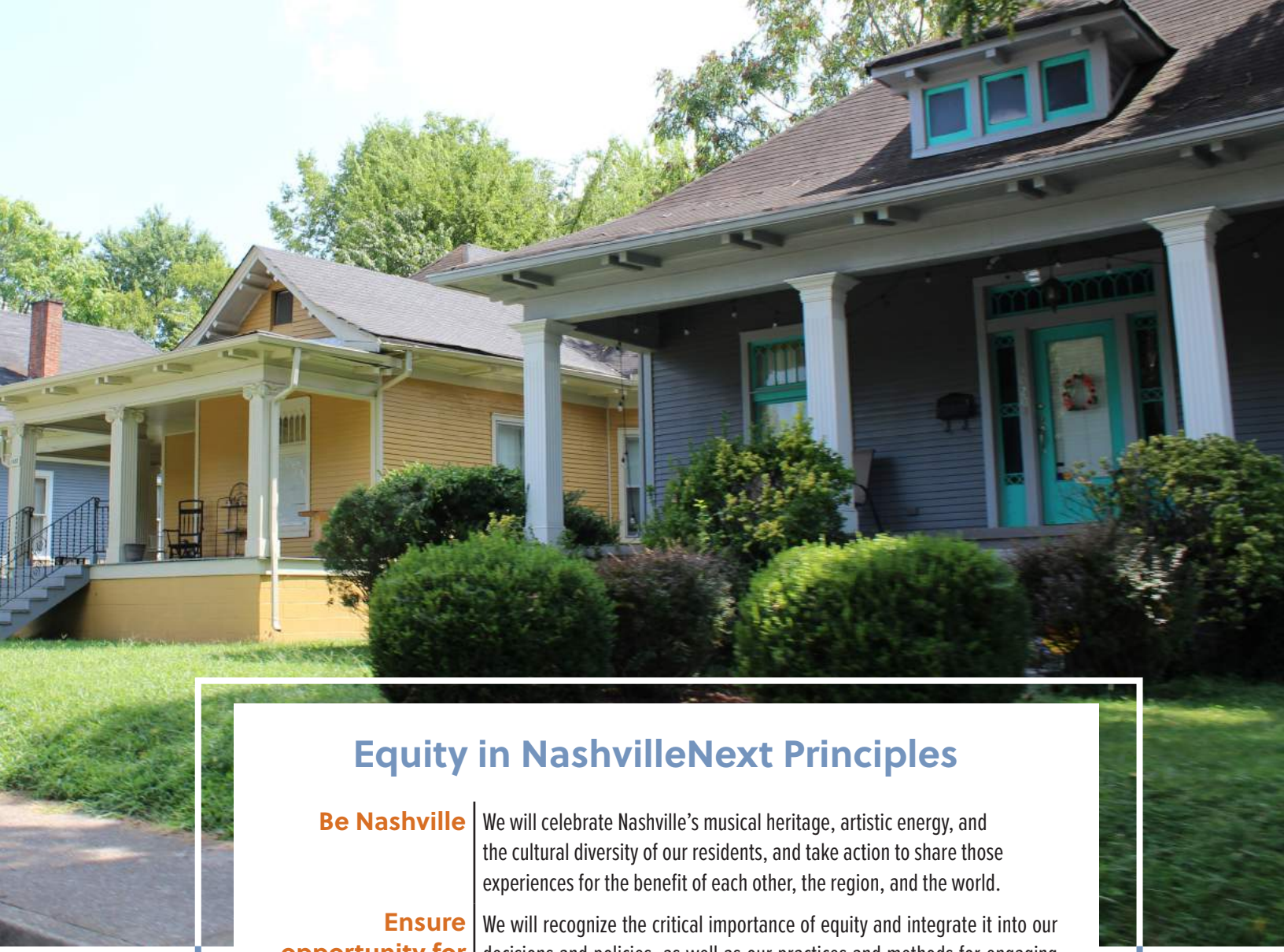
***Equitable development is a positive development strategy that ensures everyone participates in and benefits from the region's economic transformation—especially low-income residents, communities of color, immigrants, and others at risk of being left behind. It requires an intentional focus on eliminating racial inequities and barriers, and making accountable and catalytic investments to assure that lower-wealth residents: live in healthy, safe, opportunity-rich neighborhoods that reflect their culture (and are not displaced from them); connect to economic and ownership opportunities; and have voice and influence in the decisions that shape their neighborhoods.***
**- Policy Link, Equitable Development Toolkit**

The NashvilleNext plan recognizes that Nashville's work to achieve equity and inclusion for all its residents is an ongoing process. Disparities persist in access to opportunity, infrastructure, and services. NashvilleNext is structured to address those disparities. This commitment is clearly articulated:

*"As Nashville thrives as a city, the mandate to ensure that all Nashvillians share equally in and have access to the benefits of its growth is even more compelling. Nashville's strength as a city depends upon shared prosperity and the participation of all community members in policymaking decisions for its future. Planning for the next twenty-five years gives Nashville the opportunity to ensure that equity and inclusion are solidified core values of the community."*[3]

The NashvilleNext principles are outlined on the next page. This report incorporates that set of principles and identifies how historic preservation in Nashville is not only making contributions in each of those areas today, but can set a pattern for the implementation of those principles into the future. The people of Nashville want to build a more equitable city. Historic preservation is a tool that can help them do so.

3 https://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/next-report-Equity-and-Inclusion.pdf



## Equity in NashvilleNext Principles

| | |
|---|---|
| **Be Nashville** | We will celebrate Nashville's musical heritage, artistic energy, and the cultural diversity of our residents, and take action to share those experiences for the benefit of each other, the region, and the world. |
| **Ensure opportunity for all** | We will recognize the critical importance of equity and integrate it into our decisions and policies, as well as our practices and methods for engaging communities. By doing so, we will expand opportunities for all residents, meeting the needs of their unique communities. |
| **Expand accessibility** | Accessibility is critical for equity. We will provide our community with tools and resources to access the fundamental needs for growth and enhancement of life regardless of age, background or ability. |
| **Create economic prosperity** | Access to prosperity improves all. We will strive to keep Nashville affordable for the broad range of residents who call Nashville "home" and who contribute to its economy, community and civic life. |
| **Foster strong neighborhoods** | We are committed to addressing housing challenges and solutions through an inclusive, equitable, and holistic approach that balances the need for more housing, and a diversity of housing, with a commitment to preserving the character of neighborhoods. |
| **Advance education** | We will develop the necessary support systems and opportunities for all to have access to tools necessary to contribute to the economic and social future of the community. |
| **Champion the environment** | Nashville will enables sustainable living through transportation options, housing choices, economic and social diversity and thoughtful design of sustainable buildings and infrastructure. |

# What do Nashvillians think?

In 2017 and 2018, the Nashville Office of Resilience conducted extensive community outreach as part of the 100 Resilient Cities program funded by The Rockefeller Foundation. Through individual interviews, focus groups, and online polling, more than 5000 responses from Nashville citizens were obtained. Particular effort was made to make sure that a wide range of opinions were gathered, representing all segments of the community.

While "historic preservation" was not specifically included in the questions, dozens of respondents mentioned preservation both as a valuable asset of the community and one that was at considerable risk. Here are some of the comments about Nashville's strengths:

- "Big city amenities with a small-town feel. Historic neighborhoods that are thriving."
- "(T)he history, e.g. preservation of architecture, historically significant buildings, and landscapes, and clean environment, coupled with the amenities of a big city, make it an amazing place to live."
- "Our parks and greenways, historic properties, Nashville's unique culture of music, medicine, science & education."
- "Local, independent businesses. Unique neighborhoods. Historic and vintage buildings. Walkable commercial districts. Diverse mix of old and new homes."
- "Culture: Historic Buildings."

Many of the respondents were also concerned about the future of the historic assets:

- "Could do a better job at historical preservation of buildings and landmarks."
- "Preserving the historic buildings that we grew up with."
- "Over development (condos / mixed use); not protecting historic structures and sites."

And some had recommendations for action:

- "Do more to preserve historic buildings."
- "Preservation of historical homes and landmarks to acknowledge city's history"
- "Stop the greedy vulture investors who want to tear down and not restore historic different buildings and structures."
- "(P)lease let's be smart about roads, congestion, the new buildings that are permitted & the lovely historic ones that are torn down…."
- "Please, PLEASE stop destroying Nashville's historic places!! This is absolutely heartbreaking!!!"

Nashvillians are well aware of the changes occurring in their city. Their survey responses make it clear that Nashvillians understand the value of saving older places.









# NASHVILLE'S DIVERSE HISTORIC RESOURCES



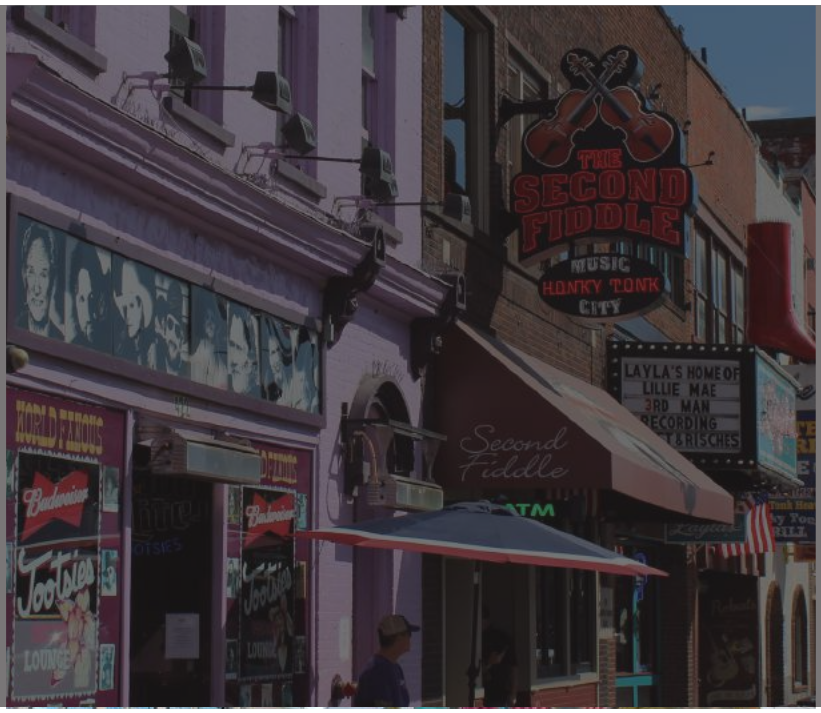




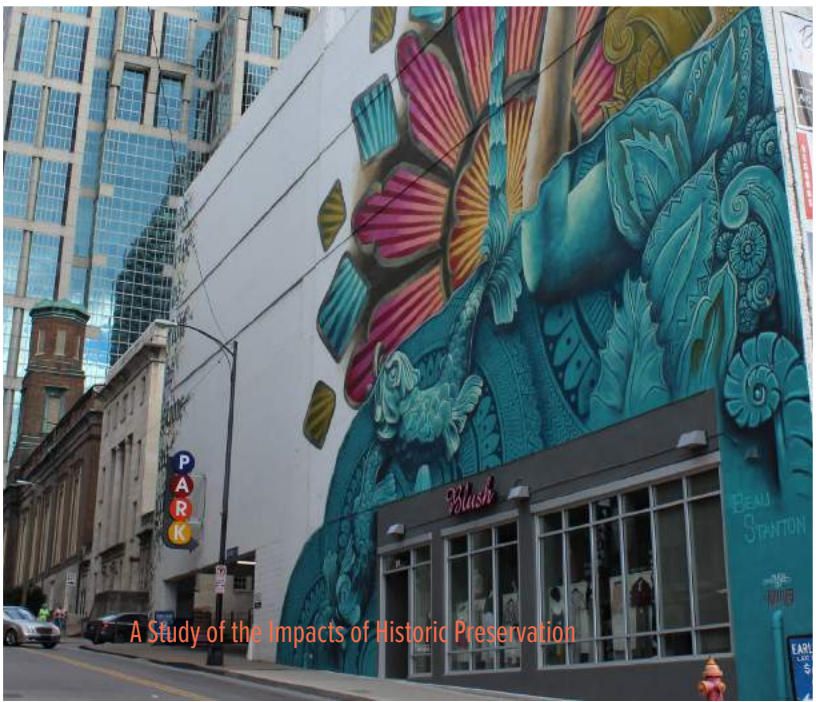
The New Nashville





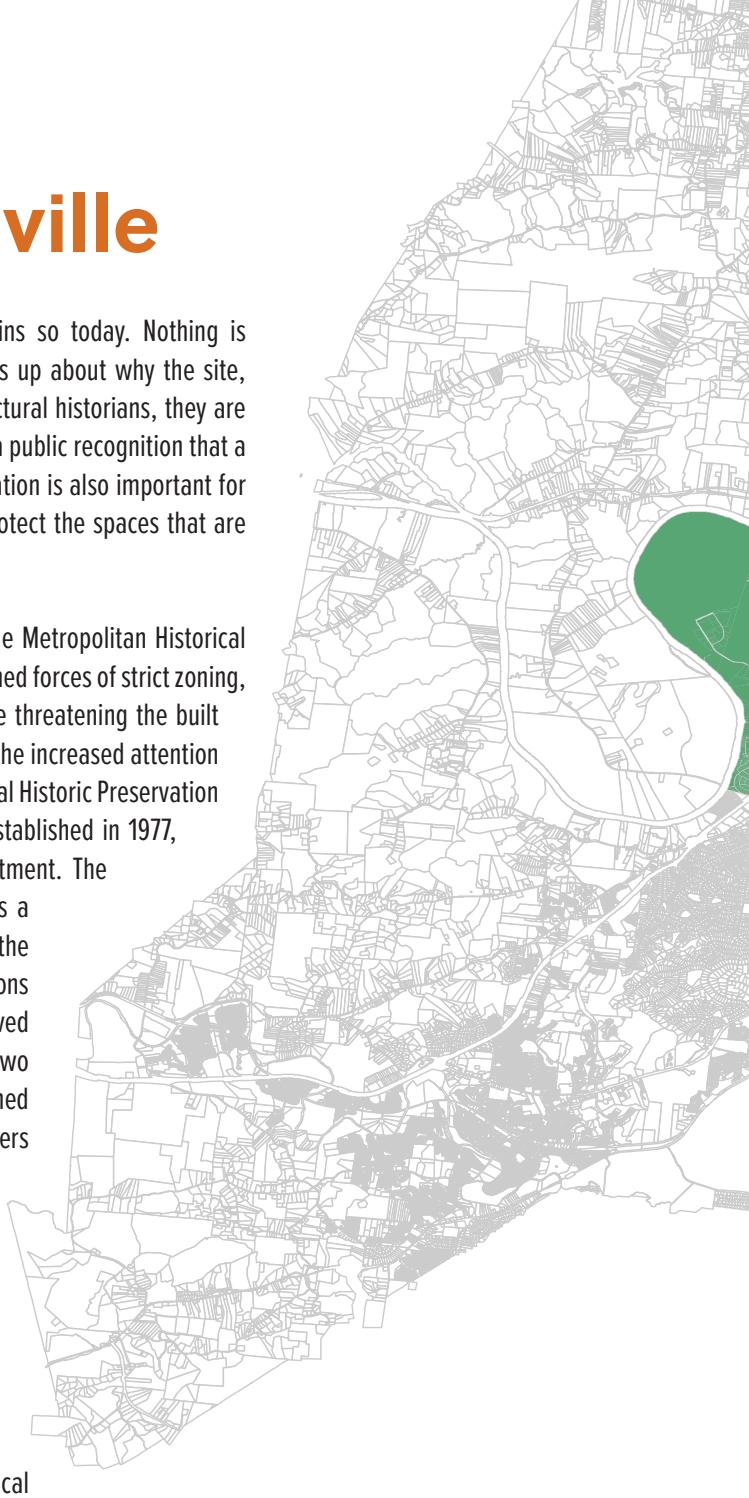

THE SECOND FIDDLE
MUSIC
HONKY TONK CITY
LAYLA'S HOME OF
LILLIE MAE
3RD MAN
RECORDING
Second Fiddle
Budweiser
Tootsies
LOUNGE




PARK
Blush
BEALE
STANTON



# Overview of Historic Preservation in Nashville



Historic preservation began as a grassroots movement, and it largely remains so today. Nothing is considered historically or culturally significant without an advocate who speaks up about why the site, building, or cultural practice is important. These advocates are not only architectural historians, they are residents and activists who recognize that places matter. Historic designation is a public recognition that a site's history is important for everyone to know about. For that reason, preservation is also important for social cohesion—it is a tool that allows community members to identify and protect the spaces that are significant to the collective memory and identity of that community.

Nashville would be a profoundly different city were it not for the creation of the Metropolitan Historical Commission (MHC). In the mid-20th century, like many American cities, the combined forces of strict zoning, urban renewal, depopulation, and unsympathetic redevelopment schemes were threatening the built character and vibrant nature of the city. The MHC was created in 1966 following the increased attention to the historic built fabric of the country spurred by the passage of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act. Nashville also has the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC), established in 1977, which serves as the design review board and enforcement arm of the department. The agency also conducts contractor training, real estate agent training, and hosts a yearly Old House Fair for homeowners. Together these two commissions work in the public sector to keep what's unique about Nashville standing for future generations – allowing Nashville to Be Nashville. The historic resources of Nashville preserved today create a physical timeline and tell the story of the city over almost two centuries. Nashville's historic landmarks include some of the city's most cherished places: from the Parthenon and the Hermitage to Bank Street's Belgian Block pavers and the Shelby Street Bridge.[4]

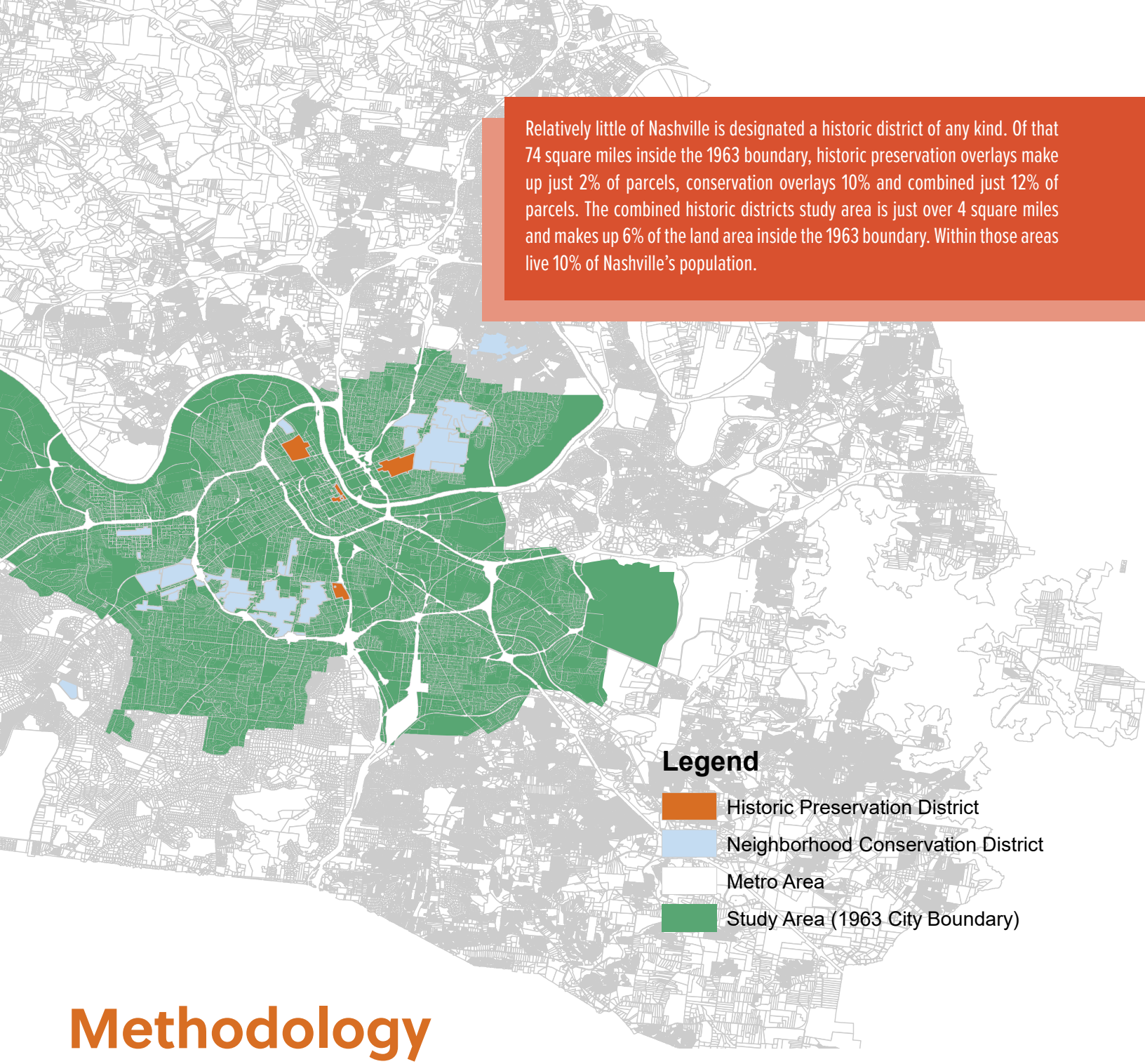
Nashville has three types of historic districts. National Register districts are an honorific designation, listed by the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C. National Register districts provide the threshold for use of the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits for commercial structures, but are not subject to other restrictions.

The greatest protection for historic properties comes from local designation. Local historic zoning overlays are under the purview of the MHZC, and their review covers a broad range of exterior changes. In total, the MHZC provides protection for over 11,000 properties in Nashville. Nashville's historic preservation overlays offer the highest level of design review and therefore protection.

The most common form of protection for historic resources in Nashville, however, is the neighborhood conservation zoning overlay. Conservation districts, provide a somewhat lesser level of design review only looking at things like new construction, additions, and demolition. Whereas historic preservation overlays are typically structured to preserve historic architecture, conservation districts address overall character. Areas designated as historic preservation overlays are not necessarily more historically significant than those with neighborhood conservation zoning. Rather, the designations differ in that during the process, citizens concluded that conservation zoning was the most appropriate level of protection for their area.

4 There are also individual designations for historic bed & breakfasts. Interior landmarking is being explored.

Relatively little of Nashville is designated a historic district of any kind. Of that 74 square miles inside the 1963 boundary, historic preservation overlays make up just 2% of parcels, conservation overlays 10% and combined just 12% of parcels. The combined historic districts study area is just over 4 square miles and makes up 6% of the land area inside the 1963 boundary. Within those areas live 10% of Nashville's population.



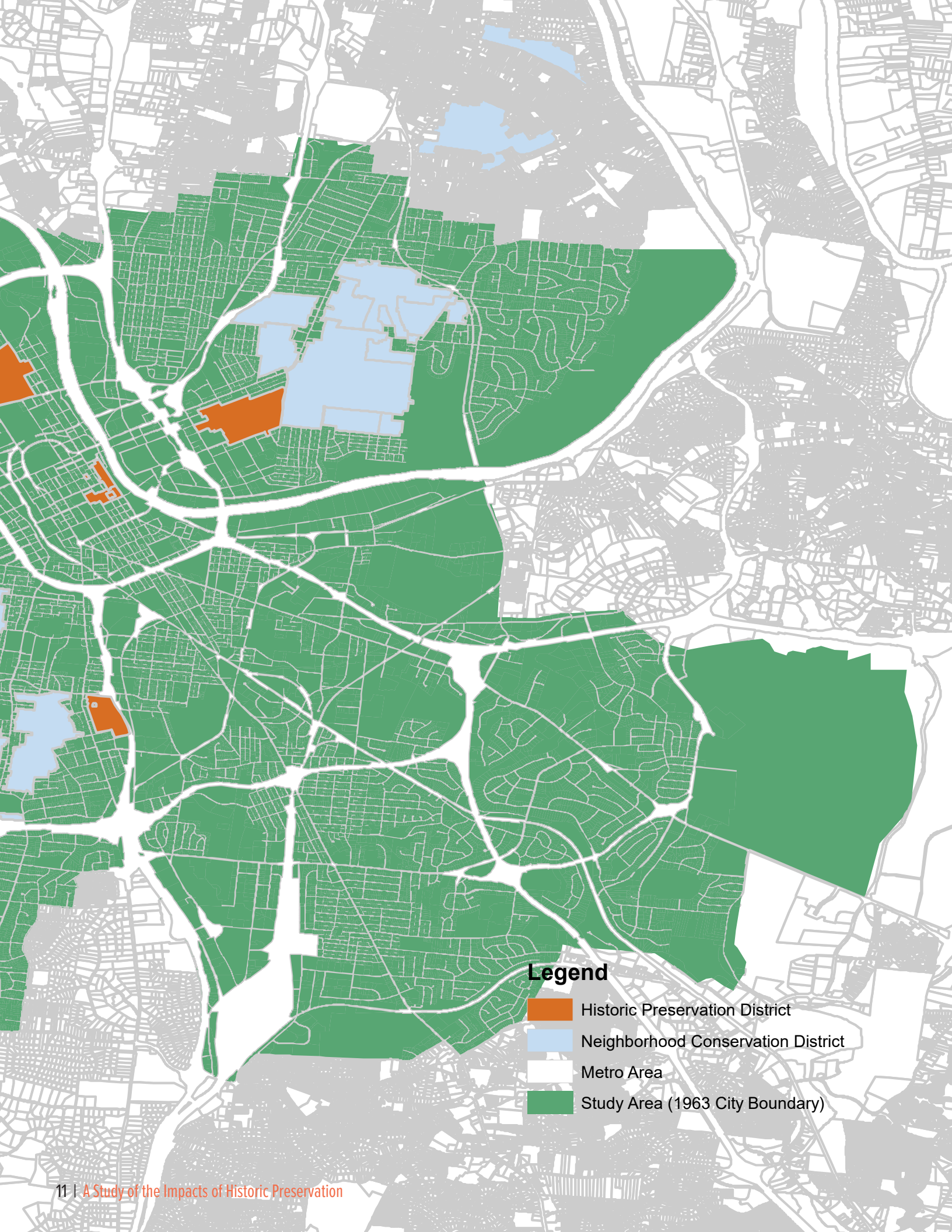

# Methodology

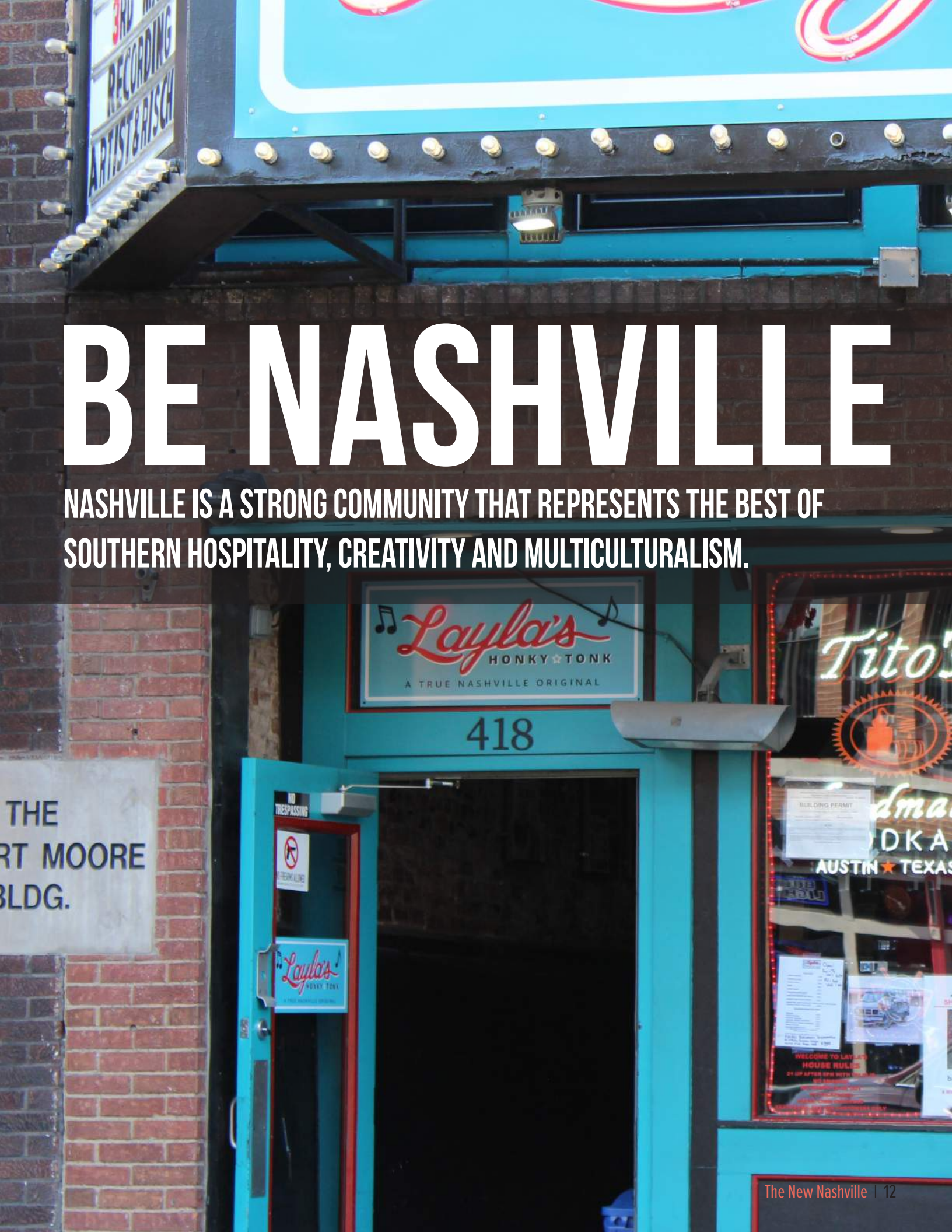
Nashville has 7 local historic preservation overlay districts, 23 conservation overlay districts, and 17 National Register districts that are not also covered as local districts. Because the historic districts are a cohesive, unique, and intact collection of historic resources, their impacts are greater and therefore measurable. Therefore, historic district areas are the primary geographic focus of this study. The analysis within this study is based on comparison - patterns within areas historically designated compared to those areas not designated. Due to the compact nature of historic districts, comparisons to the entire Metro Nashville and Davidson County would have been unsuitable. Such a comparison would have artificially favored the historic districts in many metrics related to density, accessibility, and so on. Therefore, the study utilized the properties inside the 1963 City of Nashville (prior to the metro county merger) boundary, which represents about 74 square miles of the entire city/county (grey on the map).

Overall, metrics across numerous categories looked at the areas designated historic preservation overlay districts (orange), and neighborhood conservation overlay districts (blue) compared to the rest of the city (green - residual area inside the 1963 boundary). Several historic districts (Inglewood, Belle Meade Links Triangle, and Tanglewood) are outside the 1963 boundary and were removed from the comparison analysis. The property value analysis only looked at single family residential properties and therefore districts without those were not included in that section.

# STUDY AREA




Legend
Historic Preservation District
Neighborhood Conservation District
Metro Area
Study Area (1963 City Boundary)




# BE NASHVILLE

## NASHVILLE IS A STRONG COMMUNITY THAT REPRESENTS THE BEST OF SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY, CREATIVITY AND MULTICULTURALISM.


Budweiser
Budweiser
BUD LIGHT
MUSIC CITY USA
TENNESSEE
Pabst
Layla's
BEER

# BE NASHVILLE

To "Be Nashville," according to Nashvillians, means to be creative and accepting. Nashville prides itself on hospitality and friendliness, innovation and entrepreneurship, and concern for others. Its unique combination of artistic energy and multiculturalism has created an atmosphere of tolerance, enterprise, and vibrancy. *Welcoming Nashville*, a report detailing survey results on immigration and business sentiments in Nashville, found that 7 out of 10 community leaders believe that immigrants make Nashville's economy more productive and innovative. Nashville recognizes that diversity makes its economy stronger.

Nashville further prides itself on its pioneering history within Civil Rights' activism. Nashville is remembered as the university of non-violence, and the laboratory where students at the city's historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) tested practices in non-violent civil disobedience, practices that ultimately became the template for the Civil Rights Movement.[5] The city actively seeks to build on this legacy, promoting equity and inclusion through its policies and practices.

***"People seem to forget that the success of downtown is due largely to it being a historic district. There is a lot of tension between growth and the things that give Nashville its character."***

**- Freddie O'Connell, District 19 Councilman**

Historic preservation has a role to play in helping Nashville "Be Nashville." Historic preservation honors and highlights those diverse stories, helping to situate contemporary policy and practice within a historic spectrum of accomplishments. Designation preserves those sites that add potency to the collective memory of these accomplishments. Beyond preserving merely the sites of activism, historic preservation promotes contemporary activism. In Nashville, historic designation is driven by residents who actively participate in the direction of their neighborhoods. In the recent Metro Resident Survey, nearly 30% of respondents listing historic preservation as a priority were of minority and/or Hispanic heritage.[6]

## Music as Living Heritage

There are few cases that more clearly demonstrate the importance of living heritage than the music industry in Nashville. Living heritage goes beyond physical inheritance. It is a sum of practices, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, and traditional craftsmanship knowledge and techniques. Living heritage is a process, not a product, therefore a living heritage practice is not significant for its physical output. What is significant is the process of creating, adapting, and sharing. Thus, living heritage is unique in that it is simultaneously traditional and contemporary—it can adapt to changes in economy, technology, and culture.

Music in Nashville is a living heritage that has grown with the city. According to one recent study, the Impact, Contribution, and Cluster Analysis of the Nashville Music Industry, the industry models that grew Nashville's music scene were always unique adaptations to a particular Nashville setting.

5 https://www.nashville.gov/Portals/0/SiteContent/Planning/docs/NashvilleNext/next-report-Equity-and-Inclusion.pdf
6 Metro Resident Survey Responses, https://www.nashville.gov/Mayors-Office/Resident-Survey.aspx




**Signs congratulating artists on musical success dot the yards of many Music Row buildings, as exhibited here by the offices of independent publishing company Wrensong Entertainment.**

A major genre closely aligned with one city allowed the industry to flourish in ways it could not in any other location. The two are inseparable—Nashville makes music and music made Nashville. Few other industry clusters are as intertwined with the local cultural and historic fabric, and in few other places is the built fabric so important to the ongoing image and strength of that cluster.

According to Yelp, 10 of the top 15 best bars for live music in Nashville are located in historic districts. Many of these are located in the Downtown Broadway Historic District, also known as the honky-tonk highway. This includes some of Nashville's oldest and most famous honky-tonks, including Tootsie's Orchid Lounge, Robert's Western World, and Legend's Corner. Conveniently around the corner from these bars and venues is the historic Ryman Auditorium. From 1943 to 1974, the *Grand Ole Opry* country music show on WSM 650 AM radio was held at the Ryman. Listed as a National Historic Landmark, the Ryman is known as one of the best venues in the country, lauded for its architecture, atmosphere, and acoustics. Even as cranes soar above downtown, dramatically changing the context where Nashville's sound was created, historic designation protects this important place, so it can continue to serve both the economy and soul of Nashville.

***"Country music is our international calling card, a powerful export that touches hearts and changes lives. We owe it to our forefathers to honor their life's work as a token of our gratitude for their efforts in building the wonderful city in which we've all chosen to live."***

**- Beverly Keel, Middle Tennessee State University's Department of Recording Industry[7]**

Yet music heritage is about far more than just the late-night hot spots and the grand auditorium stages. It is about all the spaces in between that foster and sustain a thriving music culture. The spaces where songwriters find inspiration for their lyrics, the first tiny apartment that an aspiring musician moves to while trying to make it big, the basement shows where they get their first gig. Understanding music as heritage requires us to consider these spaces as well—the landscape of music heritage covers the entire city, not just Music Row or Broadway. These spaces may not pass a traditional test of "historical significance," yet they are significant to a living heritage. The qualities of these unsung spaces must be protected. It is vital to both an equitable Nashville and a thriving music industry that the availability of older, smaller, affordable places be maintained.

7 https://www.tennessean.com/story/opinion/columnists/2014/06/29/nashvilles-musical-heritage-must-preserved/11638087/

*"Black music was so sophisticated here during the 1930s and 40s because you had Tennessee State producing artists and musicians who studied and could read music. That's part of what made Nashville so popular with R&B and blue singers like Count Basie and Duke Ellington and BB King...they knew you could get the best musicians out of Nashville. Better than anywhere else."*

**- Lorenzo Washington**



Photo Credit: Nashville Public Art

# Lorenzo Washington, CEO of Jefferson Street Sound, LLC

If you walked down Jefferson Street in the 1940s through 60s, you might have heard the rapid piano notes and wild, hoarse vocals of Little Richard performing Tutti Frutti, the soulful vocals of Marvin Gaye singing Motown, or Etta James earning her title as the "Matriarch of the Blues" at the New Era club. Jefferson Street was a thriving commercial and residential community full of speakeasies, nightclubs, theaters and dance halls that hosted and nurtured some of the most influential artists in American history.

In the 1950s, however, the tight-knit, predominantly African American community began losing some of its residents and venues to a redevelopment project, and then, just a decade later, new city regulations shut down more of the clubs. The final blow came in 1968 when Interstate 40 plowed through the heart of the Jefferson Street district, cutting off traffic and taking down the places like the Del Morocco in its wake.

Today, entrepreneur Lorenzo Washington has made it his mission to honor the artists who made Jefferson Street so magical, and who continue to influence music to this day. Lorenzo grew up with many of the musicians who played these venues, and while he didn't have a music background himself, he could no longer stand by and watch their legacies disappear. Lorenzo is especially intent on saving and telling the histories of the artists who are not as famous as giants like Tina Turner and Count Basie, but who played with musicians of that caliber on a regular basis in the clubs. He explained, "Marion James was my inspiration for starting the museum because she—and a lot of other great artists and musicians—were just not being talked about in any groups except by other old artists and musicians. They weren't in the media or on T.V. or radio, so they weren't getting any respect. Their stories are the stories I try to tell. My interest is in the people who played and made history on this street and in making sure they are recognized and talked about and appreciated."




Lorenzo is the CEO and founder of Jefferson Street Sound, LLC, a recording studio and museum dedicated to these artists and the music they played. There are currently a number of young musicians working in the studio to bring some of the Jefferson Street music back to Nashville. Lorenzo explained, "We have pretty much lost the blues here and we're working to bring it back. We're also talking about starting a radio station with young people—we'd call it 'History Desk' and older artists and community members would tell stories about Jefferson Street." Vanderbilt University is currently partnering with Jefferson Street Sound on a 5-year project called "Bridging Learning in Urban Extended Spaces" (BLUES). They are working to develop new ways for people to experience and learn about the history of local, urban environments by creating an interactive online map embedded with archival photographs, oral histories, news articles and song playlists collected from a variety of sources.

With little of the original fabric of the area remaining, Lorenzo also lead the charge to get Club Baron—now occupied by the Elks Lodge and the only remaining music venue building from that time—listed as a local landmark and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. "We got the Elks Lodge [locally landmarked], and that will be the only building on Jefferson Street that has been deemed historic. It's where little Richard cut his teeth. BB King liked to play there. It's where Jimi Hendrix and Johnny Jones had their big guitar dual." Through his archival work at the museum and by engaging young people in the history of the neighborhood, Lorenzo's hope is that what he's doing will inspire young artists to incorporate Nashville's deep roots into new music. "Black music was so sophisticated here during the 1930s and 40s because you had Tennessee State producing artists and musicians who studied and could read music. That's part of what made Nashville so popular with R&B and blue singers like Count Basie and Duke Ellington and BB King…they knew you could get the best musicians out of Nashville. Better than anywhere else."

# Social Impacts of Historic Preservation

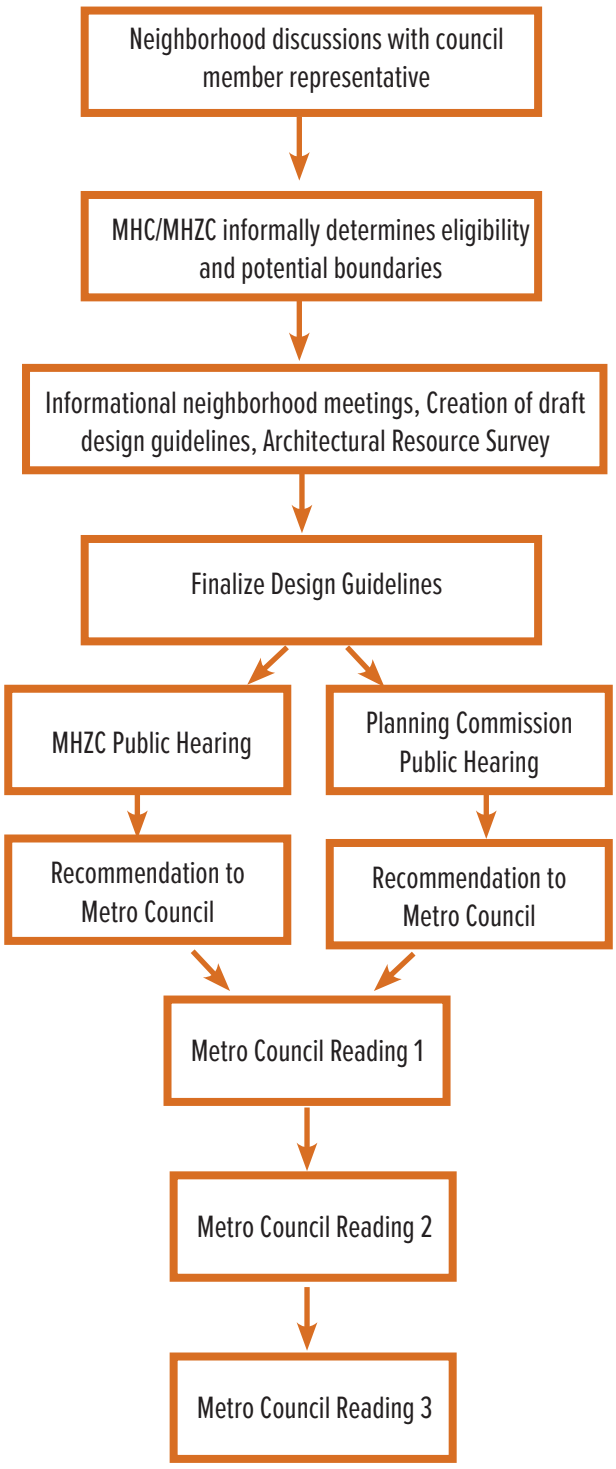
There are many things that may come time mind when one thinks "historic district" —date plaques, regulation, design review. Too often, historic preservation is perceived as the *museumification* of a building or neighborhood.

Yet today, preservationists understand their work to be about public good, and commonly this work is driven by community activism. Historic places have a significance that is defined by the community, and those places are cultural and spiritual anchors that lend continuity and cohesion to that community. Historic preservation is a process that engages citizens and creates empowered coalitions. In fact, 25% (15 of 59) of the community organizations recognized by the city represent historically designated neighborhoods. As shown in the graphic to the right, the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission designation process begins with neighborhood-led discussions.

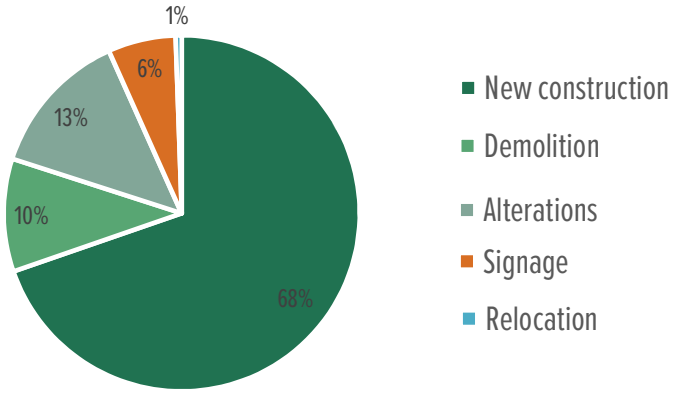
Historic preservation is a grassroots, bottom-up public process, one of few land use tools where ordinary citizens have such a major role. The work of the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission empowers citizens to identify and protect the spaces that matter to their communities. The historic resources currently designated help tell the story of Nashville. Citizens expect the public process and regulation accompanying the designation to ensure these resources are properly managed so the future generations of Nashvillians can learn from them.

The regulation in the historic preservation program comes from the enforcement of the citizen-led decisions. The overlay guidelines are enforced through administrative and MHZC approved Preservation Permits. Clearly historic neighborhoods do not prevent new construction. In fact, in 2017, more than two-thirds of approved preservation permits were for new construction. Since 2012, the number of permits has steadily risen. 59% of all preservation permit applications are MHZC staff approved, with the property owner not required to appear before the commission.[8] Together, the citizens and Metro interact through the historic preservation program to help Nashville "Be Nashville."

## Designation Process




## TYPES OF PRESERVATION PERMITS ISSUED 2017




8 In 2003 MHZC provided authority for staff issued permits for certain actions



Tall and Skinnies




Design Reviewed Infill

# Infill and Design Review

Nashville is home to the notorious "tall and skinny," a building form that can almost be considered a Nashville vernacular infill. Its form is typically two to three stories with a taller 1:2 proportion of width to height. Tall and skinnies often are built in pairs or rows with very similar styling: either traditional, with a front porch and lap siding or contemporary, with flat roofs and a roof deck. Nashville has seen more tall skinny construction as a result of supply and demand. Nashville's population is growing, particularly in the 24-55 age range, and so residential construction is booming. High land costs cause developers to build the largest houses that are financially sensible, but because the building footprint is limited by front, side, and rear setbacks, the easiest way to add square footage is by building up. Two dwellings sell for an even higher price than one for the same lot, so two tight, tall structures rise wherever the zoning allows.

***"So far, the market's answer [to soaring population] has been large multi-unit apartment buildings and scores of tall and skinnies. This answers the need for density but not necessarily the need for quality, context and character. The market must evolve past the "quantity over quality" mindset to embrace a "less is more" mantra to facilitate smart growth — factors other markets have neglected to date, and the results are glaring. So while a more dense, single-family option is needed, it doesn't have to be the equivalent of a tall non-fat skinny latte with caramel drizzle on top"***

**David Grisham, Nashville architect, Aesh Design**

Tall and skinnies are the product of a formula, not thoughtful design. Many Nashvillians despise the jarring impact of these tall homes in otherwise one story neighborhoods. At best, tall and skinnies are oddities in otherwise charming neighborhoods. At worst, tall and skinnies threaten to homogenize the distinctive neighborhoods that make Nashville special. The argument often in favor of tall and skinnies is density—in a hot market such as Nashville, the more new units the better.

Many believe that historic designation prevents new construction; nowhere is that less true than in Nashville. Further, the Metro Historic Zoning Commission has proven that infill and quality, compatible design are possible through design review. The Commission even grants preservation awards for new construction within historic districts that maintain the character and scale of the neighborhood. The MHZC's guidelines are not prescriptive, instead the guidelines encourage scale and forms similar to what is seen in the district. However, the Commission urges against merely pulling and combining design features seen throughout the neighborhood, nor do they promote exact historical replicas. The MHZC's primary goal is quality infill design that will age well aesthetically and functionally.



# ENSURE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

## NASHVILLE VALUES ITS DIVERSITY AND ENSURES THAT ALL COMMUNITIES SHARE IN THE CITY'S GROWTH AND PROSPERITY.



# ENSURE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

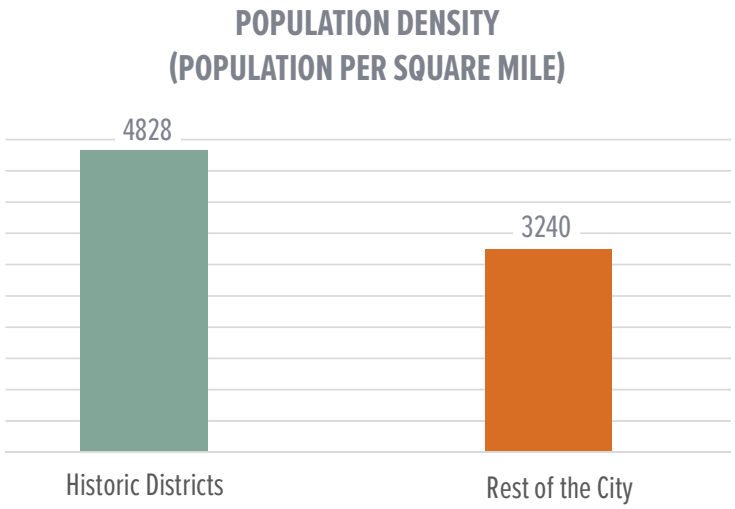
As Nashville continues to prosper, the city has made it an imperative that all residents meaningfully share in and benefit from that prosperity. True equity demands more than a top-down approach to the distribution of those benefits—the communities affected must be full participants at the table. As stated previously, community driven historic designation is one tool that allows residents to actively participate in the development on their neighborhoods and better manage the change that occurs.

## Demographics

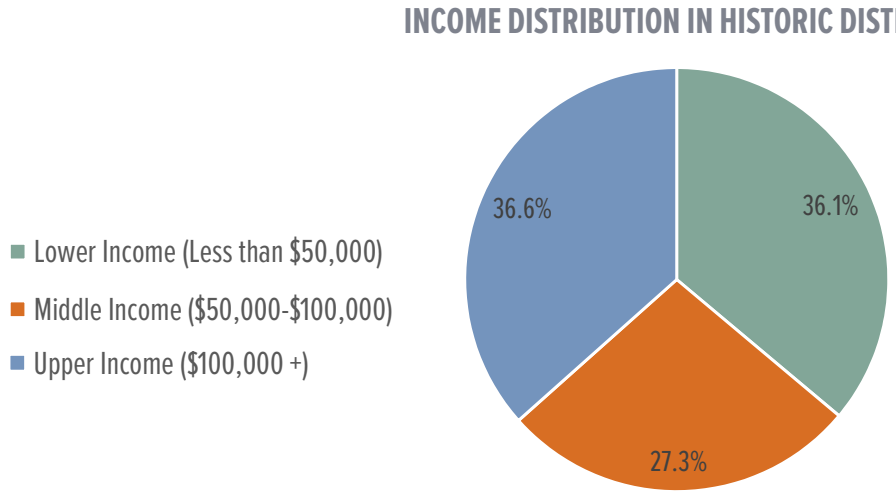
Despite making up only 6% of the land area, historic districts account for 10% of the population of Nashville. Population change in historic district also outpaces that of the city as a whole. Between 2000 and 2016, the population in historic districts increased by 3.4% compared to 2.4% in the rest of the city. Between 2010 and 2016—a period of significant population increase in Nashville— historic districts accounted for 20% of the city's total population growth.

A common criticism of historic preservation is that it prevents increased density, and critics claim that preservation is in opposition of new developments that would provide needed housing units. This claim is not true in Nashville. First, historic districts only cover 6% of the land area of Nashville, there is plenty of space elsewhere in the city without a preservation overlay. Second, historic districts are disproportionately absorbing Nashville's population growth. Third, this study found the historic districts are on average the densest parts of the city. In fact, these areas are home to 1,600 more people per square mile.[9] Density is needed in Nashville and historic neighborhoods are providing it.

9 All demographic data from the US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2013-2017?




This density is recognized indirectly by the NashvilleNext Concept Map which illustrates how the Guiding Principles will apply physically through the county. The overlay between the Concept Map and historic districts are not random. 7 of the 21 Tier One Center areas identified in the Concept Map include or are adjacent to a historic district, building off the already dense environment the historic districts provide.[10] Furthermore, 50% of the identified Bus Rapid Transit lines and a quarter of the Bus Rapid Transit Lite lines pass through or are adjacent to a historic district. Nashville's historic districts already provide the dense, walkable environment the Concept Map hopes to replicate elsewhere in the city.



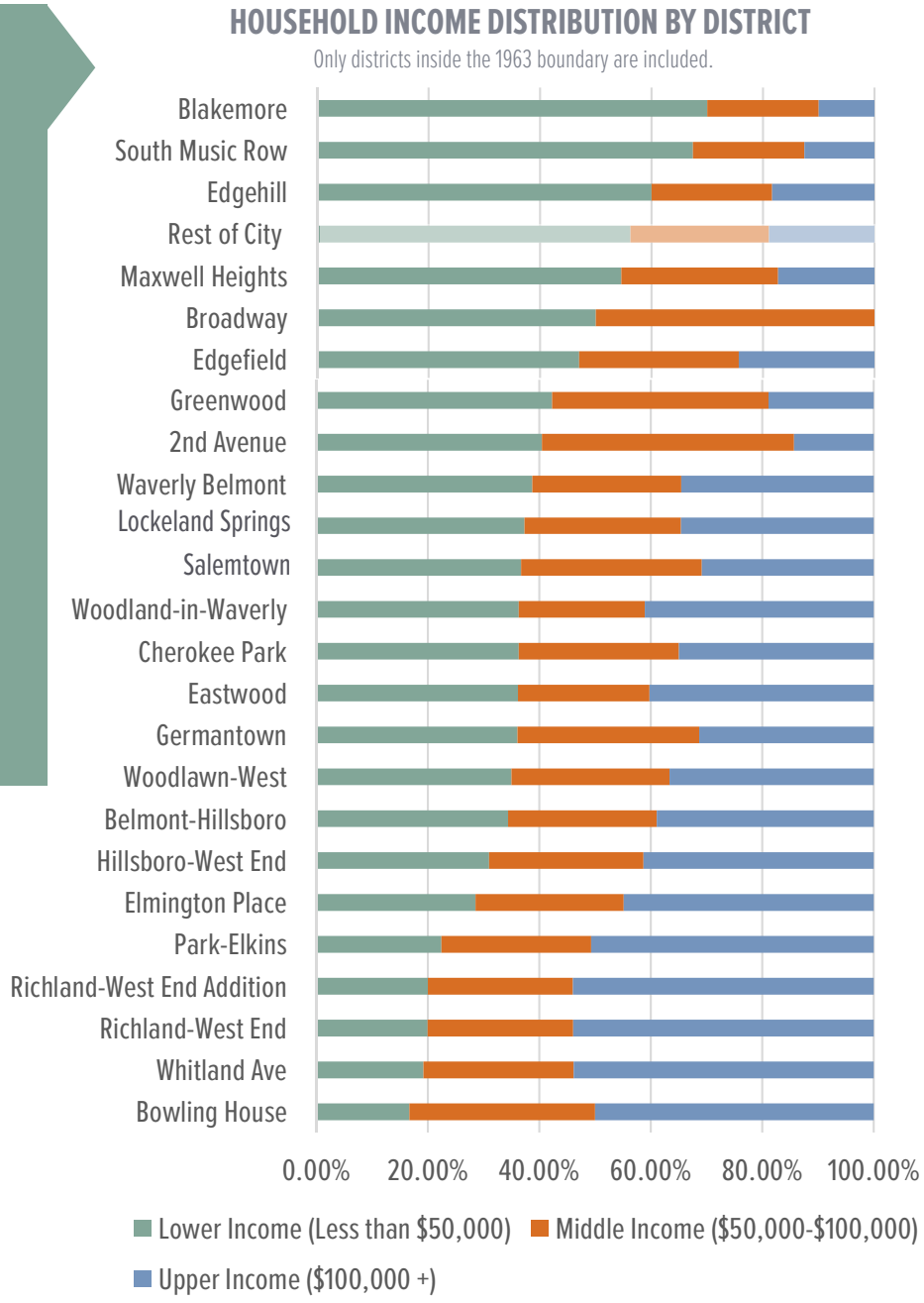

Nashville recognizes that urban vitality is built on diversity, and it has become a basic premise of placemaking that healthy neighborhoods are neither all rich nor all poor. Often, historic districts are accused of being home to only wealthy folks. While that may be true in some places, the historic districts in Nashville are home to households at both the bottom and the top of the economic rungs of the city. In fact, there is almost an even distribution of households in historic districts among lower, middle, and upper income households.

10 From NashvilleNext: Centers are identified with an emphasis on coordinating capital improvements in Tier One Centers in darker orange. These areas are likely to need more immediate investment in the near future involving upgrades to infrastructure to meet the needs of more intense employment and housing densities. The importance of these centers to transportation is critical to providing a more walkable environment and supporting transit. Increasing the density along the corridors and centers will make more frequent mass transit viable over time.

Data in the aggregate can ignore internal differences—in many cases it is most useful and revealing to analyze demographic and economic data at the district level. On a district-by district basis, the historic districts of Nashville reflect a wide range of household incomes.

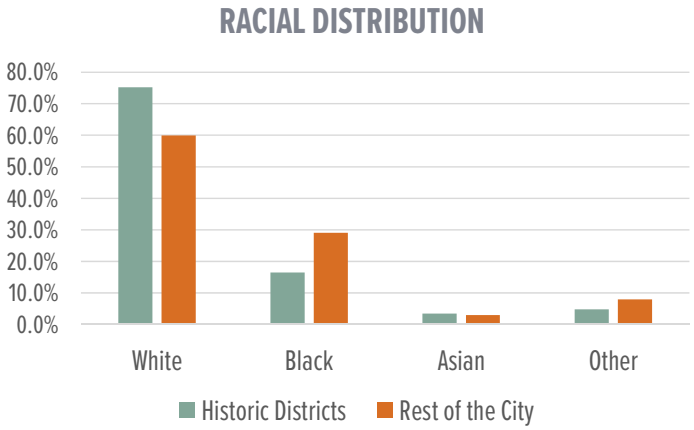
## Gini Index

A rather academic, but sometimes useful measure of income distribution is known as the Gini Index. It measures income distribution among the residents of a specified geography. If everyone in the area to be studied had exactly the same income it would have a value of zero. On the other hand, if one household had all of the area's income, the area would receive a 1 – perfect inequality of income. The closer the area has to an even distribution of incomes, the closer to a value of 0.5 would be assigned. Nashville outside of historic districts does reasonably well, with a Gini score of .45675. The historic districts are even closer to an even distribution of income, however, with a score of .475294. Among the historic districts there is a score range from .38 to .54.

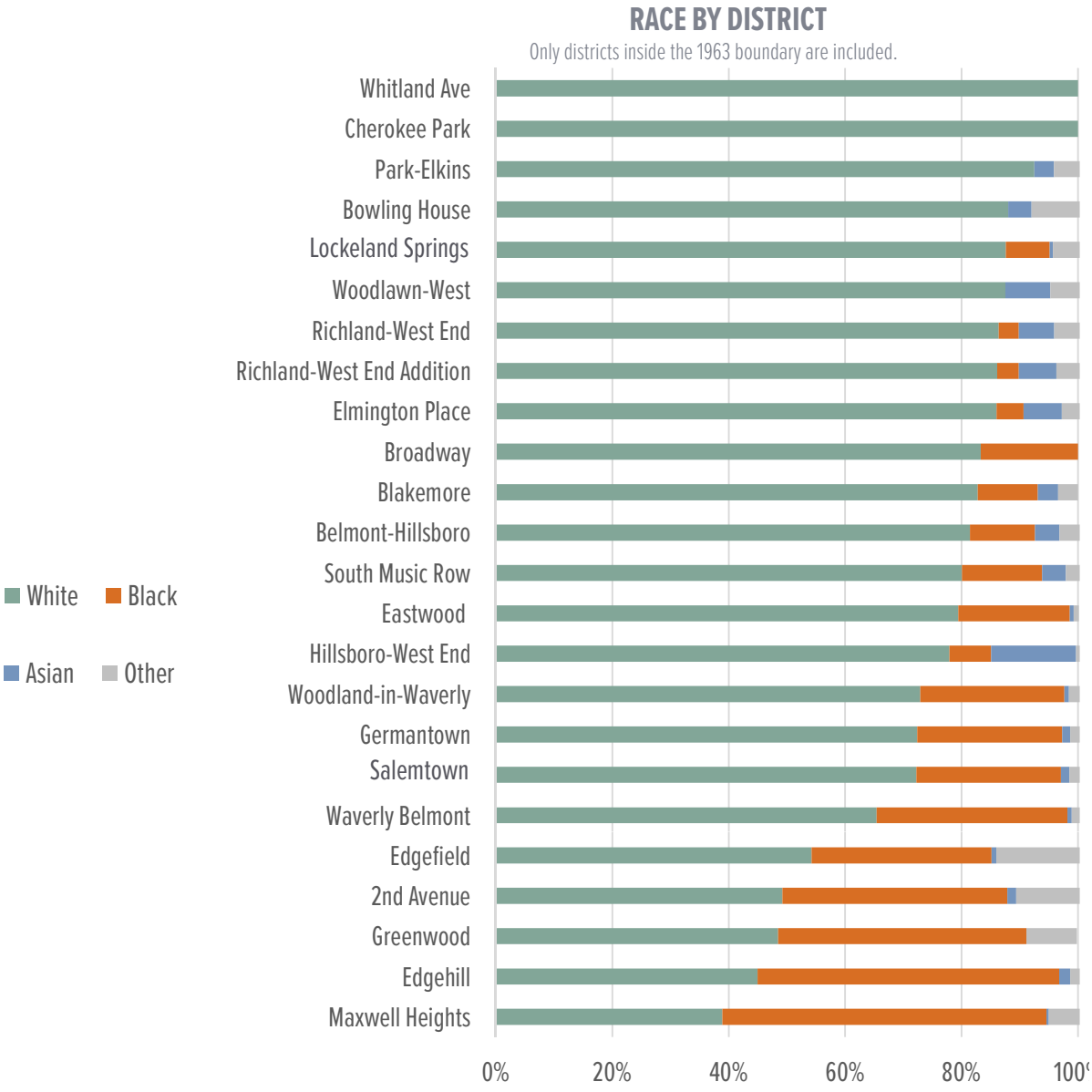



The important finding here is that in nearly every historic neighborhood in Nashville there are households with very modest earnings living next to households of significant income. This is economic integration and is central to the equity goals of NashvilleNext.

On an income basis, historic districts are reasonably balanced among lower income, middle income and upper income households. It is a slightly different picture when it comes to race. Nashville is approximately 60% white, while the historic districts are around 75% white.

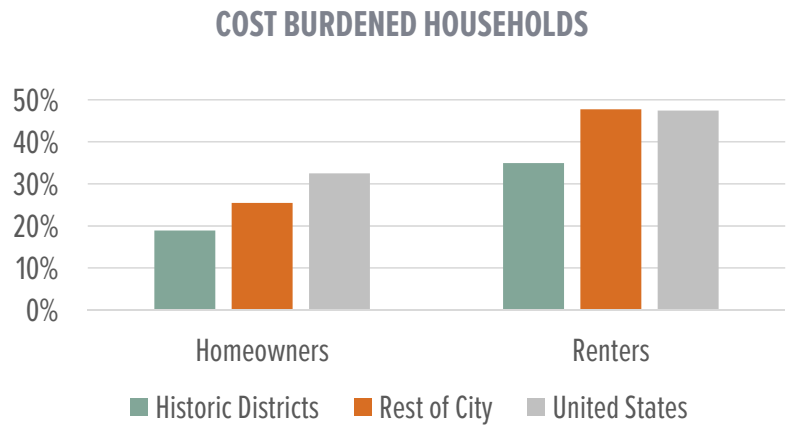



Among districts, however, is a different picture, with a third of historic districts having a proportion of Black population greater than the 29% share in the city as a whole.

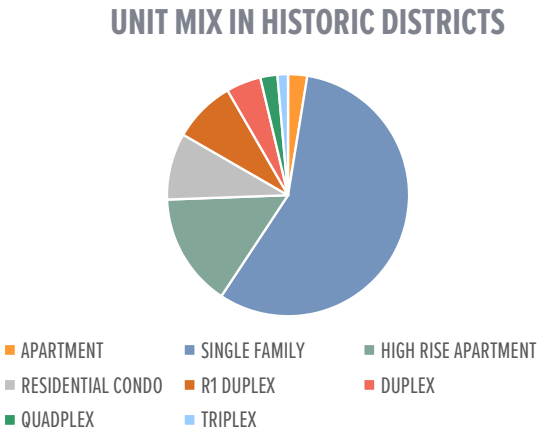


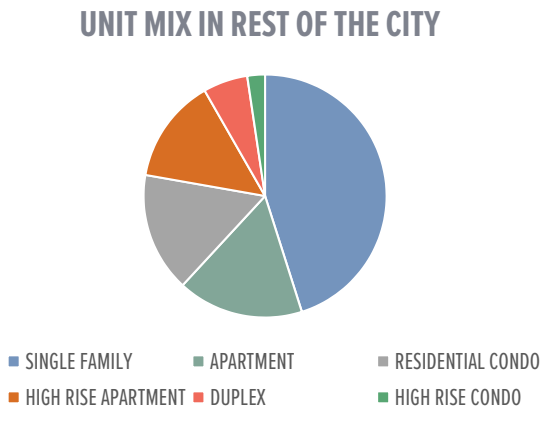
The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines cost-burdened households as those who spend more than 30% of their income on housing. Cities with the greatest rental burdens are generally cities with a high cost of living, such as Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco. Thus, the scale is skewed—individuals making a significant income may still be housing cost burdened. However, the scale can be skewed in other ways. A metric that looks only at only housing and its associated costs misses a host of related expenses. Under the typical definition of "cost-burdened households," a little over half (55%) of US neighborhoods are considered "affordable" for the typical household.

While Nashville sees fewer housing cost-burdened homeowners than the country as a whole, renters do not fare as well. Approximately the same share of rental households is housing cost burdened as is true of the US generally. For both owners and renters in historic districts, however, there is a lower share who are housing cost burdened. The slightly higher income levels in historic districts relative to the city in general is at least in part of the reason for that difference.

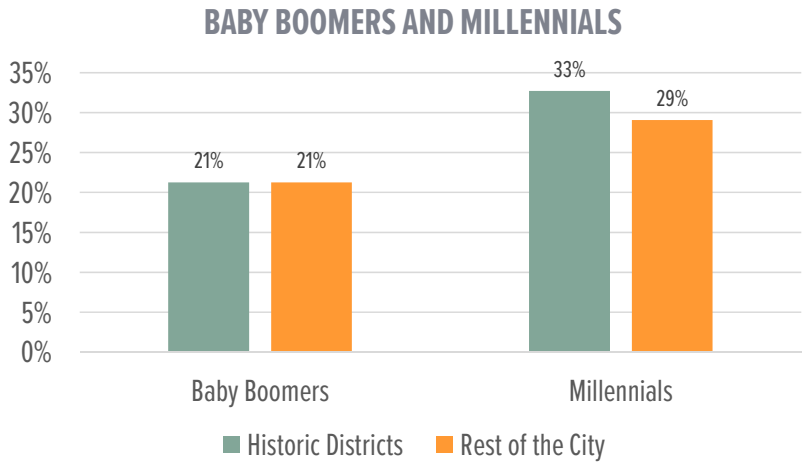



Typically, older neighborhoods include a variety of types of housing. Yet, because the majority of historic districts are primarily single-family residential neighborhoods it is not surprising that of housing units in historic districts 54% are single family. Compared to the rest of the city, where the recent apartment boom is reflected in the variety of residential units. A mix of housing types means a residents have choices in where to live. Historic districts, with older and smaller units offer more affordable housing stock. New apartments in the Gulch are certainly popular, but less affordable.

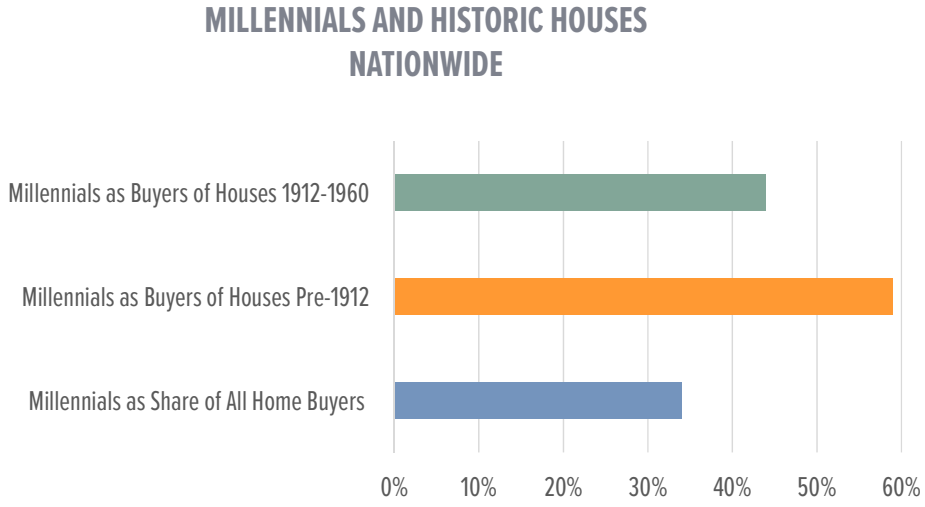


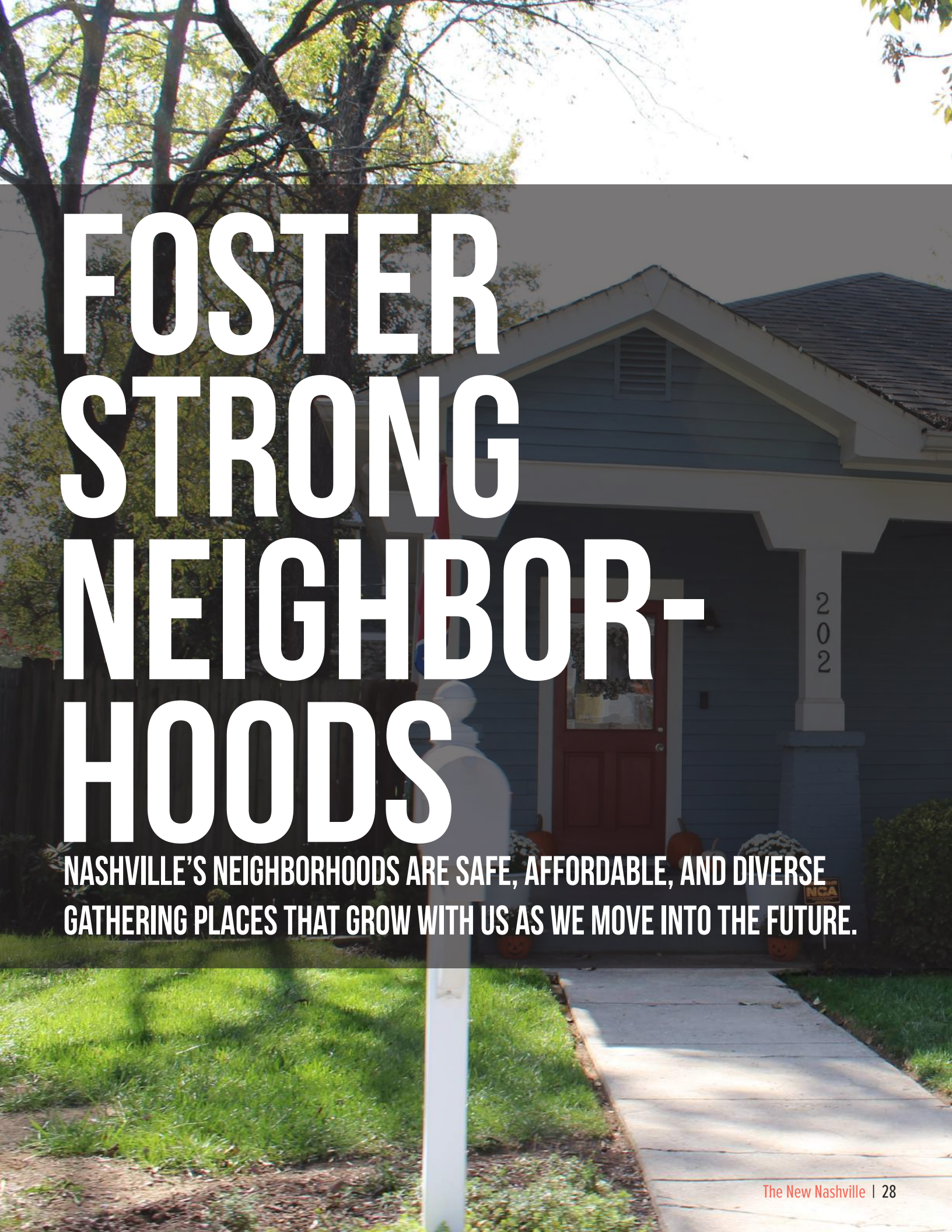
The largest demographic group in America today is millennials, those born between 1981 and 1996 — ages 23 to 38 in 2019. In Nashville, millennials have replaced Baby Boomers as the largest age cohort. In Nashville, while the share of baby boomers in historic districts and the rest of the city are virtually the same, millennials show a preference for living in historic districts.




A recent survey of the National Trust for Historic Preservation found that 44% of millennials surveyed wanted to live in historic, character rich neighborhoods.[11] National home buying trends back this up. Nationally, despite making up only 34 percent of homebuyers, millennials account for 59% of all buyers of houses built before 1912 and 43% of buyers of houses built between 1912 and 1960.




11 "Millennials and Historic Preservation: A Deep Dive Into Attitudes and Values - Online Survey Results," National Trust for Historic Preservation, Jun 18, 2017, https://nthp-savingplaces.s3.amazonaws.com/2017/06/27/09/02/25/407/Millennial%20Research%20Report.pdf



# FOSTER STRONG NEIGHBOR-HOODS

NASHVILLE'S NEIGHBORHOODS ARE SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND DIVERSE GATHERING PLACES THAT GROW WITH US AS WE MOVE INTO THE FUTURE.



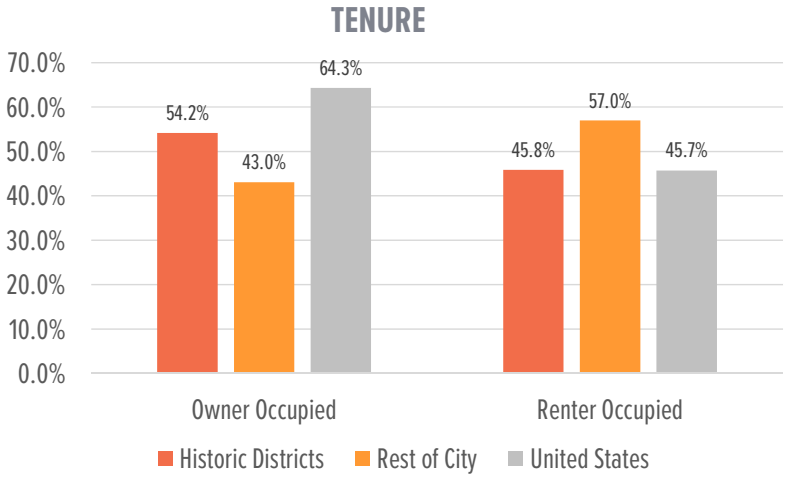
# FOSTER STRONG NEIGHBOR-HOODS

The first decade of the 21st century was a volatile time for real estate. In 2007-2008, the Great Recession began and its first and hardest-hit victim was residential real estate. Around the country, housing prices fell almost overnight and foreclosure rates soared. In Nashville, unemployment rates hit nearly 10 percent. Yet, Nashville came out of the recession early compared to most of the country. The unemployment rate dropped steadily, development boomed, real estate appreciated, and foreclosure rates dropped.

As Nashville has climbed out of the recession, others took note. According to the Urban Land Institute, Nashville has been ranked in the top 10 real estate markets in the country. The relative affordability of Nashville made it an investors market. Yet, the surging prices and development pressure on Nashville's neighborhoods have hit the residents irregularly. With NashvilleNext's focus on equitable neighborhood development, efforts are underway to build and maintain neighborhoods where all residents can thrive. This growth has been so rapid that some worry that Nashville is at risk of losing the character that brought so many people in the first place. Historic preservation helps mitigate the pace of change and protect the built character that makes Nashville special.

Nashville's historic districts are primarily residential, and a majority of designated properties are single family homes. In a hot market city like Nashville, families that own their homes are seeing their largest asset appreciating. Therefore, any regulations that impact that asset are important. The economic role of land use regulations in general, and local historic districts in particular, is to protect the context within which individual historic properties exist. In Nashville that means maintaining the character and quality of historic neighborhoods – the defining feature of each home's "location." Design review and regulation do in fact influence property values.

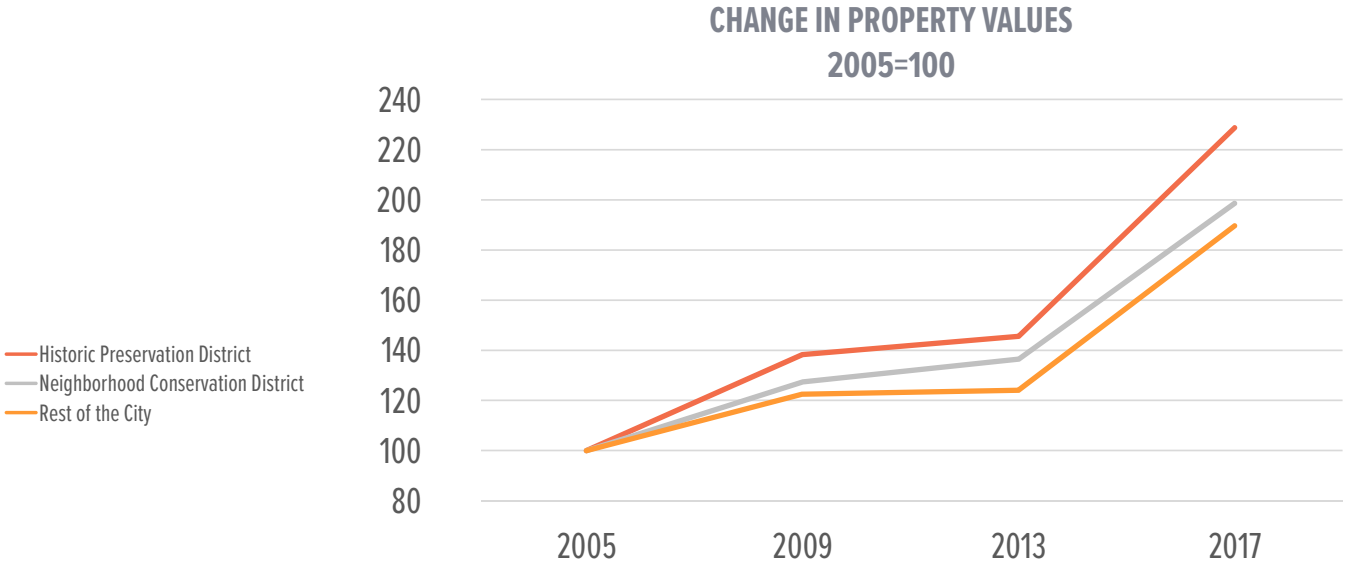
The link between homeownership and neighborhood stability is well understood. While homeownership is certainly not for everyone, there is a general understanding that homeownership is the major source of accumulating assets at the family level, and is often seen as a proxy indicator for neighborhood stability. In Nashville overall less than half of the households are homeowners. Nationally, the rate of homeownership continues to climb a decade after the end of the recession and has neared pre-recession rates to 64.3%. Nashville's historic districts, while not yet reaching the levels of the nation as a whole, have ownership rates considerably higher than the rest of the city.




Long-term residents are another indicator of neighborhood stability. 10% of all long-term residents—homeowners and renters that moved into their homes before 2000—live in historic districts.

# Property Values

A family's home is nearly always its largest financial asset. Therefore, it is a legitimate concern if there are factors that would cause the value of that asset to diminish, or even increase at a rate less than comparable properties. Some suggest that the design review imposed by historic districts, being an additional layer of regulation, has an adverse impact on property values. It was critical that this report evaluate that concern. The results were clear. Over the last fifteen years, property values in both Historic Preservation Overlay Districts and Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts outperformed the market as a whole.





For this analysis all of the property tax assessment data for single family homes was compared.[12] For each property (more than 42,000 of them) a value per square foot was calculated at four time periods, based on the reassessment dates of the Davidson County Property Assessor. The properties were then divided into each of the primarily residential historic districts, including Historic Preservation Districts and Neighborhood Conservation Districts. The per square foot average value in 2005 was given an index value of 100.[13] The index number increased as average sales prices went up and decreased when average sales prices went down. An index number of 200 would mean in that year the average square foot selling price of a house was twice what it was in the base year of 2005.

While over the twelve-year period houses in all three categories increased significantly in value, the greatest increase was in the Historic Preservation Overlay Districts, followed by the Neighborhood Conservation Districts, both of which outperformed the rest of the city.

## ANNUALIZED VALUE CHANGE (2005-2017), SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS

Rest of the City **6.0%**

Neighborhood Conservation Districts **8.0%**

Historic Preservation Overlay Districts **8.8%**

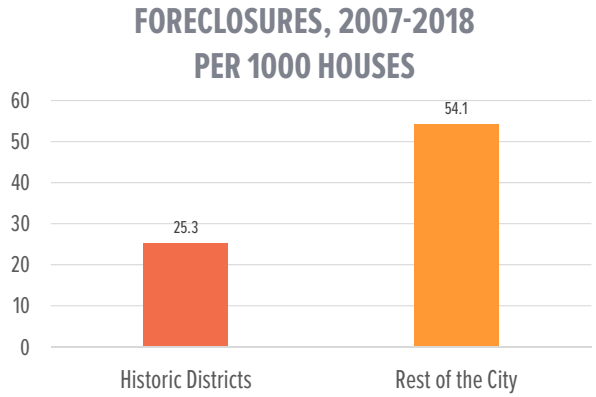
On an individual basis, all three Historic Preservation Districts and most Neighborhood Conservation Districts outperformed the rest of the city in terms of annual rate of value growth. Importantly, none lost value.

12 This analysis reviewed only single family properties, as sorted by "building type" in the Davidson County Assessor data. This analysis was limited to single-family properties. The reason is fourfold: 1) the vast majority of properties in HPZOs are residential: 2) there is a sufficient quantity of data to make the analysis statistically reliable; 3) the wide range of sizes, uses, and types of commercial properties, including multifamily residential, make comparison more problematic; and 4) the buyer and seller motivations for commercial properties are more complex and are more often driven by market skewing variables such as financing, exchanges, basic and capital gains considerations, etc., than are single family housing transactions.

13 An "index" is a way of comparing the change in different amounts over time. The most familiar index might be the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which is widely used as the way to measure inflation. Another common index is the Down Jones Industrial Average (DJIA). The ups and downs of the CPI or the DJIA are not the price of a loaf of bread or a share of General Motors directly. Rather they are a reflection of  are a reflection of percentage change in the price of those commodities over time.

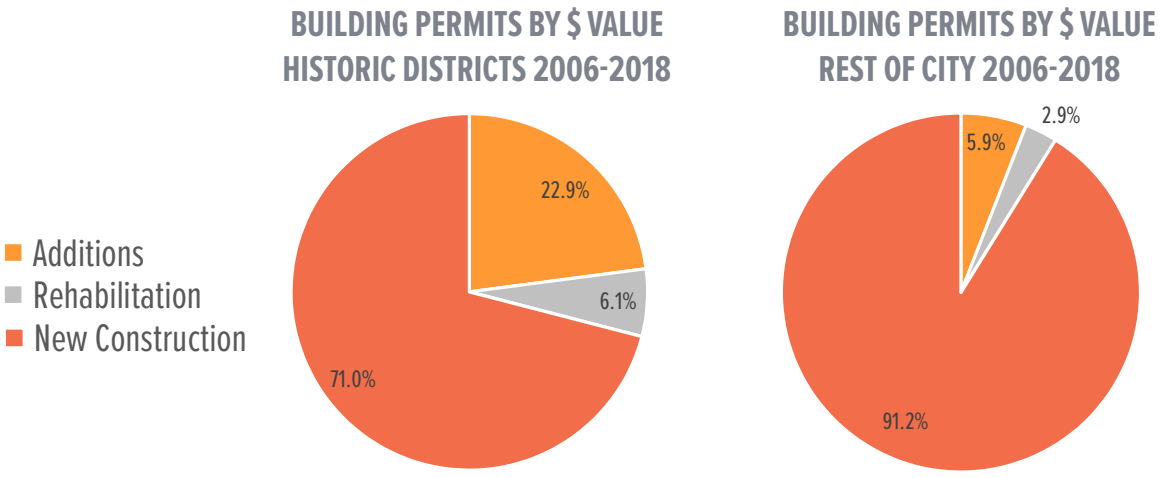
# Foreclosures

The stability and desirability of houses in historic districts paid another dividend during the recession. Millions of U.S. families lost their houses in the Great Recession as did thousands in Nashville.[14] Yet, the rate of foreclosure between the start of the recession and today has been less than half in Nashville historic districts than in the rest of the city. 16% of foreclosures in historic districts were actually new houses built in the 21st century.




# Building Permit Investment

Historic district designation doesn't discourage investment, in fact, quite the opposite is true in Nashville. An analysis of building permits from 2006-2011 shows that historic districts weathered the recession well, accounting for 19% of all permit investment and over 18% of all projects during the recession. In the last 5 years, historic districts have seen an average of $62.8 million in permit investment and 373 projects per year, accounting for around 11% of investment and 14 % projects. Historic districts attract dollars, seeing more than $445 million in investment since 2006. Far from being frozen in time as museums, historic districts, in fact, welcome appropriate new development. Since 2006, more than 70% of investment in historic districts has been in new construction.




The equivalent analysis of the rest of the city shows outside the historic districts indicates more than 90% of permitted investment was in new construction.

14 In 2008, Davidson County had 4,203 foreclosures, up 178 percent from 2006, according to Tennessee Housing Development Agency data. https://www.tennessean.com/story/money/2018/08/28/great-recession-nashville-10-years-later/824196002/




# CREATE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

NASHVILLE HAS A DIVERSE AND COMPETITIVE ECONOMY AND HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE THAT ATTRACTS AND RETAINS A STRONG WORKFORCE.


E & A HAMMER
&ZERO
VILLE, TN
RESHIE
NDZERO

# CREATE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

***"Protecting local historic districts can enhance business recruitment potential. Vibrant commercial cores and charming neighborhoods with character attract new business and quality industry. Companies continually relocate to communities that offer their workers a higher quality of life, which successful preservation programs and stable districts enhance.***

**- National Trust for Historic Preservation**

The statement above from the National Trust for Historic Preservation couldn't have been more true in Nashville. Most of the historic districts in Nashville are primarily residential, yet these areas continue to be a location of choice for businesses.

## Job Growth and Entrepreneurs

Top job industries in Nashville include health care, public administration, educational services, accommodation and food service, and professional, scientific, and technical services. Many have heard of Nashville's diverse economy. Overall, 3% of jobs are located in historic districts. As Nashville has come out of the recession, 2010-2015, 11% of all job growth in the city has gone to historic districts. In fact, historic districts have seen job growth of over 40% while the rest of the city saw 9%. Historic districts also saw 24% of all job growth in accommodation and food service jobs, playing a key role in the tourism industry.



**40% job growth in historic districts**
compared to 9% in the rest of the city.



**24% of all job growth in accommodation and food services**
meaning historic districts play a key role in the tourism industry



**135% increase in jobs in the information sector**
in historic districts



**Founded in July of 2016 by entrepreneur and business owner, Laci Bonner, The Nash Collection is a lifestyle brand that embodies a love for Nashville. The company operates a storefront in the Broadway HPZO.**

Photo credit: Nashville Guru

Historic district top job industries include accommodation and food service, management of companies and enterprises, retail trade, and information jobs. In 2016, the Kaufman Foundation ranked Nashville 5th in the country for entrepreneurship activity, ahead of cities like Boston and San Francisco. An increase in startups is a tell-tale sign of economic strength and indicated that Nashville was recovering from the recession.

## Between 2011 and 2015, 13% of startup jobs (firms less than a year old) and 15% of small business jobs (firms with less than 20 employees) occurred in historic districts.

Historic districts saw the number of jobs in the management of companies and enterprises more than double and jobs in the information sector increased by 135%. Entrepreneurs and tech startups are choosing historic districts in Nashville.

# BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT




Photo credit: Nashville Guru

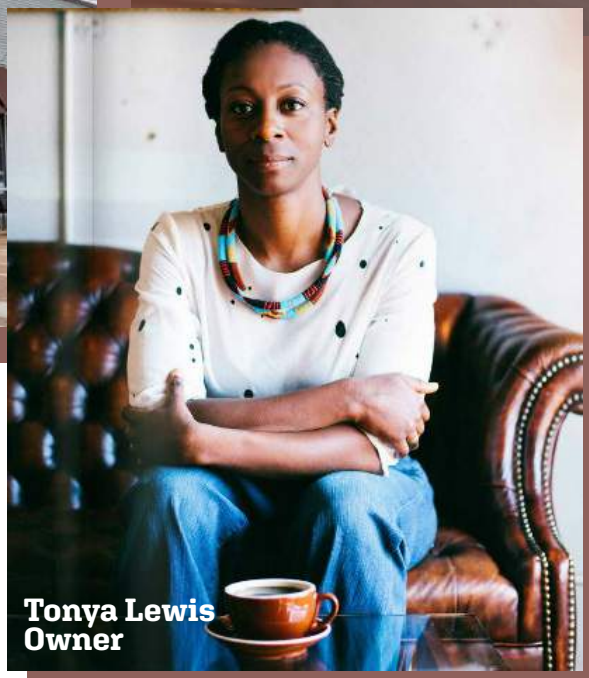



Photo credit: urbaanite.com

Photo credit: The Post Facebook

## The Post East

The Post is a community-focused cafe located in the Historic Lockeland Springs neighborhood of East Nashville. Lockeland Springs is unique among Nashville's historic districts in that it has many commercial properties interspersed throughout. Unique businesses like The Post are giving East Nashville its reputation as a trendy and distinctive restaurant scene.

The Post opened in the summer of 2014, with the intention of providing a place where the community can engage with one another. They also had a mission to provide nutritionally rich, wholesome meals, including their signature cold pressed juices. The Post hosts programs that are centered on community: from a Bluegrass Brunch and Old Time Social series on the weekends, featuring both local and national artists. Twice a month, the Post host an event called "East Side Story Tellin'," which gives local writers, poets, and musicians an opportunity to showcase their talents. Just as older buildings contribute to the character of a place, so too do businesses such as The Post contribute to the quality of life in these neighborhoods.

# Commercial Properties

On the commercial side, Nashville's growth is well-recognized as well. In 2019, the Urban Land Institute and PriceWaterhouseCooper ranked Nashville as one of the top 5 in the U.S. market for overall real estate prospects.[15] Like residential property, owners of commercial property wonder if a historic preservation or conservation overlay will impact their property values or rate of return. In short, yes and the results in Nashville are revealing.

This study looked at the downtown Nashville historic districts—Broadway, 2nd Avenue, and Downtown historic preservation overlay districts—compared to the rest of the downtown, as defined by the Central Business Improvement District. For context, this study also looked at the rate of change in Metro Nashville and the rest of the city not in downtown. The results show that the historic district properties on the aggregate are the most valuable from a value per acre standpoint.

| COMMERCIAL AREA | VALUE PER ACRE 2017 | % CHANGE IN VALUE |
|---|---|---|
| Downtown Historic Districts | $35,398,461 | 425% |
| Rest of Downtown | $20,517,010 | 236% |
| Metro Nashville (inside 1963 boundary) | $2,094,395 | 158% |
| Rest of the City (outside downtown) | $1,876,002 | 169% |

While increased value provides more tax revenue to the coffers of the Metro, funding pay for police officers and teachers, most property owners are more concerned with the rate of return. Over the period of 2005-2017, when the percentage change in property values in these areas was compared, again the historic districts prove they are a great investment. These results show that quality of place matters, and smaller, older buildings are magnets. Tall buildings are not the only way to create value in a downtown.

**The Two Downtown HPZOs, Broadway and 2nd Avenue, together make up only .01% of the land area in Nashville-Davidson County. However, they account for 2.11% of the county's state sales tax and 2.36% of local sales tax. These areas are some of the most economically productive in the city.**

15 https://urbanland.uli.org/capital-markets/understanding-the-investment-climate-for-nashville-real-estate/

# Music Industry

The music industry in Nashville is recognized as one of the largest and most dynamic clusters of the industry in the world. This is due to a combination of factors including concentration of talent and an abundance of activity in a place-based environment, all of which lead to strong relationships to support the music system from A to Z. “The best writers and musicians in the world live in this town,” said Americana artist Andrew Combs. “It keeps you on your toes being around so many talented people.” However, the music industry is more than just musicians, all sorts of fields from performance spaces, production and distribution, along with publishing and banking help the industry function. A 2012 study showed the industry has a $5.7 billion direct impact and when including indirect and induced impacts, totals over $9.6 billion in total effects. [16]

Entrepreneurial activity is key to the music industry and one reason Nashville is so successful is its strong landscape of music entrepreneurism. The vertical ladder of larger and smaller businesses work in unison to write, produce, promote, and protect Nashville’s musical exports. Entrepreneurs and small businesses thrive in historic and older buildings, which tend to be smaller and more affordable. Places like Music Row, with the modest size residential properties turned offices and studios, and older buildings found in Wedgewood-Houston are key to this. “Simply put: Nashville is the most affordable, practical and manageable of the major music cities to live in,” said Ben Ford of the band Airpark.[17] Yet, the music industry is not immune to changes nor the development pressure in Nashville. Where larger studios can afford to move to new buildings, many of Nashville’s entrepreneurs in the music industry are not so lucky.

Since 2006, there have been 23 SP zoning cases approved in the vicinity of Music Row. In 2014 alone, 10 % of all SPs granted in the city occurred in the Music Row area. These larger developments that replace modest, small buildings with new, larger buildings impact the affordability of the area.

# Nashville’s Music Row

The area known as “Music Row” was first developed as one of Nashville’s streetcar suburbs in the late-19th century. It wasn’t until the 1960s when Nashville became a top recording center with studios lining 16th and 17th Avenues South. Nashville’s music scene historically was diverse, full of entrepreneurs on all sides of the industry: songwriting, production, copyright lawyers, marketing, and front of the house shows. Music Row as a collection of buildings and a cluster of businesses has lost eminence in recent years, driven by both transitions in the music industry and Nashville’s development boom. Over 50 buildings on Music Row have been demolished and replaced since 2000. Efforts to save RCA Studio A, where Elvis Presley and Willie Nelson once recorded, spurred locals into action in 2013 as local philanthropist Aubrey Preston purchased the building at the 11th hour. The Music Industry Coalition was formed to bring awareness to Music Row’s cultural heritage. Singer-Songwriter Ben Folds got involved, telling the AP in 2015, “It seemed to me to be a little bit of a tipping point if an incredible studio like this on Music Row was just to disappear in the dead of night. I felt like the identity of Nashville needed to remain.” The campaign worked as the National Trust for Historic Preservation named Music Row one of its National Treasures in 2015. Today, only a small portion of Music Row is designated as a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District called South Music Row. There are no easy answers for balancing redevelopment and preservation efforts moving forward for Music Row. Many believe the loss of important studios on Music Row would be an economic failure as much as a cultural one. According to Dr. Shain Shapiro, founder of Sound Diplomacy, an international music market development company, “If Nashville wants the Music City branding, it should work to preserve the places that made it Music City.”

16 Nashville Music Industry: Impact, Contribution and Cluster Analysis. Dr. Garrett Harper Chris Cotton (2012).

17 https://www.forbes.com/sites/dannyross1/2017/03/29/6-reasons-to-love-the-new-nashville/#17a6919c5538



*"Nashville's music landscape is strong because of the high concentration key decision makers for the industry; super-abundance of activity (intensity unmatched elsewhere); proximity (the Music Row phenomenon of "place"); and relationships that make the music system work in Nashville as a dense compact of service with a purpose."*

**- Nashville Music Industry: Impact, Contribution and Cluster Analysis**



# NASHVILLE'S TOURISM OFFERINGS






**Ryman Auditorium**

# Heritage Attractions

Heritage Attractions are among the most well attended attractions in Nashville . Of the top 20 tourist attractions in Nashville, 16 are heritage attractions. Of the 4,325,673 paid admissions at these 20 sites in 2017, 64 percent were at heritage attractions.

| ATTRACTION | NUMBER OF PAID ADMISSIONS, 2017 | HERITAGE TOURISM SITE |
|---|---|---|
| Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum | 1,244,764 | X |
| Nashville Zoo at Grassmere | 921,522 | |
| Adventure Science Center | 357,539 | |
| Johnny Cash Museum | 345,000 | X |
| Belle Meade Plantation | 327,978 | X |
| Frist Art Museum | 219,135 | |
| Andrew Jackson's Hermitage | 214,147 | X |
| Cheekwood | 211,718 | X |
| General Jackson Showboat | 131,909 | X |
| Corsair Distillery | 52,000 | X |
| Musicians Hall of Fame and Museum | 50,000 | X |
| The George Jones | 45,000 | X |
| Belmont Mansion | 36,000 | X |
| Historic Travellers Rest Plantation and Museum | 32,000 | X |
| Lane Motor Museum | 31,242 | X |
| Chaffin's Bar Theater | 25,219 | X |
| Patsy Cline Museum | 25,000 | X |
| Tennesee Central Railway Museum | 22,000 | X |
| Yazoo Brewing CO | 18,500 | |
| Music City Roots | 15,000 | X |




# Marathon Motor Works

There is an adage that says if you do something for locals, the tourists will come—but if you do something for tourists, only the tourists will come. An economic development strategy that relies too heavily on tourism risks losing the authenticity that attracts tourists in the first place. Thus local investments should be directed towards residents first, nurturing the character and culture that makes a place distinctive and attractive to visitors.

This is exactly what has happened at the Marathon Motor Works Factory. It took Barry Walker 28 years to acquire the entire complex, with its sprawling buildings—most built between 1881 and 1912— including the historic Marathon Motor Works auto factory and its central administration building. Walker's approached the project with block-by-block perseverance, preserving the historic texture of Marathon, giving it a "funk" that attracts both locals and visitors.[18] His investment was catalytic—at the time, the factory's location in downtown was considered an island, but today it is increasingly surrounded by new development.

Walker was dedicated to uncovering and showcasing the history of the Marathon Motor Works complex—when he bought the first building, the origins of the complex were unknown. "In 1989, I finally found out it was part of the Marathon car company," he says. "I started researching and there really wasn't that much out there."[19] He spent the following decades learning about the company's history and the roles of the various buildings throughout the complex, preserving the different buildings to their time periods. Today, visitors can see four of the eight Marathon cars still in existence—collected by Walker and put on display to remind guests of the site's history.

Today, the tenants of the complex are diverse and eclectic. Among the nearly 50 tenants of Marathon Village are photographers, distillers, personal trainers, interior designers, sculptors, printmakers, music video producers, recording studios and advertising agencies. Antique Archaeology can also be found in the complex, the store owned by Mike Wolfe and made famous on the popular TV show, "American Pickers". Corsair Distillery also located in the former Yazoo Brewery within the complex. Corsair Distillery is one of the best attended tourist attractions in Nashville, with 52,000 paid admissions in 2017.[20] Around 2004, Lightning 100—Nashville's longest running independent radio station spotlighting community, local Nashville music, and emerging artists—moved their offices into the Marathon Complex. "It is unique and eclectic like we are," says Fred Buc, general manager for the station.[21]

18 http://www.venturenashville.com/histories-unfolding-maker-entrepreneur-barry-walker-marathon-village-cms-992
19 https://www.liveauctioneers.com/news/top-news/general-interest/historic-marathon-village-rises-from-rubble-in-nashville/
20 Book of Listings, 2017.
21 https://www.liveauctioneers.com/news/top-news/general-interest/historic-marathon-village-rises-from-rubble-in-nashville/

# Events and Festivals

Many festivals and events in Nashville showcase the city's heritage. Musician's Corner, shown in the photo, is a free summer concert series held in Nashville's Centennial Park. The organization supports emerging artists and provides inclusive arts enrichment and educational programming for adults and youth. Other events showcasing the Music City's heritage are the Cheekwood Annual Wildflower Show, the Music City Jazz, Blues, & Heritage Festival, the Music City Soul Series, Awesome April, Rites of Spring, Tin Pan South Songwriters Festival, the Full Moon Pickin' Parties, the Running of the Iroquois Steeplechase, the CMT Music Festival, the Music City Hot Chicken festival, and the Celebrate Nashville Cultural Festival. These festivals showcase Nashville's living heritage—its musicians and its music lovers.

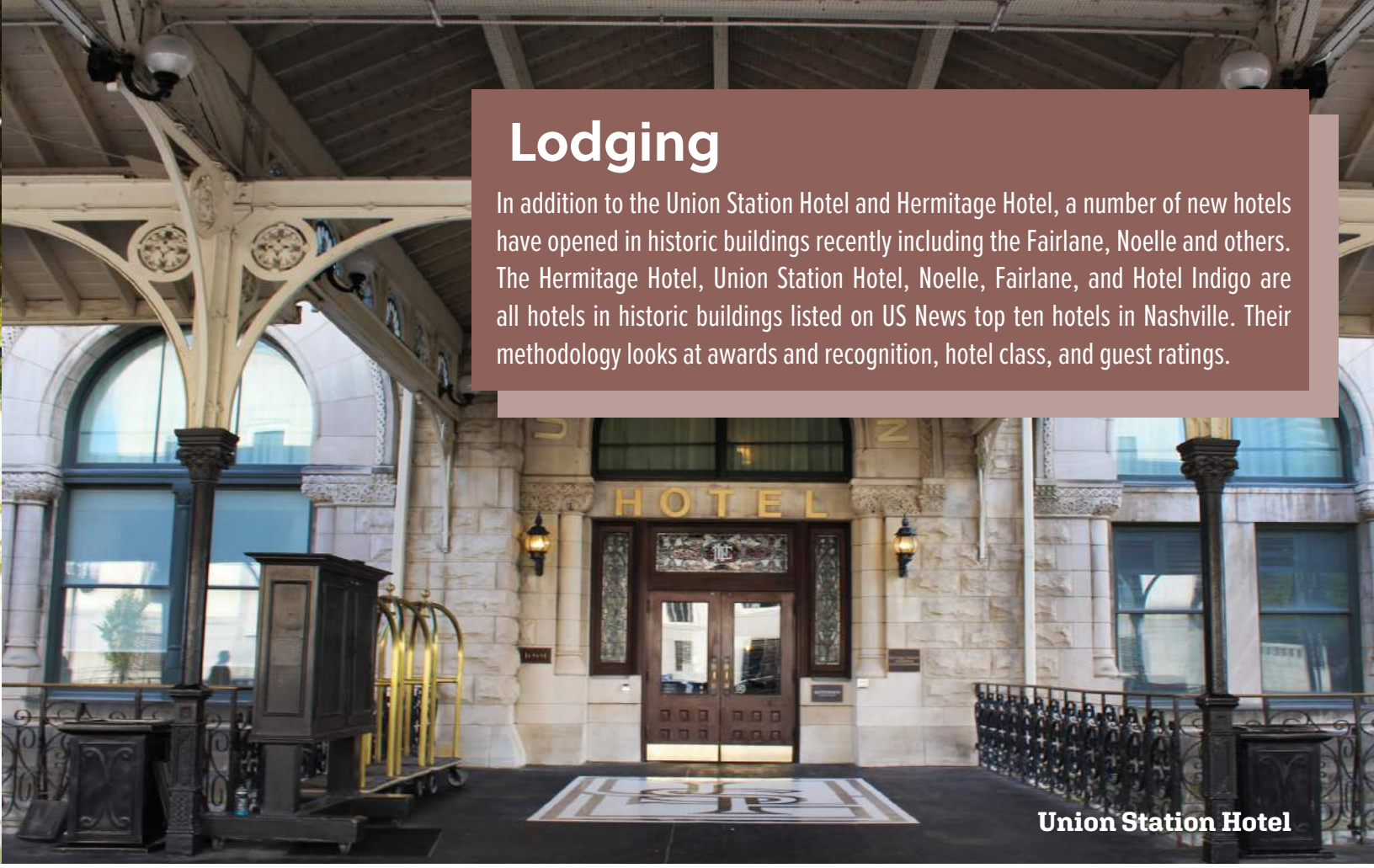



**Musician's Corner**

Photo credit: Nashville Guru

# Lodging

In addition to the Union Station Hotel and Hermitage Hotel, a number of new hotels have opened in historic buildings recently including the Fairlane, Noelle and others. The Hermitage Hotel, Union Station Hotel, Noelle, Fairlane, and Hotel Indigo are all hotels in historic buildings listed on US News top ten hotels in Nashville. Their methodology looks at awards and recognition, hotel class, and guest ratings.




**Union Station Hotel**

# Tours

Nashville has diverse tour offerings to offer visitors. From historical walking tours to country music pub crawls, there are tour offerings for everyone in Nashville. One such tour is given by United Street Tours, which provides tours celebrating Nashville's diversity. Offerings include a tour of African American culture in Downtown, a tour of Jefferson Street, known as Nashville's "Black Wall Street," or a Civil Rights heritage tour. United Street Tours are led by knowledgeable local guides who break down complex topics to help attendees understand the influence of African Americans in Nashville's history. One stop on the tour is the newly rehabilitated Woolworth on 5th, the site of early Nashville sit-ins.




**Woolworth on 5th**


















# Entertainment Venues

THE DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE PARTNERSHIP PROVIDES A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF ENTERTAINMENT VENUES IN DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE. OF THE 54 VENUES LISTED, 39 ARE LOCATED IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS.









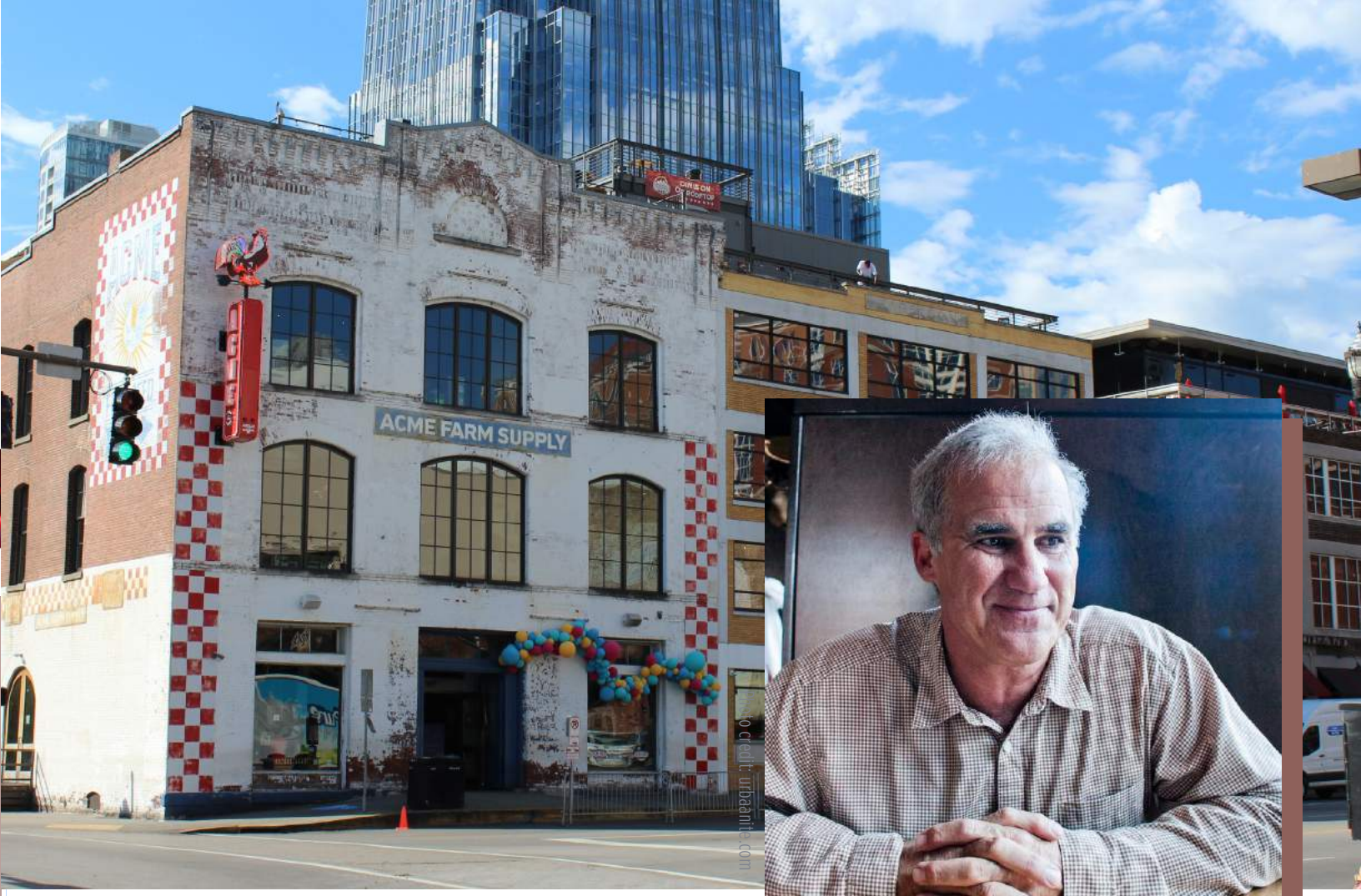
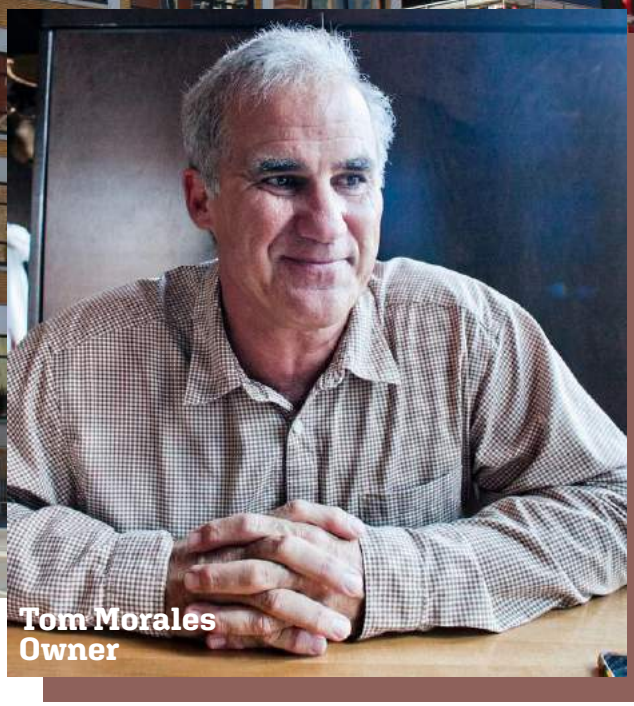



Photo Credit: urbanitc.com



Tom Morales
Owner

# Dining

Long before the record job growth and real estate boom or before Nashville made the national rankings for number of construction cranes, Nashville's downtown was not a boom town. One early pioneer was restaurateur Tom Morales, founder of TomKats catering company and owner of multiple restaurants. Morales's first major renovation project was the 1890s Acme Feed & Seed building, located on a prominent corner on lower Broadway. After sitting vacant for over 20 years, the building was rehabilitated to maintain its character and transformed into three floors for restaurant and entertainment, and a rooftop terrace. Locals and tourists alike delight at the charm of the building and love to take in the views the rooftop allows of downtown Nashville and the Cumberland River.

As a Nashville local, Morales's preservation ethic runs deep. "The history has always intrigued me because I grew up here; I watched it," Morales said. "I think what makes Nashville different and the 'it city' is its core. Every time you blow up a building, we lose a part of that." Morales's most recent building renovation is further into downtown, in the Fifth Avenue National Register Historic District, the Woolworth building. Most recently operating as a Dollar General, the building's past had been long nearly forgotten. In 1960, 124 students from Nashville's historically black colleges and universities, fresh off nonviolent resistance training, started a lunch counter protest at Woolworth. Civil Rights Movement leader and Congressman John Lewis was one of those students. Of the site, Morales said, "People fought for change here at this lunch counter and then it closed and became a Dollar General and so no one was eating at that counter anymore. I think there's a history here that needs to be retold."

Thanks in part to the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit, the rehabilitation restored many features including the terrazzo floors, cast-iron railings, and of course the lunch counters. The restaurant, called Woolworth on 5th, preserved interior space, and interpreted history of the site, opened in early 2018. The restaurant has been ranked "the most historically significant restaurant" in Nashville by NashvilleEater, and Woolworth on 5th is also part of the newly launched U.S. Civil Rights Trail, which charts the course of the Civil Rights Movement at more than 100 locations across 14 states.



Photo credit: On The Grid

**The Arcade**

# Retail

The Nashville Arcade opened in 1903 as Nashville's first covered shopping center. The interior space is two stories high covered with a gabled glass roof, and has shops, restaurants, and galleries lining both the ground floor and second floor mezzanine. At its grand opening, the Arcade caused so much excitement that more than 40,000 people attended. At the time, the population of Davidson County was approximately 125,000. The Arcade was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973, and its Palladian facades create interest at the arcades two entrances.

The Arcade is more than historic retail space—it is an incubator space for small and locally owned businesses. Today the Arcade features 50 tenant spaces and administrative offices, including 22 restaurants and cafes, 18 galleries and design studios, and 3 shops. Due to the concentration of artists and designers within the Arcade, the space is a hub for the Downtown arts scene. The first Saturday of every month, the Arcade galleries participate in the First Saturday Art Crawl, allowing visitors and the community to tour the diverse exhibitions put on by Nashville artists. The arcade is home to makers beyond artists. One such establishment is the Bubblery Nashville, a business offering high quality handmade bath and body products at affordable prices. The Arcade is also home to From Nashville with Love, both a working studio for M. Florita Jewelry, which creates jewelry that celebrates a love for Nashville, as well as a boutique selling carefully curated, locally made gifts. Finally, the Peanut Shop is located in the Arcade. The Peanut Shop's location within the Arcade was once home to a Planters Peanuts storefront. At one time, Planters had 2,000 retail stores across the country. Today, the Nashville Peanut Shop is one of only four original Planter Peanuts stores still open and operating, meaning the Arcade has been a home to fresh roasted peanuts since 1927. The store still features both the original peanut themed wallpaper that Planters created for all their shops, as well as an original peanut roaster.

The Arcade brings a lot to Downtown—both history that entices visitors and locals, as well as opportunities for small businesses and local artists.




**The Bubblery Nashville**

Photo credit: The Bubblery Nashville Facebook @bubblerynashville




**The Peanut Shop**

Photo credit: Nashville Public Television




**Whiskey Row, Downtown**

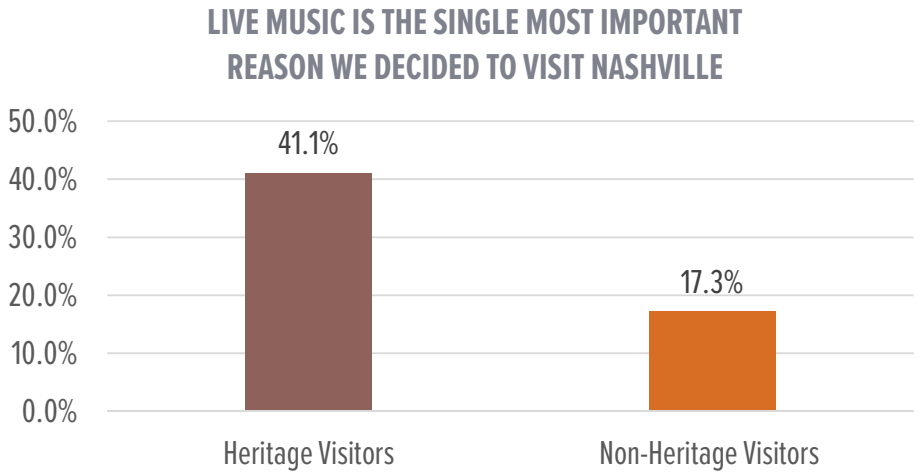
# Tourism

Tourism is big business in Nashville. Last year Davidson County hosted more than 15 million visitors who collectively spent $6.5 billion. Those tourism dollars supported 68,320 jobs in Nashville.

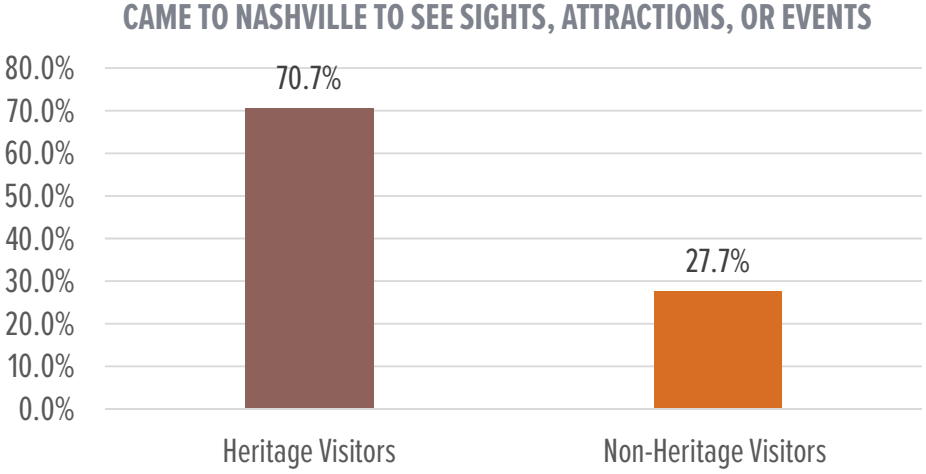
Around a quarter of all visitors to Nashville fall into the "heritage tourism" category – those who indicated historic sites were a most important factor in deciding to visit the city. In the language of historic preservation there is "tangible heritage" – buildings, sites, and artifacts; and there is "intangible heritage" — performing arts, social practices, oral traditions, rituals, festive events. Nashville has an abundance of both kinds of heritage with its rich collection of historic buildings and, of course, the matchless intangible heritage of Nashville music.

What many in Nashville might not recognize, but visitors to Nashville do, is the inherent connection between the tangible and the intangible heritage. In fact, there may not be a city in America where the intangible and the tangible are most closely intertwined. It is no accident that the most popular live music venues according to Yelp.com, a crowd-sourced user review and recommendation site, in Nashville are in historic buildings, nor that those coming to the city to see historic sites are much more likely to attend musical performances.

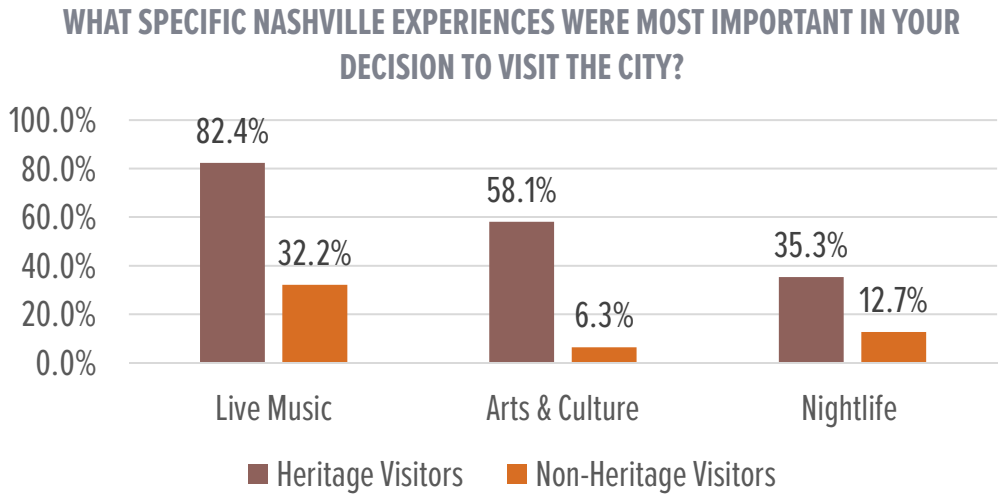
When asked to identify the single most important reason they decided to visit Nashville, live music topped the list for heritage visitors at a rate more than twice as high as non-heritage visitors.



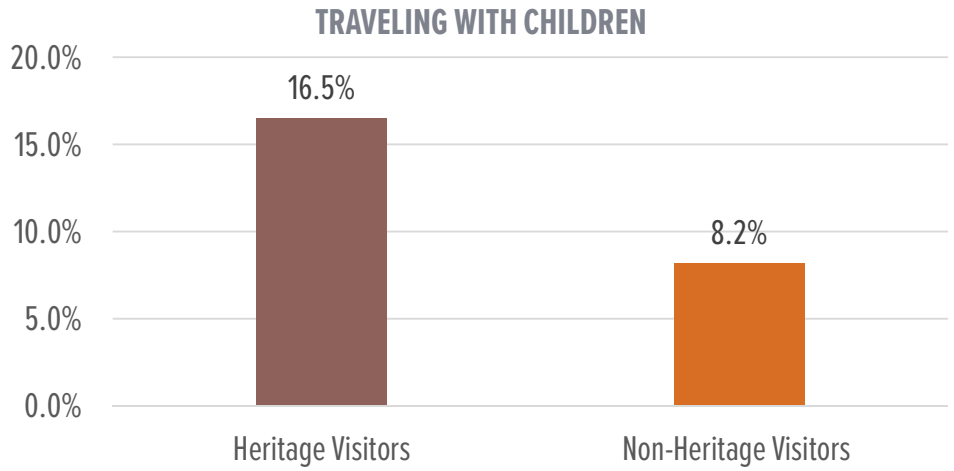

Heritage visitors come to enjoy the sights, attractions and events of Nashville, much more so than those for whom historic sites was not a priority.

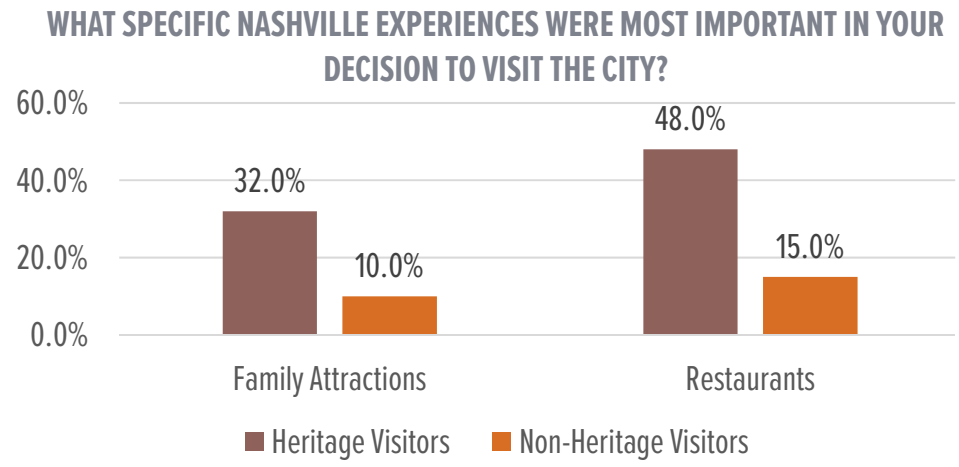


NashvilleNext speaks of the "musical heritage, artistic energy, and the cultural diversity of our residents" and those attributes are clearly the draw for heritage visitors. More than 4 in 5 heritage visitors said that live music was a driving factor in their decision to come to Nashville. Nearly sixty percent cited arts and culture and more than a third said nightlife as other reasons they visited the city. In each of those categories the share of heritage visitors with those interests was much significantly greater than non-heritage visitors.

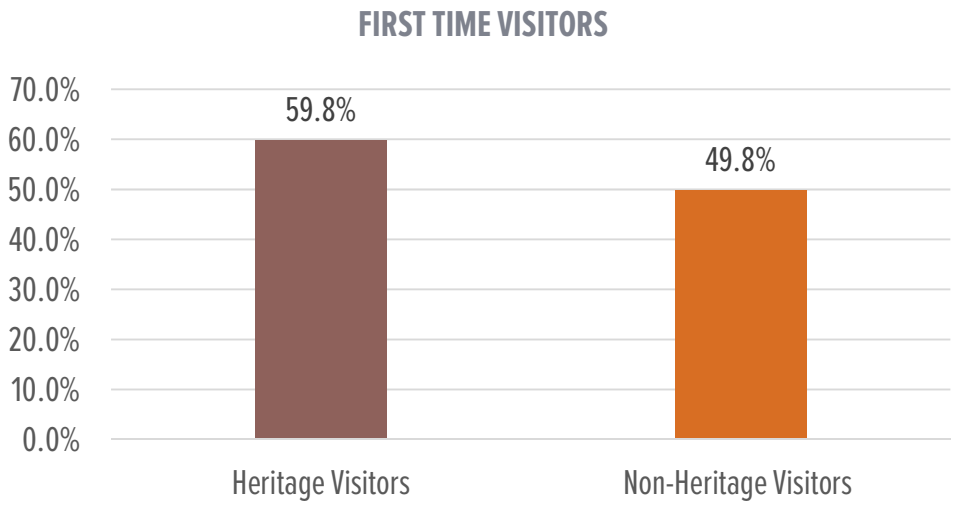



While many live music venues are essentially "adults only" Nashville also has an abundance of family-oriented attractions. A third of heritage visitors brought children with them a share three times higher than non-heritage tourists. And Nashville's growing reputation for a wide range of eating establishments was also recognized by heritage visitors.

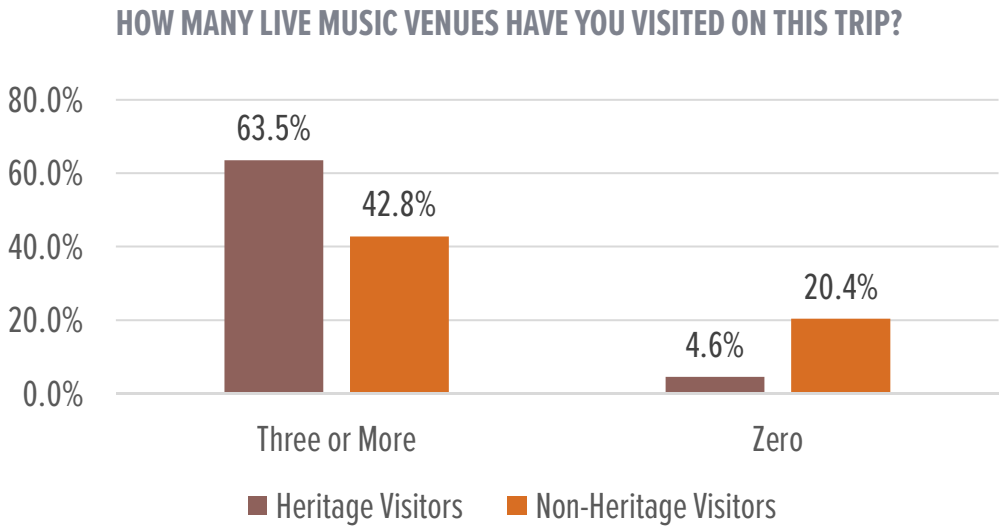


Nashville has for decades been a popular city for tourists. As that reputation grows and diversifies, the number of people visiting for the first time also continues to grow. Sixty percent of heritage visitors are making their first trip to Nashville. Only 12% of them said they wouldn't return.




Heritage visitors do not just like the music in Nashville, they love it. Nearly two-thirds patronized three or more live music venues during their stay and fewer than 1 in 20 visited no live music venues at all.

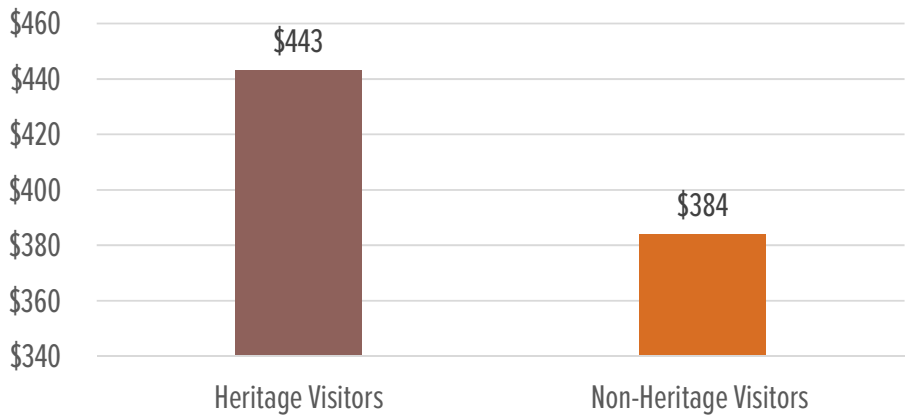



The whole concept of "Be Nashville" is built around the importance of uniqueness and authenticity. Nearly 95% of heritage visitors rated Nashville as good or excellent for uniqueness and authenticity.

Downtown, of course, is where almost every tourist to Nashville visits. However, for heritage visitors, there is more to Nashville than downtown. Heritage visitors went to nearly twice as neighborhoods beyond downtown as did non-heritage visitors.

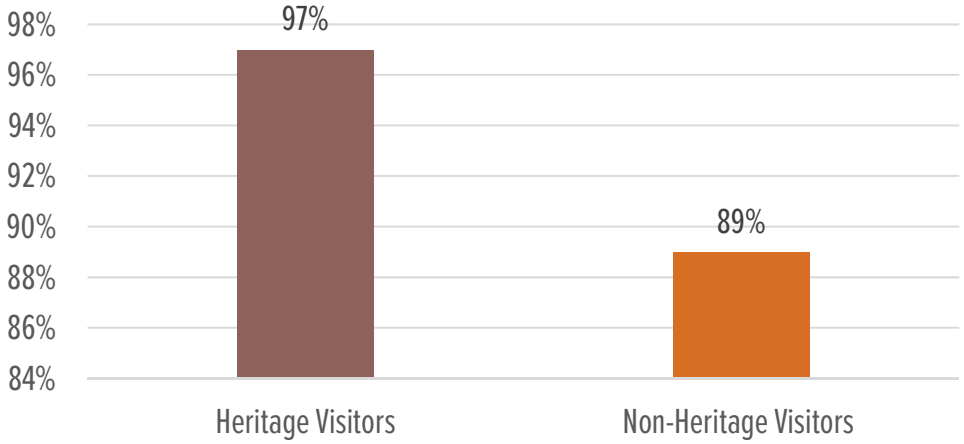
Just as there a differences in patterns of behaviors between heritage and non-heritage visitors, so are there differences in patterns of spending. Local expenditures of heritage visitors are 15% greater than non-heritage visitors. That means a greater relative impact on jobs, incomes, and taxes.

## LOCAL EXPENDITURES



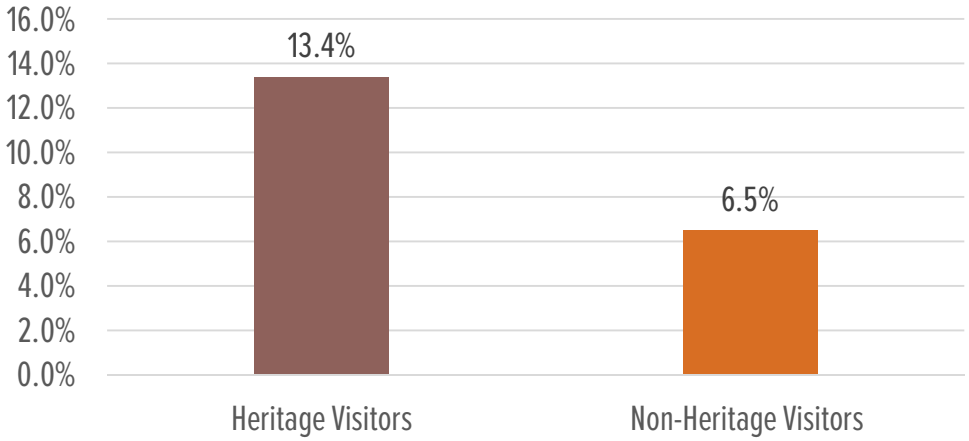

When someone comes to Nashville from Chattanooga or Memphis, there is an economic benefit to Nashville. When a visitor comes from beyond the Tennessee border, the statewide and regional impact is even greater. Heritage visitors to Nashville are overwhelmingly from out of state.

## VISITING FROM OUT OF STATE




The reputation and appeal of Nashville to visitors has become decidedly international. More than one in seven heritage visitors to Nashville are not from the United States.

## INTERNATIONAL VISITORS



Even though only around a quarter of Nashville tourists fall into the "heritage visitor" category, their impact in terms of jobs and income is considerable.

### NASHVILLE JOBS FROM HERITAGE TOURISM[22]

| | Direct | Indirect | Induced | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Retail | 3,788 | 670 | 631 | 5,089 |
| Food and Beverage | 5,330 | 562 | 708 | 6,600 |
| Lodging | 3,874 | 842 | 768 | 5,484 |
| Local Transportation | 1,878 | 430 | 385 | 2,693 |
| Entertainment/ Admissions/Other | 4,962 | 749 | 593 | 6,304 |
| Total | 19,832 | 3,253 | 3,085 | 26,170 |

But those jobs have paychecks, and most of that money is recirculated locally paying for rent, retail purchases, local taxes, and other living expenses.

### NASHVILLE EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION FROM HERITAGE TOURISM

| | Direct | Indirect | Induced | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Retail | $102,255,437 | $37,064,924 | $30,448,316 | $169,768,676 |
| Food and Beverage | $144,386,347 | $32,670,180 | $34,156,830 | $211,213,357 |
| Lodging | $138,633,642 | $46,754,168 | $37,041,408 | $222,429,218 |
| Local Transportation | $62,630,298 | $24,525,586 | $18,584,310 | $105,740,194 |
| Entertainment/ Admissions/Other | $140,474,556 | $41,104,728 | $28,216,014 | $209,795,297 |
| Total | $588,380,280 | $182,119,586 | $148,446,878 | $918,946,742 |

## Even if only the direct impacts are measured, the expenditures of heritage visitors are responsible for nearly 20,000 local jobs, and $588 million in local earnings. In Nashville, history pays.

Heritage visitors are certainly important to the economy of Nashville. In the long run those visitors are important in recognizing and supporting the connection between the built heritage of the city and its incomparable music, arts, and cultural activities. To lose the historic buildings that house those activities will ultimately reduce both their uniqueness and their authenticity.

22 "Direct jobs" are those within the segment of the tourism industry. A desk clerk at a hotel is a "direct job". "Indirect jobs" are those which provide goods or services to the industry. So a baker who prepares the bread for the hotel restaurant is an "indirect job". "Induced jobs" are those made possible because of the payroll created in the tourism industry. So, the desk clerk takes her paycheck and buys groceries and a membership at the gym. Each of those expenditures creates part of a job which was "induced" because the hotel employed the desk clerk. A "job" is a one-year, full-time equivalent job. So, two desk clerks each working half a year would constitute one full-time equivalent job.




# EXPAND ACCESSIBILITY

ALL NASHVILLIANS, REGARDLESS OF BACKGROUND, ARE ABLE TO GET WHERE THEY NEED TO GO THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY AND REGION.



**Downtown Riverfront Park**

# EXPAND ACCESSIBILITY

***"Existing urban neighborhoods endowed with proximity, connectivity, and historic fabric...already possess many of these elements: density, diversity, pedestrian oriented design..."***

**- Made for Walking: Density and Neighborhood Form**

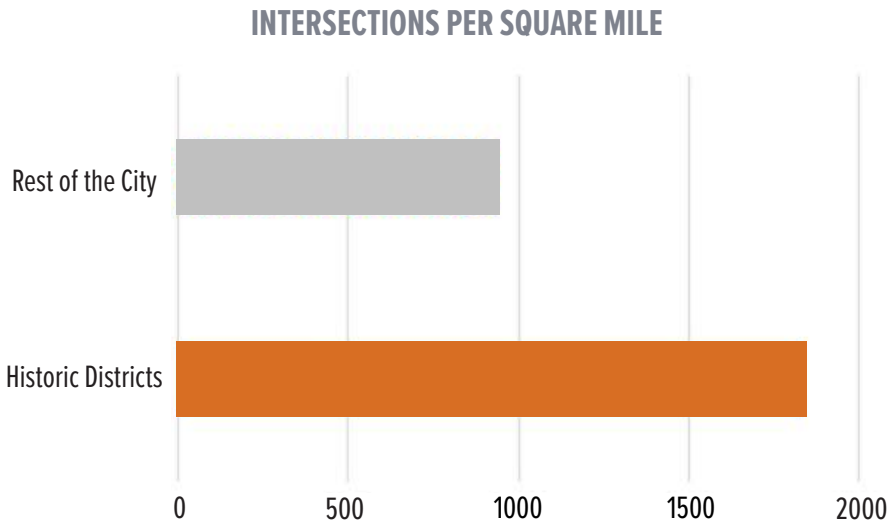
***"Intersection density is what makes cities safe and walkable."***

**- Jeff Speck, Walkable City Rules: 101 Steps to Making Better Places**

This connectivity and inherent accessibility of the historic districts is apparent in several metrics, including intersection density and walkability.

## Intersection Density

The U.S. Green Building Council recommends that a connected development pattern has at least 140 intersections per square mile. While Nashville's streets inside the 1963 boundary have an impressive average of 932 intersections per square mile, the historic district streets double that. The impact of shorter blocks, connectivity for transit, and traffic calming benefits are well known with more intersection density.



# Walkability

Nashville is notoriously unwalkable. Walkscore rated Nashville the 48th most walkable large city in the US, with a Walk Score of 28 and a Bike Score of 25. As a city, Nashville falls in the "Car Dependent" category. Yet historic districts are demonstrably more accessible earning them a Walk Score of 63 and a Bike Score of 57. Nearly half of the historic districts have a Walkscore over 70, considered "very walkable."

**90–100 Walker's Paradise**
Daily errands do not require a car

**70–89 Very Walkable**
Most errands can be accomplished on foot

**50–69 Somewhat Walkable**
Some errands can be accomplished on foot

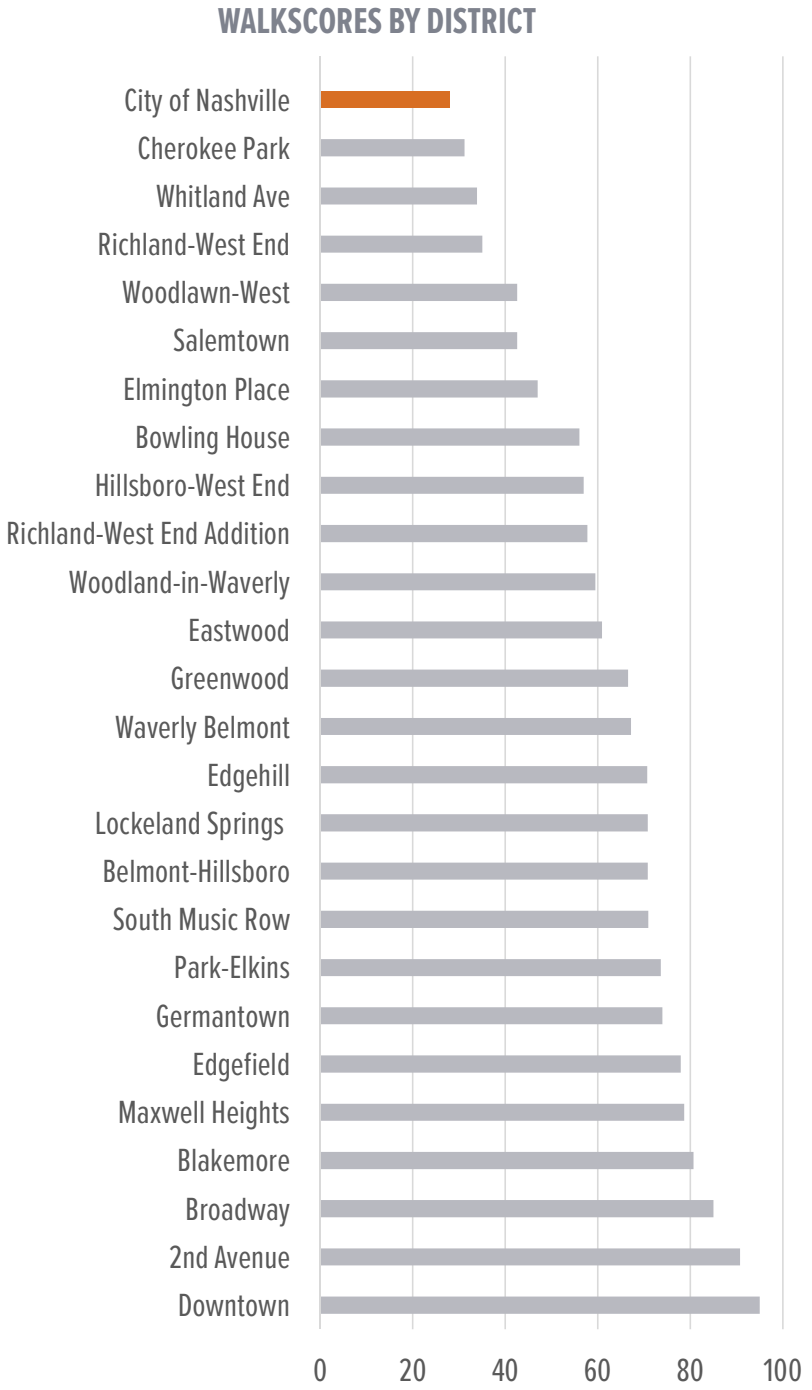
**25–49 Car-Dependent**
Most errands require a car

**0–24 Car-Dependent**
Almost all errands require a car

**92% of properties in historic districts**
are within .25 miles of a bus route, compared to 76% in the rest of the city.

**29% of residents in historic districts**
are within .5 miles of a hospital, compared to 10% in the rest of the city.

**75% of residents in historic districts**
live within .5 miles of a public school, compared to 67% in the rest of the city.




As Nashville has grown beyond the older neighborhoods surrounding downtown, the character of those newer neighborhood precludes the accessibility attributes relative to the older areas. Historic districts, due to their location and compact design, are at an advantage for households to access transit, healthcare, and schools.





# Sidewalk Accessibility

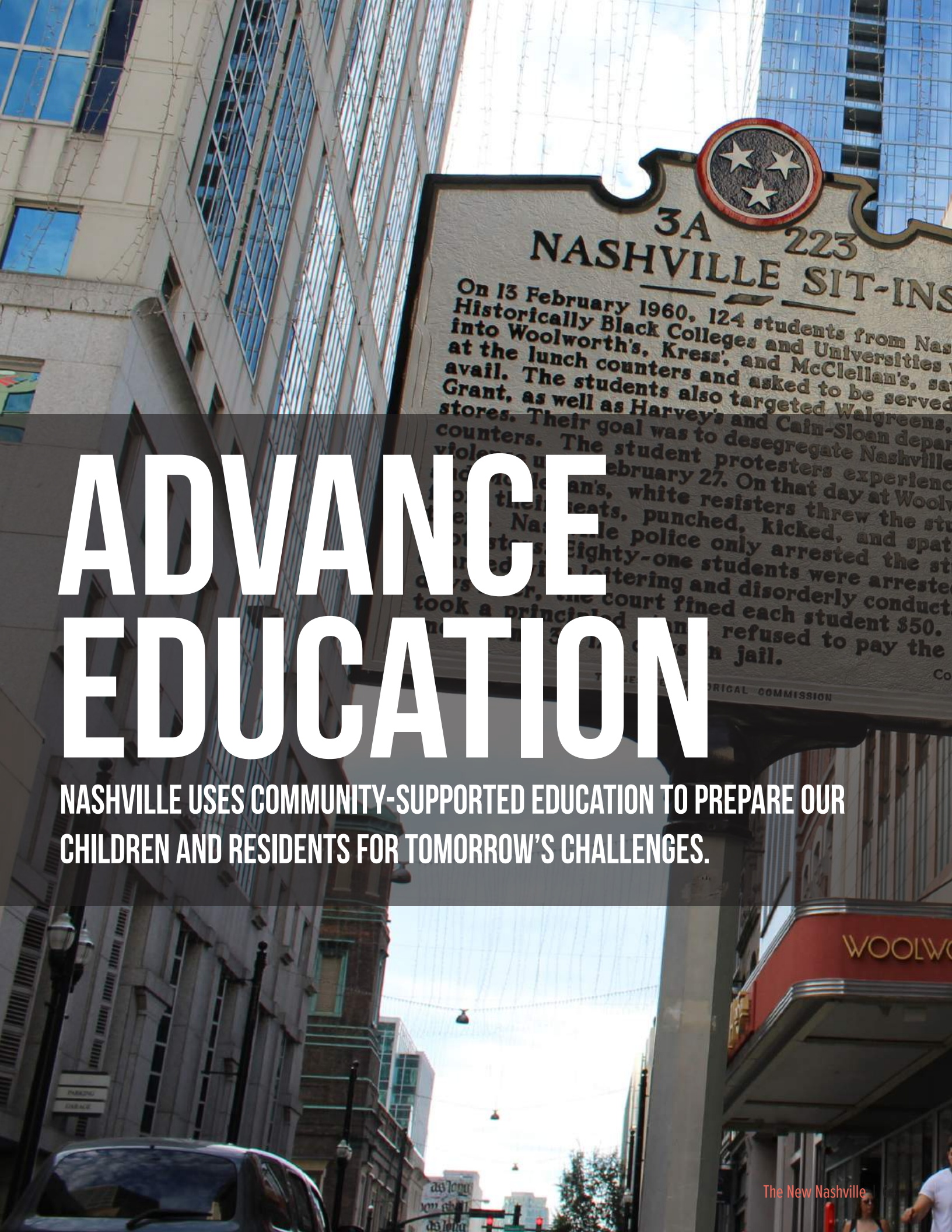
Peter Westerholm - Director, Policy and Government Affairs for the Greater Nashville Regional Council

Most historic neighborhoods in Nashville are in close proximity to the downtown core, and this means the homes there are in high demand as people move back to the city. There are numerous advantages to living in these neighborhoods—they are generally close to parks, schools, restaurants, and other amenities, and contain sidewalks lined by smaller, landscaped yards with a mature tree canopy. Historic commercial corners tucked throughout neighborhoods create walkable storefronts where small businesses thrive.

Historic neighborhoods are also inherently more sustainable and accessible for residents. Peter explained, "Sidewalks, for example, are coveted in Nashville, and sidewalks are often found in older neighborhoods. Historic neighborhoods were built with sidewalks to support walking as a form of transportation and to connect residents to the city's old streetcar system, which operated through the 1930s. Neighborhoods that were built in later decades, during auto-centric times, often lack sidewalks. Beyond making neighborhoods more walkable, safer, and less car-dependent, they encourage dialogue and community among residents." Metro now wants to try and retrofit sidewalks into other neighborhoods, but this isn't always an easy thing to do.

There are also more bike lanes found in historic areas. According to Peter, "For the past couple of decades, people living in historic neighborhoods are more likely to be the people riding bicycles and advocating for bike infrastructure. In Nashville, 30-40% of the trips a person makes are less than three miles." Many of these trips happen within a certain radius of downtown, and that radius encompasses many of Nashville's historic neighborhoods. There is more compact development in and around downtown, so it's more feasible to bike or walk to a restaurant or store.






# ADVANCE EDUCATION

## NASHVILLE USES COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED EDUCATION TO PREPARE OUR CHILDREN AND RESIDENTS FOR TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES.




**Woolworth on 5th**

# ADVANCE EDUCATION

Education does not take place in just classrooms. Historic landmarks, historic districts, museums, and other heritage attractions may be about the past, but in countless ways they are providing for the future too. Children gain enhanced learning experiences and inspiration as well as pride of place from learning about the history of their own community.

The proximity of historic districts to Nashville's sites of art, culture, and social capital are striking.

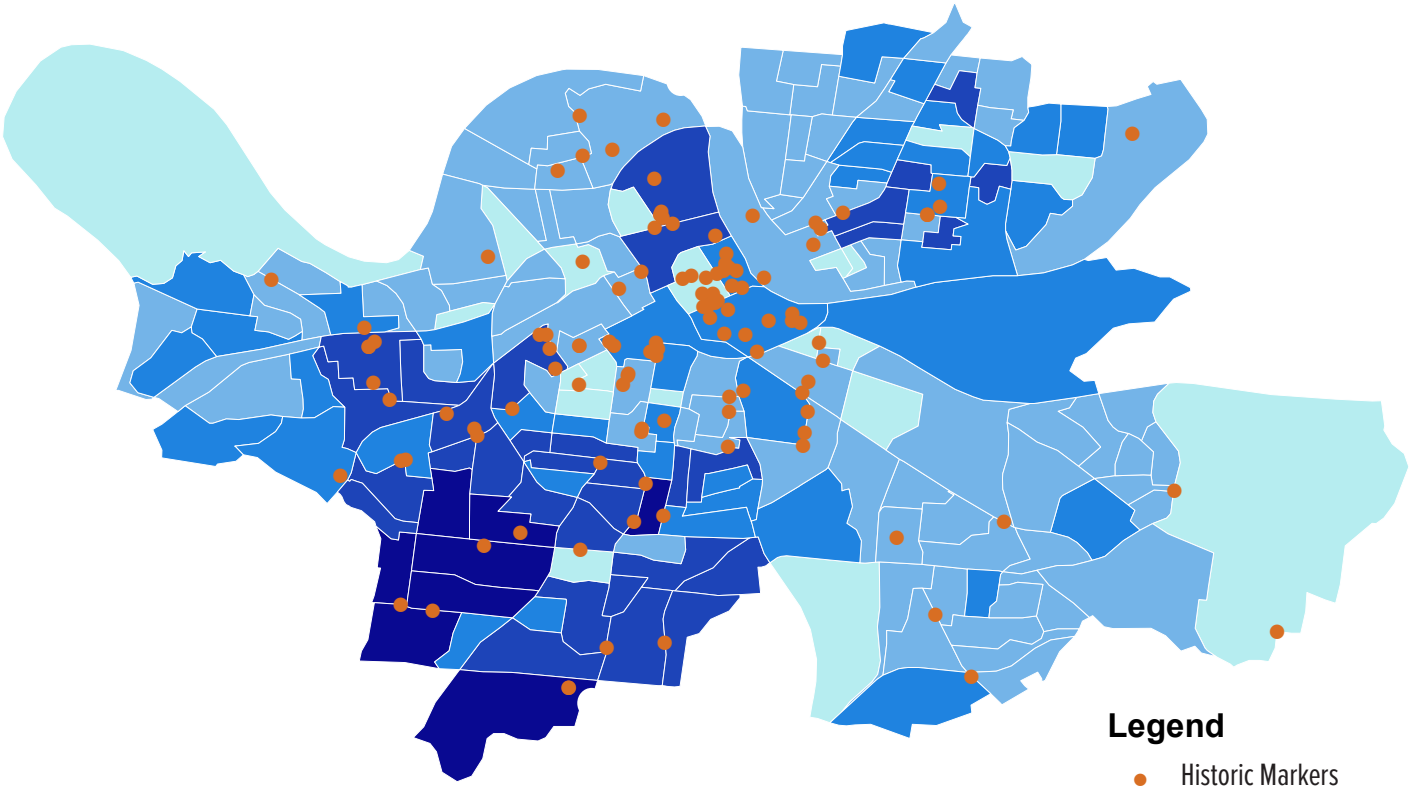
**9% of non-profits**
are located in historic districts

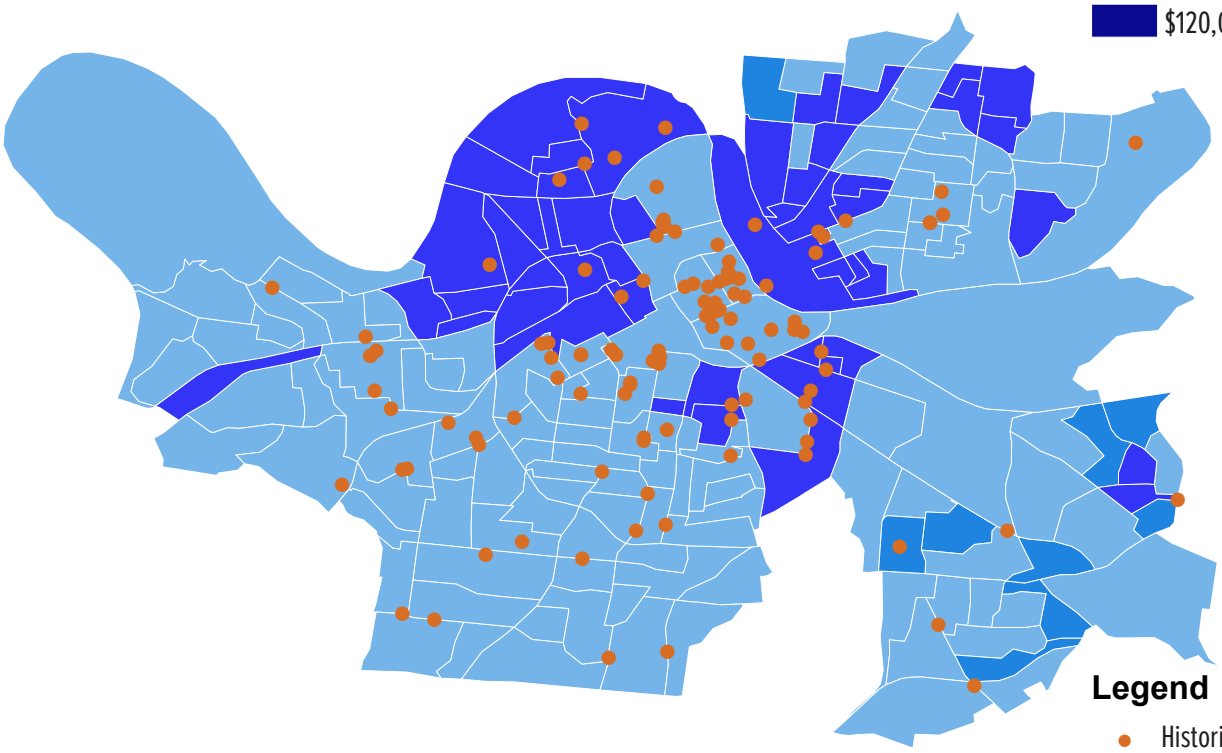
**31% of historic district residents**
live within walking distance of a museum,
compared to 19% in the rest of the city

**40% of historic district residents**
live within .5 miles of a library,
compared to 24% in the rest of the city

**84% of historic district residents**
live within walking distance of public art,
compared to 47% in the rest of the city

Not only are the historic districts providing learning opportunities, another program of the Metropolitan Historical Commission is having an impact as well. Since 1967, the MHC has operated a historical marker program to commemorate significant people, places, and events in the city's past. This is another citizen-led program, where residents apply for the marker to share the story of a person, place, or event that matters to them. There are now nearly 180 markers across Nashville. The historical marker program works to identify sites of underrepresented histories (including African American, women's, Jewish, and LGBTQ histories). This furthers the City's equity goals, as the distribution of the markers illustrates how spread out over the city they are.


Legend
Historic Markers
Median Income
$0-18,000
$18,000-45,000
$45,000-70,000
$70,000-120,000
$120,000-250,000


Legend
Historic Markers
Predominant Race or Ethnicity
White
Black
Hispanic




Griggs Hall was built in 1925 as the first building on the American Baptist College campus. Griggs Hall became the dormitory that housed and provided meeting space for several of the Nashville Student Movement's activists, including John Lewis and Bernard Lafayette.

Photo credit: civilrightstrail.com

# Civil Rights Heritage

The story of Nashville cannot be told without relaying its African American history. Civil rights activists in Nashville created a movement that would alter the entire Civil Rights Era, testing and honing the practice of nonviolent resistance as a form of civil disobedience. As the home of 4 historically black colleges and universities (HBCU)—Fisk University, American Baptist College, Tennessee State University, and Meharry Medical College, Nashville produced some of the greatest thinkers and leaders in the civil rights movement, including John Lewis, James Lawson, Diane Nash, Bernard Lafayette, and C. T. Vivian. The story of African American history can be told at nearly any site in the city—from the steps of the Davidson County Courthouse, where HBCU student leaders confronted Nashville's mayor after months of lunch counter sit-ins and economic boycotts to protest segregation, to the Capers Memorial CME church, designed by local African American architectural firm McKissack & McKissack. African American history is Nashville history. These spaces are educational. They invite us all to share in the memory of a great injustice valiantly fought, and they serve as inspiration for similar fights today.




Photo credit: Nashville Public Radio

Hadley Park, established in 1912, is considered the first public park in the United States built for African Americans.

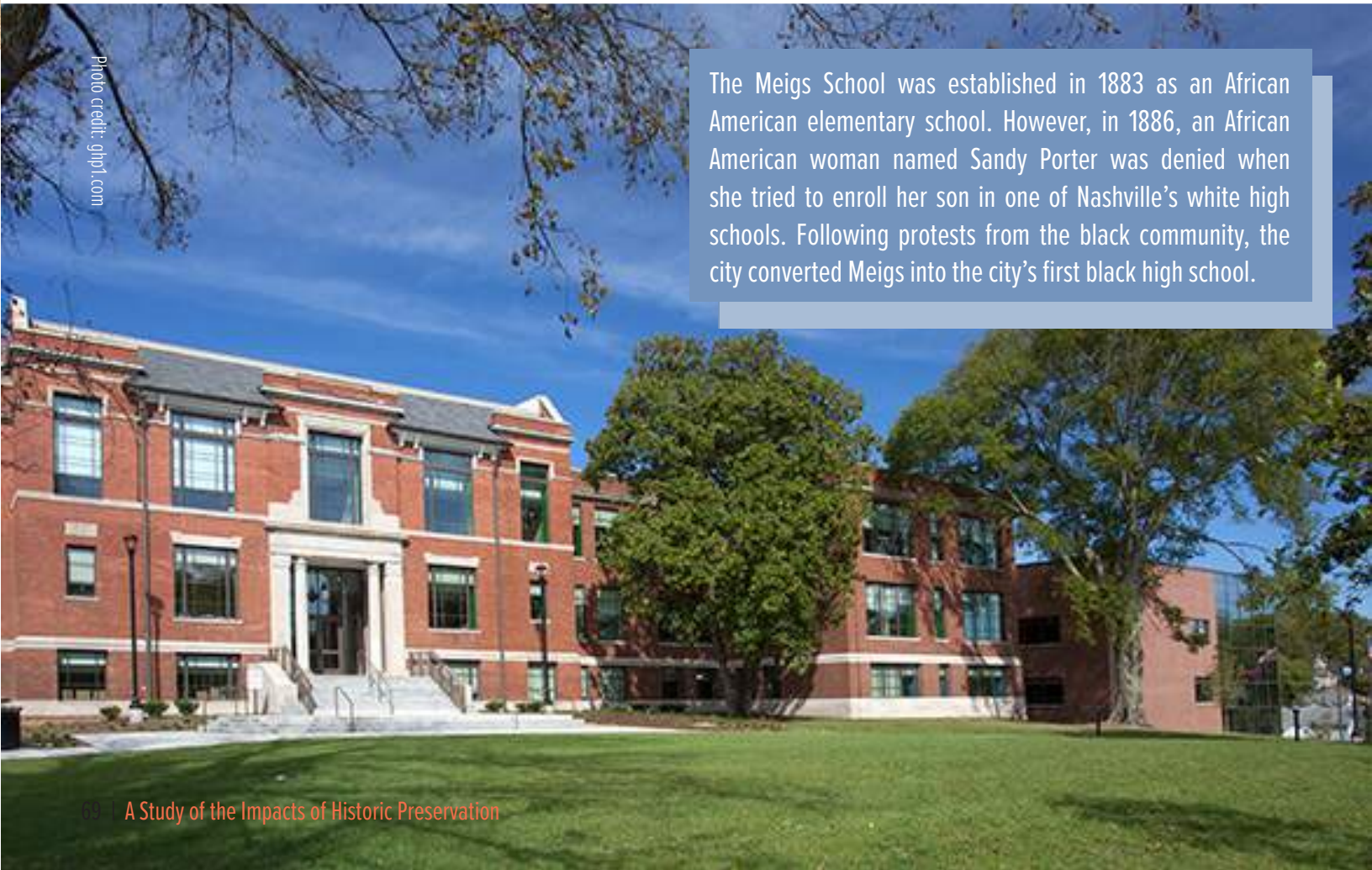
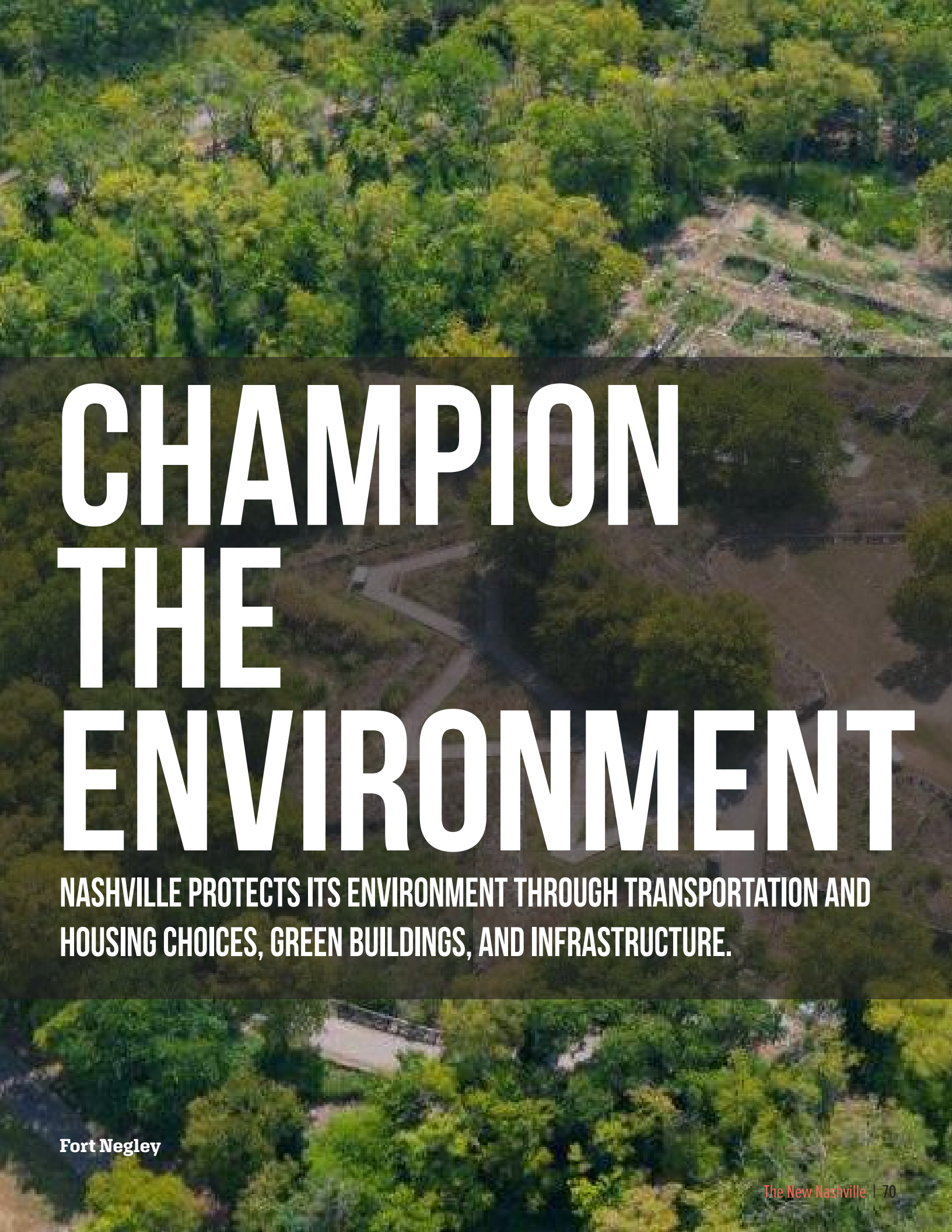


Photo credit: ghp1.com

The Meigs School was established in 1883 as an African American elementary school. However, in 1886, an African American woman named Sandy Porter was denied when she tried to enroll her son in one of Nashville's white high schools. Following protests from the black community, the city converted Meigs into the city's first black high school.



# CHAMPION THE ENVIRONMENT

## NASHVILLE PROTECTS ITS ENVIRONMENT THROUGH TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING CHOICES, GREEN BUILDINGS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

**Fort Negley**



# CHAMPION THE ENVIRONMENT

With the bold plans in NashvilleNext, Nashville is hoping to be a national leader in sustainability, greenspace, lowering the city's impact on natural resources. The city is gaining a sustainability ethic through programs led by various departments, but is a reuse ethic yet identified? Reusing and keeping old buildings is one of the most environmentally sound decisions a person or community can make.

In the 2011 report, *The Greenest Building: Quantifying the Environmental Value of Building Reuse*, a comprehensive analysis of the potential environmental benefit of building reuse and retrofit found that building reuse almost always yields fewer environmental impacts than new construction. In fact, the analysis showed it takes 10 to 80 years for a new building that is 30 % more efficient than an average-performing existing building to overcome, through efficient operations, the negative climate change impacts related to the construction process.

> ***" The greenest building is the one already built."***
>
> **- Carl Elefante, Immediate Past President, American Institute of Architects.**

## Embodied Energy

Embodied energy is the energy consumed by all of the processes associated with the production of a building, from the mining and processing of natural resources to manufacturing, transport and product delivery. Research suggests that in a building's lifetime, assuming it has a 100-year lifetime, embodied energy accounts for 10-15% of the total energy used. Embodied energy is less for historic buildings because many of the resources and labor to construct them were local. By contrast, embodied energy for modern buildings is very high, because they invariably use non-local materials and modern systems. Historic homes were built before modern heating and cooling systems and are usually designed to take best advantage of passive cooling and heating, natural ventilation and lighting, so fewer modern utilities are required. When adding the embodied energy costs of new buildings with that of the old building

that was demolished, there is virtually no way the new building will be more energy efficient than the old one when considering full life cycles.

Maintaining and reusing existing structures also contribute to reducing urban sprawl, prolonging the physical service-life of buildings and building parts and supporting waste-avoidance.

# Proximity to Parks

In 2017, the Trust for Public Land published an advocacy statement that all Americans should live within a 10-minute walk (or a half mile) of a high-quality park or green space. Research demonstrates that people who have easy access to parks are 47% more likely to walk at the daily-recommended level than those who do not have easy access. Currently, one in three Americans do not have a park nearby. In Nashville, residents of historic districts benefit from more access to greenspace.

**59% of properties in historic districts**
are within .25 miles of a park
compared to 38% in the rest of the city.

# Smart Growth

The closest the United States has to a comprehensive sustainable development initiative is known as Smart Growth. The Smart Growth movement has a clear set of principles. It is useful to compare those Smart Growth principles with the characteristics of Historic Preservation Overlay Districts.

| SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLE | HISTORIC DISTRICTS |
|---|---|
| Mix land uses | ✔ |
| Take advantage of compact design | ✔ |
| Create a range of housing opportunities and choices | ✔ |
| Create walkable neighborhoods | ✔ |
| Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place | ✔ |
| Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas | ✔ |
| Direct development toward existing communities | ✔ |
| Provide a variety of transportation choices | ✔ |
| Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective | ✔ |
| Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions | ✔ |

Smart Growth IS sustainable development, and historic districts are Smart Growth.

# Private Land Conservation

In August of 1979, Berdelle Campbell and her husband, Ernest, read an article in the Sunday paper about an eight-block area just north of downtown Nashville that had just been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Campbells were deeply concerned that some city neighborhoods were being abandoned in the flight to the suburbs and that historic buildings were at risk of being destroyed. "With our love for historic houses, we drove to the new Germantown area for a look, but we didn't get out of the car. It was a dangerous area then."

Shortly after their initial visit, and after talking with a local business person and a few other interested individuals hoping to turn the neighborhood around, the Campbells ended up buying a small brick cottage in Germantown. They proceeded to purchase a two-storied Victorian in the neighborhood, restored it, and moved in. Meanwhile, they observed some old houses in the area being torn down—banisters would be torn out and taken apart for firewood. "Our intent was to help preserve these places that remained. There were already so many empty lots and we worried about the neighborhood."

The Campbells bought one of those empty lots—a quarter of an acre next to their home—and turned it into a community asset. "My husband wanted a huge garden and he started battling the weeds and debris. A retired sociology professor from Vanderbilt out there all day learning to garden and planting seeds we brought back from our travels. He became a Master Gardener and was very protective of the garden. He yearned to find some way to ensure it remained for the community when he was no longer there to care for it."

After Ernest's death in 2013, Berdelle was committed to protecting what had mattered most to him. When the Land Trust of Tennessee announced their new emphasis on protecting urban green space at a time when undeveloped lots were increasingly hard to come by, Berdelle jumped on the opportunity to purchase a protective easement for the garden space. "The easement is attached to the deed, and now there can never, ever be a building on this garden. Other people in the neighborhood also grow things here. It's a part of Germantown that we know won't ever be developed."

For 41 years, Berdelle has fought to protect the historic resources of Germantown and the significant community asset beside her house. Nearing 92 years old, Berdelle has no intention of leaving her home and still works in the garden. She also continues to fight to protect what other bits of green space are left: "There are a couple of other empty parcels and we're trying to convince the owners to do a protective easement. My green space is protected—I made sure it will stay that way forever—but open land is very limited. Developers are always trying to build on what little is left, including my lot. So, I speak out to whoever will listen. We have this wonderful easement tool. I tell people, 'come visit my garden, my green space.'"



**Berdelle Campbelle and grandson**

# CONCLUSION

As Nashville grows and transitions to its future, its historic resources remain shining examples of many of the Guiding Principles it hopes to become. The physical places valued by citizens and tourists alike, the stories, events, and traditions of Nashville's heritage will remain thanks to a strong municipal preservation program.

### BE NASHVILLE

Nashville's unique history, places preserved, and living intangible heritage provide a character unlike any other that drives creativity and draws people from around the world. The residents of Nashville are actively engaged in managing the future of their neighborhoods and speak up for the places and stories that matter to them. The people have spoken and preservation is a priority.

### ENSURE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

The historic preservation and neighborhood conservation overlay districts exhibit diversity and integration. The perception that historic neighborhoods are only for wealthy folks is far from true in Nashville. These neighborhoods are attracting millennials, baby boomers, and a disproportionate share of Nashville's recent population growth.

### FOSTER STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS

Historic districts remain a strength node in a fast-changing city landscape. With higher rates of homeownership, more affordability, greater rates of appreciation, and lower rates of foreclosure, historic districts signal stability. They also manage change through design overlay that encourages quality building investment.

### CREATE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Older spaces in Nashville despite a small geographic focus are locations of choice for businesses large and small. Historic buildings support Nashville's music entrepreneurs and start up businesses. The draw of these places is felt by millions of dollars in tourism economic impact each year.

### EXPAND ACCESSIBILITY

Nashville's historic districts are densely developed, walkable, and accessible. These areas serve as building blocks for Nashville's future transit and density plans.

### ADVANCE EDUCATION

The rich history in Nashville is publicly-recognized through various public and private initiatives including a historic marker program and Civil Rights Trail. Sharing the diverse stories all across the city educate children, citizens, and tourists alike furthering the Be Nashville principal.

### CHAMPION THE ENVIRONMENT

Nashville's historic buildings and districts exhibit many of the resilience, sustainability, and Smart Growth principles guiding the city's future.




**Clawson's Deli**




**Batch Nashville**



# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all who contributed their time, knowledge, and expertise to this report. A special thanks is owed to Tim Walker, Executive Director of the Metro Historical Commission, and Caroline Eller of the Metro Historical Commission for facilitating stakeholder engagement and organizing this report. We also thank Lorenzo Washington, Victoria Hensley, Campbell, Peter Westerholm, and Shain Shapiro for their thoughts and contributions. We wish to acknowledge Anne Havard, Deputy Chief Resilience Officer for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville-Davidson County for speaking with us and providing resiliency data. Carolyn Brackett, Senior Field Officer with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. We also thank Gregory Claxton and Nicholas Lindeman of the Metro Planning Department for their time and review of the report. This project has been funded in part by a grant from the Daniel K. Thorne Intervention Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and in part by agreement with Castle Crown, a provider of communications infrastructure.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge our advisory committee for their excellent guidance.

Betsy Williams, Nashville Chamber of Commerce
Cyril Stewart, AIA and MHZC Commissioner
David Price, TRC Solutions
Jennifer Harrman, Historic Nashville Inc
Mark Deutschmann, Village
Freddie O'Connell, Council Member (District 19)
Sean Marshall, The District
Eric Hoke, Nashville Civic Design Center
Chelsea McCready, Nashville Convention & Visitors Corporation
Audra Ladd, Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development
Ann Roberts, Historic Nashville Inc and former MHC Executive Director

# Methodologies

This analysis relied on data from the MetroGIS, the County Tax Assessor's Office, online research platforms, newspaper and social media outlets, and in-person stakeholder interviews. Jobs calculations came from the US Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD). The calculations of the economic impact of tourism was made using IMPLAN, an econometric modeling software. Tourism data was provided by the Nashville Convention & Visitors Corporation. Population and demographic data from the US Census Bureau. Survey data was gathered by the Mayor's Office of Resilience. Sales tax data was provided by the Tennessee Department of Revenue, facilitated by Nicholas Lindeman of the Metro Planning Department. Unless otherwise noted, all photos are credited to PlaceEconomics.

# About the PlaceEconomics Team

This report was prepared and written by Donovan Rypkema, Briana Grosicki, Carla Bruni, and Katlyn Cotton. Rypkema is principal of PlaceEconomics, a Washington D.C.-based real estate and economic development consulting firm. Grosicki is Director of Research at PlaceEconomics and handled research methodologies and data collection. Cotton is a Research Associate with PlaceEconomics and handled graphic design. Editing was done by Rodney Swink, Senior Associate for Developing and Planning.





# THE NEW NASHVILLE

## A STUDY OF THE IMPACTS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION PREPARED FOR THE METRO HISTORICAL COMMISSION

APRIL 2019


Metropolitan Historical Commission
3000 Granny White Pike
Nashville, TN 37204
(615) 862-7970
www.nashville.gov/mhc

PlaceEconomics
P.O. Box 7529
Washington, DC 20044
202.588.6258
www.placeeconomics.com