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The Ancient City

By William R. Adams

The following essay was written by Dr. William Adams and published in the St. Augustine Historical Society's publication El Escribano. Permission to use within this document was granted by the author and the St. Augustine Historical Society. It was composed in 2002 as a reflection of St. Augustine's growth in the context of the preservation movement looking forward to the 21st century. William R. (Bill) Adams received a Ph.D. in history at Florida State University and served as director of the Department of Heritage Tourism for the City of St. Augustine from 1999-2009. Formerly, he was executive director of the Florida Bicentennial Commission and he presided over the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board from 1977 to 1985 when that agency completed historic surveys of the city and county.

In the aftermath of St. Augustine's fiery destruction at the hands of Governor George Moore in 1702, the residents set about rebuilding the town. Little remained but the stone fortress that had sheltered them from the British and the century-old plan for the colonial presidio, marked by the central plaza and a rough pattern of crude streets that defined a narrow, rectangular grid along the west bank of the Matanzas River, or what is now the Intracoastal Waterway. In building anew, the Spanish residents employed materials more durable than the wood and thatch which had defined the town the British torched.

St. Augustine is not just another city with a history. All cities boast a past. Nor is St. Augustine merely the nation's oldest city. What it claims in the pages of U. S. history is the distinction as the capital of Spain's colonial empire in North America. In the American experience, St. Augustine's historic resources incomparably testify to that heritage. **When, in 1821, the United States acquired Florida, the colonial presidio contained some 300 buildings, the most abundant physical legacy of Spain's presence on the North American continent.** Little more than a century later, only thirty-six remained as survivors of the fires, insects, rainfall, humidity, and human destruction that consumed the others.

Until recent years, historic preservation in St. Augustine was associated with what locally was known as the "Restoration," an effort to reconstruct the colonial town. Only in little more than the past quarter century have historic preservation activities that met a conventional definition appeared. That apparent confusion of objectives resulted from St. Augustine's special place in American history and the unique qualities of its historic resources. The Restoration, a program initiated in the midst of the Great Depression to preserve those remaining resources and even to reconstruct parts that had been lost, consumed the next generation of preservation activity.

Congressional approval of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the subsequent organization of federal and state programs to assist and encourage local activities caused a preservation ethic to blossom throughout America. State-fostered programs and municipal measures adopted in St. Augustine during the 1970s paralleled the national experience. In some respects, St. Augustine emerged as a leader, one of the first two cities in Florida to adopt historic architectural guidelines and historic districts and the first to approve a historic preservation plan. The existence of a state preservation program in the city nevertheless discouraged the development of neighborhood organizations that characterized the preservation movement in most Florida cities. By the century's end, the state organization was gone. Responsibility for actively pursuing or assisting historic preservation activity remained uncertain.

St. Augustine contains much to preserve. It possesses the largest concentration of historic resources in the United States that testify to the contributions of Spain and the Spanish-speaking people to the nation's colonial settlement and development. The Castillo de San Marcos is the only stone military fortress of Spanish origin in North America. St. Augustine served as one of the colonial capitals of the Revolutionary War in America, a fact generally ignored in American historiography because St. Augustine

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and the British colony of East Florida remained loyal to the British Crown throughout the struggle for independence. Still, no other place in Florida possesses comparable historic resources that have survived from that epochal period of American history. The city's antebellum and mid-19th century architectural legacy comprises, in number of buildings and arguably their stylistic quality, Florida's most extensive and finest collection. Its late-19th and early-20th century architecture, the legacy of the "Flagler Era," would, in any other location, earn that place unequaled distinction.

Early Changes to the Colonial Town

Geographically, the municipality of St. Augustine and, particularly, the colonial walled city have historically occupied a relatively small piece of land, some twenty-two modern blocks in all, confined to a peninsula between two rivers and a barrier island. The archaeological evidence therein, which testifies to centuries of prehistoric habitation by Native Americans, 256 years of colonial European settlement, and nearly two centuries of historical experience under the dominion of the United States, remains relatively undisturbed in many locations. The colonial "Town Plan," an irregular checkerboard pattern of streets drafted in accordance with the administrative provisions of royal ordinances in the late 16th century, has suffered little change, despite 400 years of urban growth and activity.

Historic preservation in the modern sense is essentially a process of controlling change. Only in a museum setting can an expectation exist to preserve historic buildings in a pristine state. In a "living city," transformations of buildings and their environment inevitably occur. **Every age exerts its cultural prejudices upon the past.** That has certainly marked the experience of St. Augustine throughout its history. The process may be said to have begun with the arrival of the British in 1764. They found the buildings left to them by the previous inhabitants unappealing. The Spanish "consulted convenience more than taste," wrote one British observer in 1769. Bernard Romans complained in 1775 about the narrow streets, described the church as "a wretched building," and regarded the town as "a fit receptacle for the wretches of inhabitants." The British accordingly exhibited no esthetic compunction about altering the buildings to suit their habits of domestic comfort, introducing glass windows, interior fireplaces and of course, chimneys, which they pushed through rooflines. What they did not change they often destroyed. John Bartram reported two years after the arrival of the British that half the town had been torn down for firewood.

For the first but surely not the last time St. Augustine suffered the cultural bias that characterizes Anglo-Saxon opinion of the Spanish. Historians call that bias the "leyenda negra" or "black legend," the idea propagated for centuries in English cultural tradition that the Spanish were a corrupt, evil and oppressive people. The black legend provided a useful argument for arousing popular sentiment against the Spanish, with whom the British contended over three centuries and more for supremacy throughout Europe and the Western Hemisphere. The black legend persists. It can be found in the popular and academic tendency to diminish Spain's role in the settlement and development of the United States. St. Augustine has paid a price for the black legend. State and federal governments, foundations, and other sources of funds for historic purposes have chronically neglected the city and its resources, favoring places that reflect Anglo-Saxon traditions.

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When the Spanish returned to St. Augustine in 1784, they found the city in shambles, with "nothing presenting itself to the eye anywhere except roofless buildings on the point of falling, or, already fallen, to the ground." They remained until 1821, when the United States formally took possession of the colony and its capital city, St. Augustine. During those thirty-seven years, despite political and social turbulence in Europe, the Western Hemisphere, and in the colony of East Florida itself, the Spanish occupants built a number of new dwellings and other buildings, including a new and impressive church on the Plaza. Some 100 new buildings were added to the 200 or so that were counted in 1796. Most reflected the rawness of a frontier town, but some were substantial, erected by owners who profited from trade and commerce with the burgeoning states north of the Florida colony.

American Views of St. Augustine

The town did not appeal to the first American surveyor to enter it in 1821. Charles Vignoles found it "ruinous, dirty, and unprepossessing" and condemned the Spanish for allowing it to "decay." Abandoned buildings often were cannibalized for materials used to erect other buildings. A local minister wrote that St. Augustine "wears a foreign aspect to the eye of the American. Ruinous buildings, of antique and foreign model … and a rough, tasteless exterior … awaken a sense of discomfort and desolation in the mind of a stranger." He held out hope for a change in the town more to his liking. "This ancient city is being transformed into American features, both in its external appearances and customs of the people."

A visiting Baptist minister in 1844 wrote that St. Augustine "seems destitute of all ideas of civilized architecture" and that the old Spanish homes, which he called "rat castles," were "only fit for owl nests." Another observer concluded that there were no more than a dozen residences in the town that "would be considered comfortable" in the north. According to some antebellum observers, only the poverty of the community saved many colonial houses from demolition.

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Figure 4.1: Street view of St. Augustine ca. 1861, by S.A. Cooley. Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2018671295/.

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Opinion changed after the Civil War, when the country's industrial economy spawned a distinct leisure class, loaded with money and an appetite for travel. One northern magazine, for example, touted St. Augustine as a "foreign city…with a foreign language and customs." Something else was at work in America as well. As the nation came upon its centennial year, people looked for a history that set it apart from Europe. About St. Augustine, a travel writer proclaimed, "We keep it to show our sneering European visitors, who say we have no past….It has its ancient story, which it has preserved in an unadulterated state." By the late part of the century, the St. Augustine style, with its walled and narrow streets, had become a familiar theme in travel magazines and brochures. Buildings once called dilapidated had become "quaint." Harriet Beecher Stowe thought that the town had a romantic quality to it, without "pretensions to architectural richness and beauty; and yet…impressive from its unlikeness to any thing else in America." It was, she wrote, "as if some little, old, dead-and-alive Spanish town… had broken loose, floated over here, and got stranded on a sand-bank."

The Flagler Era

It was such qualities that entrepreneur Henry Flagler sought to capitalize upon in the 1880s, when he brought his railroad into town and began construction of the monolithic hotels that indelibly transformed the city. A quaint, foreign-appearing town it no longer was, but one whose architectural marvels rivaled Newport's and all the other watering holes of the nation's rich. Many of the wealthy people who spent winters in Flagler's hotels built homes for themselves in the city, introducing examples of the picturesque styles that characterized late Victorian Era architecture. Flagler's projects actually had little effect on the colonial city itself. Instead, he created an architectural legacy of his own, on the fringes of the Ancient City.

The enemy most ruinous at the time to St. Augustine's colonial heritage was fire. Widespread destruction resulted from conflagrations in 1887 and 1914. By the early 20th century, only about fifty of the 300 colonial era buildings remained standing. An appreciation for their historic value was not absent within the city. A complaint was voiced in 1886 about the damage that tourists inflicted upon Castillo de San Marcos when they chipped away souvenirs from the coquina building stones. In 1907, a group of women defeated an attempt by the mayor to dismantle the City Gate at the north end of St. George Street. Four years later, the organization that is now the St. Augustine Historical Society appealed to the Department of War to take urgent action to preserve Fort Matanzas, a 17th century fortress along the Matanzas River, fourteen miles south of St. Augustine.

The Society began in 1918 to take an active role in preserving the city's historic resources when it purchased the Gonzales-Alvarez House on Marine Street for exhibition as the "Oldest House." The building has had rivals for that claim, but its pedigree has withstood challenge. More than one local entrepreneur at the time advertised often outrageous historic claims about a building to entice tourists. The Society went on to purchase other threatened historic buildings whose preservation at times it assured through resale with restricted covenants.

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Figure 4.2: The "Oldest House" as it appeared in 1902 (top). Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2016799087/. The González-Alvarez House today in its restored Spanish Colonial condition (bottom).

The Advent of Modern Tourism

The automobile and an intrastate road system created a new era of tourism for St. Augustine in the post-World War I period, raising local awareness of the potential economic value that historic buildings and sites held. A planning study commissioned by the City in 1917 emphasized the need to promote St. Augustine's historic character and for the first time enumerated the physical resources such as buildings and sites that might be defined as "historic." The Charter of the City of St. Augustine, approved by the State Legislature in 1925, declared the "preservation, restoration, and maintenance...of ancient landmarks, sites, buildings, and remains and other property of historical and antiquarian interest" a municipal purpose. To preserve them, the charter authorized the City Commission to exercise eminent domain and to hold historic property in trust. Seven years later, the City agreed to accept in trust from the estate of Anna Burt the Peña-Peck House, whose origins dated to about 1740, a rare "First Spanish Period" building. The City acquired the title to the Llambias House (c. 1750) from the Carnegie Institute, which had purchased the building as a consequence of that organization's role in the Restoration program.

As the air began to seep out of the 1920s Florida real estate bubble, presaging the Great Depression, the Atlantic Bank Building rose to completion beside the Cathedral-Basilica. The six-story edifice overwhelmed the historic church. A horrified City Commission belatedly concluded that the historic character of the Ancient City had been compromised. It adopted an ordinance restricting the height of future construction throughout the city to thirty-five feet, the first recognition in municipal code that the architectural principle of scale indelibly figured in what modern preservation parlance refers to as the city's "sense of historic place." The economic misfortunes that the collapse of the Great Boom brought on may have restrained the City Commission from engaging in a more proactive preservation role. In 1929, it refused an appeal from the Historical Society for an appropriation to maintain old cemeteries and "properly certified landmarks."

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Figure 4.3: The Cathedral Basilica with origins to 1797 and its tower adjacent to the Atlantic Bank Building (1927) which inspired the city to establish a height limit to preserve the historic character of the city.

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The Origins of the Restoration

By the advent of the Great Depression, there existed evident concern about the ultimate fate of the city's remaining colonial resources. There was also much economic misery in St. Augustine, like elsewhere in America. Looking for a solution to the two problems, St. Augustine discovered a role model in Williamsburg, Virginia, where the highly publicized restoration of that colonial capital was proceeding under the financial auspices of John D. Rockefeller. In 1935, St. Augustine Mayor Walter B. Fraser mobilized support for organization of a national committee to formulate plans for a similar effort in the Ancient City. He approached the Carnegie Institute of Washington, D.C., a rich and powerful national foundation, to underwrite the effort. A preliminary meeting of the committee, held in Washington on October 26, 1936, advocated a historic survey of the city's historic resources as an initial measure of activity. Although probably not what local leaders wanted, the committee's proposal offered the logical first step in any preservation program, namely to identify and evaluate the city's historic resources.

In the same year, transfer of Castillo de San Marcos from the War Department to the National Park Service (NPS) placed the city's most prominent historic structure under the administration of an agency dedicated to that site's preservation and interpretation. The former chief historian and acting director of the Branch of Historic Sites and Buildings for the NPS, Verne Chatelain, was selected to direct the St. Augustine survey as a research associate on the staff of the Carnegie Institute. Chatelain, who hoped to make St. Augustine a laboratory of history, said that ultimately the program was designed to reveal the "life history" of the city and translate the results of his survey into a plan of physical development and management.

The Committee began its work, which included the collection of documentary materials in the National Archives in Washington, especially the East Florida Papers, Spanish documents relating to the area's colonial history. Pictures and photographs were gathered and photographs made of existing historic buildings in the city. A tentative assessment of archaeological documents was compiled, for, as Chatelain pointed out, no reconstruction work could proceed without preliminary investigation of the below-ground historic resources. The Works Progress Administration (WPA), a Depression-Era New Deal agency, gave the project assistance by funding two historic surveys, a nationwide records search and a state archives search. W. J. Winter, a former NPS archaeologist, was placed in charge of the local search for archaeological records. He promised that his work would constitute only the beginning of a systematic study of archaeology throughout St. Johns County.

World War II interrupted the ambitious program before it got much beyond the planning stage. Very little physical work was accomplished, although the City adopted an ordinance to protect historic landmarks. The ambitious research effort produced little. Chatelain presented many of his findings in a book on the military defenses of the colonial city. No report resulted from the archaeological program. Its data were scattered and lost. Significantly, however, the State of Florida endorsed the program. In 1937, the State Legislature approved a special act granting St. Johns County and its cities and subdivisions the power of eminent domain to protect historic landmarks and sites. A bill providing for creation of a "St. Augustine Historical Preservation and Restoration Commission" was introduced and an appropriation of $50,000 to fund the acquisition and preservation of historic sites approved. Although the Commission authorization failed, the appropriation did stand.

The Post-War Restoration Program

In the immediate aftermath of the war, residents grappled among themselves and with federal officials over widening of the bayfront, closely skirting Castillo de San Marcos. The eventually constructed four-lane boulevard proved but one of a number of new developments in an era of fast growth that threatened the remnants of the city's past. The Historical Society purchased three colonial buildings in the early 1950s to prevent their destruction. With the 400th anniversary of the city's founding approaching, local officials this time turned to the state legislature for assistance. On June 19, 1959, Governor LeRoy Collins signed into law a bill creating a St. Augustine Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission. The seven-member commission was authorized "to acquire, restore, preserve, maintain, reconstruct, reproduce, and operate for the use, benefit, education, recreation, enjoyment, and general welfare" St. Augustine's "historical and antiquarian sites."

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Employing concepts formulated in the 1930s by the Carnegie-sponsored study, the Commission proposed to conduct a program of restoration or reconstruction of colonial structures throughout the "Walled City," or colonial presidio. In late 1960, it undertook its first physical venture, restoration of the Arrivas House, and looked to the State Legislature for financial assistance to expand its efforts. It received an appropriation of $150,000, but was required to dip into that small pool of money to fund its staff activities. Little or nothing remained for the acquisition of additional properties or for the actual task of restoration. The recurrent pleas of trustees for capital support to pursue the restoration program job fell on deaf ears in Tallahassee. The legislative practice of merely funding staff salaries while ignoring capital expense needs remained in place for the succeeding thirty-six years.

By the end of 1961, after two years of work, the Commission had but one partially completed project -- the Arrivas House -- to show for its efforts. Looking elsewhere for funds, the Commission created a private foundation to solicit private and other public or foundation assistance. For at least the first two decades of the program, the City of St. Augustine and St. Johns County made annual contributions to the Commission for the acquisition and restoration of specific historic properties.
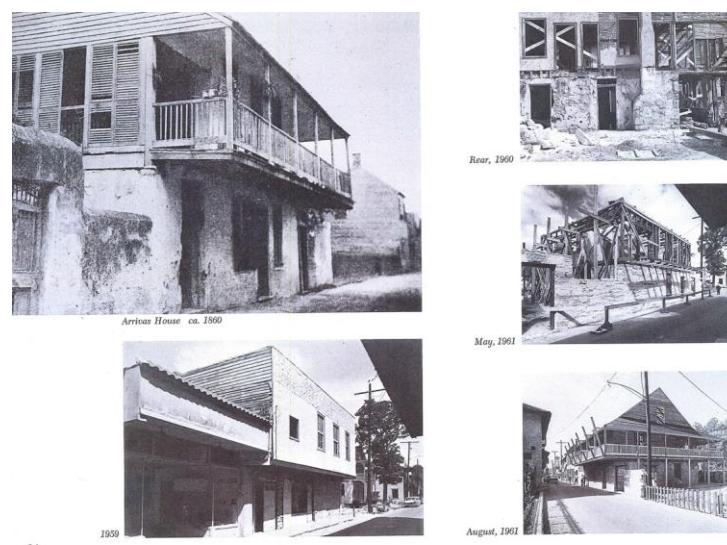

Figure 4.4: Restoration process of the Arrivas House at 46 St. George Street excerpted from St. Augustine Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission publication (copy available at St. Augustine Historical Society).

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The Commission selected north St. George Street as the focal point for the program popularly referred to as the "Restoration." That part of the city contained a distressed commercial sector, which community leaders wanted revitalized. A cluster of five surviving colonial buildings were found in this area, the closest such concentration in the city. They stood directly west of Castillo de San Marcos, offering the possibility of creating an interpretive program linked to the city's most visible and popular attraction. Between 1961 and 1984, the Commission (renamed the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board in 1968) restored, reconstructed or preserved some forty buildings within the colonial city, most of them in the blocks bounded by Fort Alley and Hypolita Street on the north and south, and between St. George and Charlotte Streets. The City of St. Augustine contributed to the program's interpretive effort by limiting St. George Street to pedestrian traffic from the City Gate to Hypolita Street.

Other legislative developments cast early doubt on the state's commitment to St. Augustine's program. Preservation boards modeled after the St. Augustine example were created in Pensacola, Key West, Tallahassee, and four other locations, providing competition for legislative monies, which, in any case, were always limited. In its thirty-seven years of operation, 1960 to 1996, the state-sponsored commission (or board) received less than $200,000 in capital outlay expenditures for the purposes of acquiring, restoring, or reconstructing historic buildings. Especially after the creation of the rival Pensacola Commission in 1968, it was easily apparent that, barring some legislative miracle, St. Augustine would never receive a state appropriation sufficient to complete even a modest part of its original plan for the colonial city's restoration.

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The Modern Historic Preservation Movement

The presence of a professional staff at the Board permitted St. Augustine to march in the vanguard of state preservation efforts in the 1970s, during a time when historic preservation in the United States experienced dramatic changes. The national movement, launched by Congressional passage of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, fed upon a growing national awareness of the negative impact that modern development exerted on America's historic towns and cities and the energies generated by the national Bicentennial celebration. The Board's staff prepared applications for listing of many local historic buildings and sites in the expanded National Register of Historic Places, including, in 1971, the colonial city historic district. Three years later, in 1974, the City Commission adopted an ordinance demarcating for architectural control five local historic districts, essentially within and around the colonial city. To supervise change within those districts, the Commission authorized creation of the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB), a citizen panel appointed by the Commission and charged with the responsibility of exercising those controls.

Although the Restoration initiative faltered for lack of funding in the 1970s, historical and archaeological research and investigations flowered. Professional historians and archaeologists, funded by the Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board, the National Park Service, and the St. Augustine Restoration Foundation, which briefly considered the reconstruction of the 1580 colonial settlement, produced a rich and abundant body of scholarship. In little more than a decade's time, archaeologists Hale Smith, Charles Fairbanks,

Figure 4.5: Model of the Commission's vision for a restored Spanish Colonial St. Augustine from St. Augustine Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission publication (copy available at St. Augustine Historical Society).

> *The Preservation Board completed in 1980 a three-year long archaeological and building survey, compiling information about historic resources that permits agencies, property owners and, especially, the Historic Architectural Review Board to make informed preservation judgments.*

John Griffin, Kathleen Deagan, and Robert Steinbach, and historians Albert Manucy, Luis Arana, Eugene Lyon, Paul Hoffman, Michael Gannon, Michael Scardaville, Thomas Graham and Amy Bushnell established a base of knowledge that will support a generation and more of research and preservation efforts.

The preservation initiative also expanded in the 1970s to embrace resources outside the colonial city. The Preservation Board completed in 1980 a three-year long archaeological and building survey, compiling information about historic resources that permits agencies, property owners and, especially, the Historic Architectural Review Board to make informed preservation judgments. Employing the information gathered from the survey, the Board's staff wrote nominations embracing two historic neighborhoods, the Abbott Tract Historic District, located north of Castillo de San Marcos, and the Model Land Company Historic District, comprised of the residential blocks situated west and north of the Ponce de Leon Hotel. Both were listed in 1983. The nomination papers for listing in the National Register of a fourth historic district within the city, Lincolnville, prepared at the request of the City in 1988, recognized the community's historic black neighborhood. A later attempt, sponsored by the City Planning Department in 1992, to add the Lighthouse neighborhood to the National Register of Historic Places failed because of the objections of residents.

The City in 1986 adopted a Historic Preservation Element as a part of its Comprehensive Plan. This document provided an outline of goals and objectives for preserving cultural resources and suggested policies for achieving them. In response to one of the plan's declared objectives, the City Commission in 1986 approved an ordinance requiring property owners undertaking development at a defined below-ground level to make an assessment of the property's archaeological resources. The City employed a professional archaeologist to perform the investigations.

The Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board withdrew from sponsorship of community historic preservation research and advocacy in the late 1980s.

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Preserving buildings and other historic resources was left to property owners and market forces. A relatively small number of property owners took advantage of federal tax laws that accorded an investment tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic buildings. Many eligible public agencies and non-profit entities received state and federal grant assistance for historic preservation improvements to historic buildings. Only within the historic districts controlled by municipal ordinance were changes to the historic architecture or landscape officially monitored.

In the mid-1990s, as the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners and its staff prepared to move into a new courthouse on the outskirts of the city, St. Augustine faced the renewed threat of a vast, empty building in the heart of the city. In the early 1960s, the same building, originally constructed as the Casa Monica Hotel in the late 19th century, had remained vacant for over thirty years before its conversion to the county courthouse. In the same period, its two companion buildings, the Ponce de Leon Hotel and the Alcazar Hotel, likewise empty or about to be vacated, found useful new lives, the first as a centerpiece for a four-year college and the second as a museum and municipal office building. The Casa Monica was rescued a second time through adaptive re-use, returned to its original purpose as a hotel. The facility breathed new economic vitality into the city, like the two other Flagler-era hotels. Both St. Johns County and the City of St. Augustine adopted a state-authorized ad valorem tax relief provision to encourage rehabilitation of the Casa Monica Hotel and other eligible historic buildings.

The Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board experienced some fitful years after 1988, resulting in a one-year legislative abolishment of the agency in 1990-1991. When it was reconstituted, the Board was placed under close control from Tallahassee. The apathy of state officials toward maintaining the historic program became increasingly apparent. Faced with growing evidence that the Board's years were numbered, St. Augustine's Mayor and City Manager began quietly in 1993 to inquire about the costs and problems associated with the City's assumption of the program's management. When the State Legislature ended the program in 1997, the Florida Department

Figure 4.6: The Casa Monica Hotel (1888) at left and the Alcazar Hotel (1889) occupy the opposite corners of the Ponce de Leon Hotel on King Street. All have undergone significant rehabilitation or adaptive use in the last half of the 20th century.

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of State gave the City a five-year lease upon the buildings and properties that had been assembled during the state's thirty-six years of operation and responsibility for managing the museums associated with those properties. The City Commission established a new department to administer the former state program and also subsequently approved the acquisition of additional properties in the area associated with the Restoration, indicating a municipal purpose to continue the work.

The City's Planning Department sponsored an updated survey of historic buildings in 1998. As the municipal department responsible for the Historic Architectural Review Board and the archeological program, as well as review of ad valorem tax relief applications, it has, by a process of default, become the only identifiable entity in the city that exercises an active historic preservation role. Architectural preservation outside of the historic districts controlled by municipal ordinance essentially relies on incentives provided under state and federal tax laws. Archaeological research continues, under the auspices of the City and the University of Florida, which conducts annual field studies that for over a decade have centered on early settlement patterns. Historical research within the city that might contribute to interpretation of archaeological findings and to architectural preservation suffer from an absence of any sponsored professional historian dedicated to that work. It is encouraging, however, that at the dawn of a new century that will encompass the quincentennial of the city's founding, tentative efforts have begun to give renewed purpose to preserving the city's historic resources and affirming its identity as a living city with a rich heritage spanning 450 years of European settlement and more than 4,000 years of prehistory.

(Conclusion of Dr. Adams essay)

> *Architectural preservation outside of the historic districts controlled by municipal ordinance essentially relies on incentives provided under state and federal tax laws.*

Figure 4.7: Casa Monica Hotel, pictured ca. 1903, benefited from tax incentives for the 1999 restoration work that returned the property to a hotel use after being vacated by the St. Johns County Courthouse. Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2016800951/.

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"Afterword"

In 1993, a varied group of civic leaders created a Vision Planning Project for the next century. A committee was created dedicated to preservation of the city's cultural resources and included representatives of public and private historical or historic preservation organizations and interested local residents. It drafted a statement of specific and general goals for the city in the 21st century. **Another visioning initiative was held in 2014 that resulted in 4 principles: authenticity, character, livability and vitality.** The city leadership continues to recognize the significance of historic resources and how they play a role in the local economy and the physical landscape.

The city began to recognize limitations of managing 40 buildings and other state-owned property leased to the city and began working with officials at the University of Florida to devise an alternative management plan. In 2007, this action was formalized with *Florida Statutes* to allow the University to assume this responsibility. In response to acquiring management responsibility of state-owned properties and historic buildings located within the St. Augustine Historic District, the University of Florida released a St. Augustine Historic Area Strategic Plan in 2009. Since that time, the University of Florida Historic St. Augustine Direct Support Organization has overseen the preservation and management of the properties including a significant rehabilitation of Government House and installation of multiple museum exhibits. In 2011, the city ceased operations of the Spanish Quarter Living History Museum and the University of Florida oversaw its transition to a private operator with an expanded facility including a performance stage, redeveloped site to represent all of the colonial periods, and increased restaurant and retail services. With a focus on the city-owned buildings, brick and mortar preservation projects are ongoing and still represent a monumental challenge due to varied types and sizes of resources. The Hotel Alcazar has undergone a full roof rehabilitation and termite fumigation between 2015 and 2017 and the Waterworks building in Davenport Park is currently under a long term and full rehabilitation that began in 2015.

Leading up to the city's 450th Celebration, the Department of Heritage Tourism and Historic Preservation was converted to the 450th Commemoration program. The Planning Department contributed by providing support to a private citizen that successfully nominated the Constitution Obelisk to the National Register of Historic Places in honor of the anniversary. As with other major preservation and celebration initiatives, the 450th was a public and private effort to raise money, programming and management of many events beginning in 2013 and culminating on Founder's Day, 8 September 2015, commemorating the 1565 landing of Pedro Menendez de Aviles. The celebration highlighted the multicultural history of St. Augustine's past and present, providing a reminder of its historical significance.

An architectural survey was completed in the North City area in 2006 to continue the survey update begun for the city in 1998. It was not until a resurgence of state grant funding allowed for substantial preservation projects to continue. The significant portion of the city not surveyed at all since the original 1980 survey was Davis Shores/Anastasia Island. Because this area developed primarily in the mid-century time period buildings were not candidates for the 1980 survey and were not represented in the architectural inventory of the city. In 2015, one year prior to the devastation of Hurricane Matthew, an architectural survey was performed. The following year, a survey

The City of St. Augustine Vision Plan 2014 and Beyond

St. Augustine will be livable, authentic, waterfront city that builds upon its rich history and environment to create a distinctive community character founded on a healthy and vibrant economy, a diverse mix of people and experiences and a valuing of its natural assets.

- Livability
- Authenticity
- Character
- Vitality

Figure 4.8: A Mid-Century Modern home on Inlet Drive built in 1955 that was recorded during the 2015 architectural survey before Hurricane Matthew.

update of the St. Augustine Town Plan National Register Historic District was completed which also performed an evaluation of the integrity of historic resources for the Town Plan National Historic Landmark District. A marker program was undertaken to ensure that the original remaining colonial buildings and individually designated buildings are recognized and interpreted to visitors and residents.

Another major step forward was the grant-funded project to inventory the major archaeological excavations performed within the boundaries of the 18th century town plan. This information, coupled with the evaluation of historic resources, will contribute to planning considerations as well as the National Park Service's initiative to update the Town Plan National Historic Landmark District to modern standards supported by archaeological resources, historic structures and buildings and the town plan landscape.

Additional National Register nominations have been performed or are underway which celebrate the city's founding heritage, diversity and its recent past along with the city's humbled influence on the Civil Rights Movement. In 2014, St. Augustine honored the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act. Subsequent research documented in the nomination of the Municipal Miniature Golf Course identified it as the first local public facility to be officially desegregated. A multiple property nomination to document the historic context of the Civil Rights Movement in St. Augustine was submitted to the Florida Division of Historical Resources and will result in multiple sites being listed in the National Register. Since 2010, the city nominated the Fullerwood Park, Nelmar Terrace, and North City National Register Historic Districts.

> *In 2014, St. Augustine honored the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act. Subsequent research documented in the nomination of the Municipal Miniature Golf Course identified it as the first local public facility to be officially desegregated.*

Figure 4.9: Dr. Robert B. Hayling's dental office (1957) at 79 Bridge Street is now home to the ACCORD Civil Rights Museum in honor of his contribution to the Civil Rights Movement. It is not designated in the National Register and is recommended for inclusion as part of the nomination for the St. Augustine Civil Rights Movement.

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Preserving St. Augustine's Past into the Future

The implementation of the city's preservation program has had many successes and faced many challenges. Its success can be measured in the ongoing desirability of the city's citizens, business owners, institutions and visitors to experience and benefit from St. Augustine's unique historic character. However, the increased desirability also presents a challenge as development, which is often preceded by demolition, erodes the city's neighborhoods and sense of place. This issue is further complicated by the effects of sea level rise and the impact to the built environment and archaeological resources.

The Historic Architectural Review Board ordinance and the accompanying Architectural Guidelines for Historic Preservation (AGHP), as well as the Archaeological Preservation Ordinance, have served to protect the historic core of the city. It now faces intensified development pressures from a changing population and economy, modern building codes, technologies, and heightened sense of vulnerability. To maintain St. Augustine's unique qualities and manage the development pressure, a present day, holistic review of the city's historic resources is required.

The city's historic preservation program includes both the built environment and the below ground resources that contain information in the archaeological record. All resources that constitute the cultural inventory of the city need to be preserved and/or documented and are under the auspice of the city's historic preservation program. This includes the cultural landscape, archaeological sites, buildings, objects, districts, cemeteries, submerged sites and features, and significant elements of the streetscape. In total, these features begin to tell the whole story of St. Augustine from the Native American experience, Spanish Colonial mission sites, and outpost of the Spanish and British military through American Territorial and United States historic periods. The first step in planning for the protection of these resources is their identification.

Based upon the current and anticipated development pressure, as well as priorities established by the city-wide review, the historic preservation program can be modified to play a larger role in the city's planning efforts, balancing the cherished sense of place with continued demolitions, new development, and adaptation in response to sea level rise and other environmental threats.

Figure 4.10: Plaza de la Constitución showing the Public Market, Confederate Monument, Spanish Constitution Obelisk, and the Cathedral Basilica between 1880-1897 by W. H. Jackson. Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2016797265/.

Defining historic and cultural resources varies across national and local entities. Within the city's jurisdiction, historic properties are buildings, objects, sites, or structures which are individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places; a contributing property in a National Register-listed historic district; designated as a local landmark; or a contributing property in a local historic district. There are numerous properties in St. Augustine designated as historic and for which historical information is available. Furthermore, the **Florida Master Site File (FMSF) serves as an inventory of historic resources maintained by the state and includes information on nationally and locally designated properties as well as properties that may or may not be considered historically significant.** The majority of designated properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and are part of a National Register historic district as a contributing resource. Local designations include 5 local districts, all of which overlap with 3 of the 7 National Register Historic Districts in part, and 3 individual local landmark buildings. The Archaeological Preservation Ordinance defines archaeological zones throughout city with descriptions of the information that could be uncovered in those zones which is a part of the archaeological inventory.

Nationally Designated Properties

The City of St. Augustine has numerous properties individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places and some of those properties are designated as a National Historic Landmark. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places does not impose any national regulatory requirements that would keep it from being modified or destroyed. Instead, listing:

- Provides recognition of a property's significance that can provide a tool for local planning
- Provides access to technical assistance from the Florida Division of Historical Resources and the State Historic Preservation Officer
- Provides an opportunity for historic preservation financial incentives
- Provides consideration of the potential impact of federally funded or licensed projects

National Historic Landmark Designations*

- **Cathedral of St. Augustine** – April 15, 1970 – Cathedral Street between Charlotte and St. George Street
- **Fort Mose Site (Second)** – October 12, 1994
- **González Alvarez House** – April 15, 1970
- **Hotel Ponce de Leon** – February 17, 2006 – 74 King Street
- **Llambias House** – April 15, 1970
- **St. Augustine Town Plan Historic District** – April 15, 1970

  *NHL designations are by default also listed in the National Register

National Register of Historic Places Designations

- Abbott Tract Historic District – July 21, 1983
- Alcazar Hotel – February 24, 1971 – 75 King Street
- Avero House – June 13, 1972 – 39 St. George Street

National Historic Landmarks

National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Today, just over 2,500 historic places bear this national distinction.

  - NPS.gov

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.

  - NPS.gov

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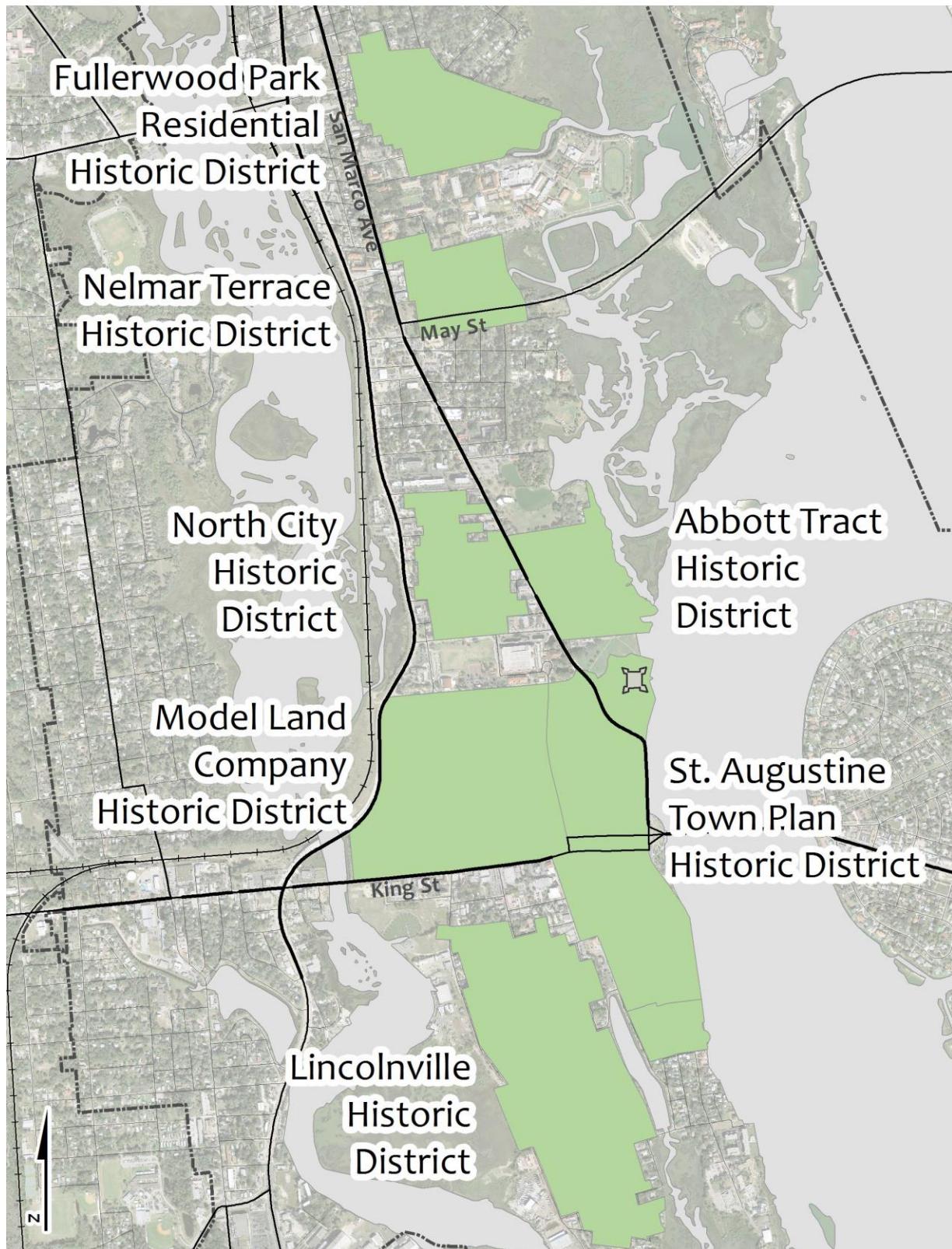
Figure 4.11: Neighborhoods designated as a historic district in the National Register of Historic Places. The listing is honorary and does not equate to any federal oversight unless there is a potential impact of a proposed federal funded or permitted project.

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Figure 4.12: The Fountain of Youth Archaeological Park is the most recent addition to the National Register of Historic Places in St. Augustine.

- Bridge of Lions – November 19, 1982 – King Street
- Castillo de San Marcos National Monument – October 15, 1966 – In addition: 1924 designation as a National Monument; 1975 Historic Civil Engineering Landmark designation by American Society of Civil Engineers
- City of St. Augustine Miniature Golf Course – November 19, 2014 – 111 Avenida Menendez
- Constitution Obelisk – December 18, 2012 – Plaza de la Constitución
- Fish Island Site – June 13, 1972
- Fountain of Youth Archeological Park and District – 2016 – 11 Magnolia Avenue
- Fullerwood Park Residential Historic District – September 24, 2010
- Government House – January 7, 2014 – 48 King Street
- Grace United Methodist Church – November 29, 1979 – 8 Carrera Street
- Lincolnville Historic District – November 29, 1991
- Lindsley House, (also known as the Horruytiner House) – September 10, 1971 – 214 St. George Street
- Father Francisco Lopez Statue – June 5, 2012 – 27 Ocean Avenue
- Xavier Lopez House – July 1, 1993 – 93 ½ King Street
- Markland - December 6, 1978 – 102 King Street
- Model Land Company Historic District – August 2, 1983
- Nelmar Terrace Historic District – March 28, 2011
- North City Historic District – October 1, 2009
- O'Reilly House – October 15, 1974 – 31 Avilés Street
- Old St. Johns County Jail – August 27, 1987 – 167 San Marco Avenue
- Record Building – April 26, 2006 – 154 Cordova Street
- Rodríguez-Avero-Sánchez House – April 16, 1971 – 52 St. George Street
- St. Augustine Alligator Farm Historic District – September 10, 1992 – 999 Anastasia Boulevard
- St. Augustine Civic Center – April 21, 2005 – 10 Castillo Drive
- St. Augustine Historic District – July 1, 1970
- St. Augustine Lighthouse and Keeper's Quarters – March 19, 1981 – Old Beach Road
- St. Augustine National Cemetery – May 26, 2016 – 104 Marine Street
- St. Augustine Water Works – February 5, 2014 – 184 San Marco Avenue
- Sanchez Powder House Site – April 14, 1972 – Marine Street
- Solla-Carcaba Cigar Factory, (Pamies-Arango Cigar Factory) – May 6, 1993 – 88 Riberia Street
- Spanish Coquina Quarries – February 23, 1972
- Stanbury Cottage – October 8, 2008 – 232 St. George Street
- Villa Zorayda – September 23, 1993 – 83 King Street
- Horace Walker House (Castillo Sebastian) – January 30, 1998 – 33 Old Mission Avenue
- Ximinéz-Fatio House – July 25, 1973 – 20 Aviles Street

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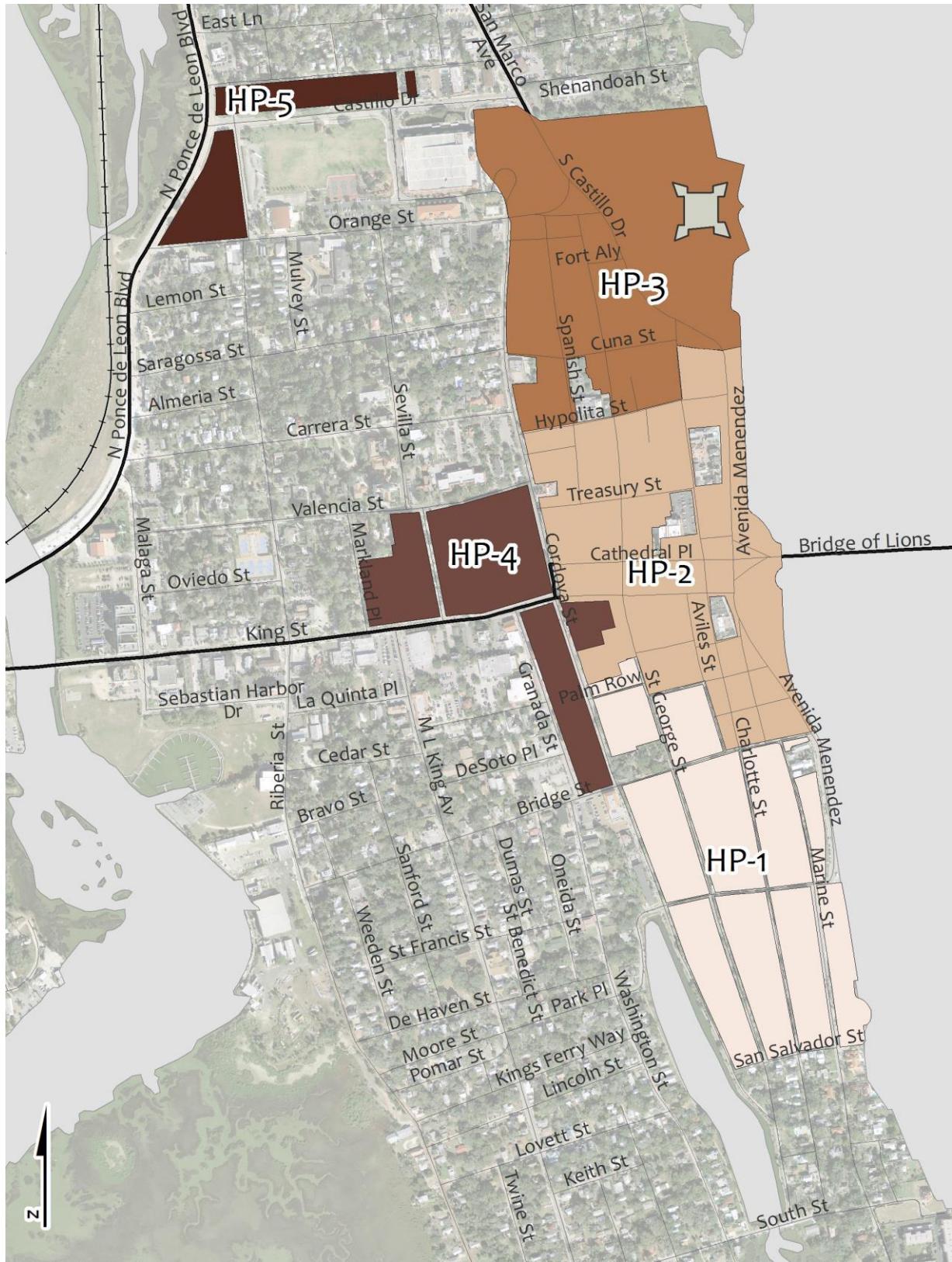
Figure 4.13: There are five local historic preservation zoning districts which are regulated by the HARB and the AGHP.

Florida Master Site File (FMSF)

The Florida Master Site File (FMSF), administered by the Division of Historical Resources, is the state's inventory of historical buildings, structures, bridges, cemeteries, archaeological sites, submerged sites, historic districts, landscapes, and linear features. The Site File also maintains copies of archaeological and historical survey reports and other manuscripts relevant to history and historic preservation in Florida. Site File staff do not evaluate the historical significance of sites or the potential impact of development projects, however, evaluations of historical significance by other State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff and preservation consultants are included in its records. Florida Master Site File staff are available to assist citizens, government agencies and historic preservation professionals in performing searches and obtaining information from its inventory. There are over 3,700 resources recorded on the FMSF within St. Augustine. Much work remains to record archaeological sites in St. Augustine on the FMSF. Of the 800 excavation projects the FMSF has an inventory of 231 archaeological sites within the St. Augustine area (not all 800 projects are considered individual sites).

While local inventories can serve a regulatory function, the state inventory serves as an archive for information regarding historical properties across the state. There are limitations of this inventory, however. Because the forms can be completed by experts and non-professional recorders the information will vary in degrees of detail and accuracy depending on the source and the purpose for recording the information. Also, it is an incomplete inventory as it only includes properties that someone has taken the effort to document. Many other properties may exist that have not been recorded.

Local Designation

In 1971, the City of St. Augustine designated five historic districts through the creation of zoning overlay districts to control architectural modifications and regulate commercial uses of buildings within the districts. The applicable zoning for each district is identified in the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 28, Article III, Division 3. – Historic Preservation Districts. The five locally designated historic districts are:

1. **Historic Preservation - One [HP-1]**

   This district encompasses the southernmost portion of the St. Augustine Town Plan National Historic Landmark District.

   *Intent. This district is intended to provide primarily residential uses that will encourage the **preservation and restoration of historic structures** in the district.* - Zoning Ordinance

2. **Historic Preservation - Two [HP-2]**

   This district is the central portion of the St. Augustine Town Plan National Historic Landmark District.

   *Intent. This district is intended to provide a mix of commercial and residential uses that will encourage the **restoration and reproduction of historic structures** and maintain the historic and pedestrian scale of the neighborhood.* - Zoning Ordinance

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3. **Historic Preservation - Three [HP-3]**

   This district includes the northernmost portion of the St. Augustine Town Plan National Historic Landmark District.

   Intent. This district is intended to provide a mix of commercial and residential uses that will encourage the **restoration and reproduction of historic structures** *and maintain the historic and pedestrian scale of the neighborhood.* - Zoning Ordinance

4. **Historic Preservation - Four [HP-4]**

   This district includes portions of both the St. Augustine Town Plan and Model Land Company National Register Districts.

   Intent. This district is intended to **apply to significant, large-scale Flagler-era development adjacent to the Colonial City and provides for such uses that encourage the maintenance and use of these structures**. - Zoning Ordinance

5. **Historic Preservation - Five [HP-5]**

   HP-5 includes portions of the southernmost block of the North City National Register District.

   Intent. This district is intended to provide a **mix of residential and nonresidential uses compatible with the existing historic structures and the district's relationship with surrounding neighborhoods and traffic circulation.** - Zoning Ordinance

The 1984 AGHP reflects 6 local Historic Districts however by the 1989 version the 5 districts in place today were reflected. Since that time the city has not designated a new local Historic District although there have been individual property landmarks.

Local Landmarks that have been designated are:

• The Record Building, September 18, 2003, 154 Cordova Street

• St. Augustine Waterworks, June 20, 2013, 184 San Marco Avenue

• 32 Granada Street, September 15, 2016, relocated to 34 Granada Street

Figure 4.14: The building previously addressed as 32 Granada Street (ca. 1899) was designated as a local landmark by HARB in recognition of previous occupants significant to St. Augustine's history and the building's physical characteristics.

Archaeological Zones

Building projects are reviewed for their potential to impact buried archaeological resources located in an archaeology zone involving ground-penetrating construction activities. St. Augustine's archaeological heritage is unparalleled in the quantity and diversity of remains buried beneath its buildings, streets, and backyards. These deposits not only reflect the City's European origins since 1565, but also a rich and varied Native American heritage that has been in existence for thousands of years. The intent of the City's archaeology program is not to stop or limit development, as St. Augustine is a vibrant and evolving urban community, but to preserve the information of those buried remains subject to potential destruction through documentation. Most archaeological projects in the City of St. Augustine stem from local construction and development projects that impact buried cultural resources. In 1986 the City drafted an Archaeology Preservation Ordinance to protect its buried heritage. The ordinance is unique in that the effects of ground-penetrating construction activities are evaluated on both public and private properties. St. Augustine also is one of a few municipalities in the country that has an Archaeology Program, which averages 30 investigations each year.

The city is divided into zones as shown on the archaeological base map entitled "Archaeological Base Map for St. Augustine, Florida." The zones, as delineated on the base map, are described as follows, with titles and abbreviations as indicated:

1. **Archaeological Zone Number I** relates to areas containing the most significant archaeological sites in the city and includes the following subzones: Archaeological Zone I-A consists of an area containing historic resources from the 17th to the 20th centuries, including the Cubo Line west to Ponce de Leon Boulevard, and limited prehistoric resources. Archaeological Zone I-B consists of an area containing historic resources from the 16th through the 20th centuries, specifically including the earliest areas of the downtown portion of the city. Archaeological Zone I-C
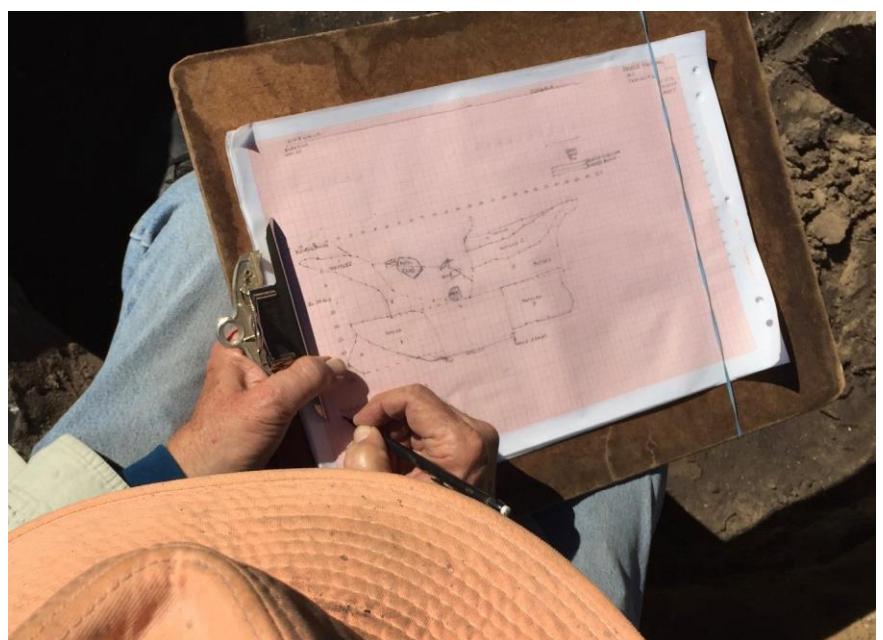
Figure 4.15: Mapping information discovered during an archaeological investigation provides documentation to study development patterns, historical events, and temporal associations which are the context for any physical artifacts that are found.

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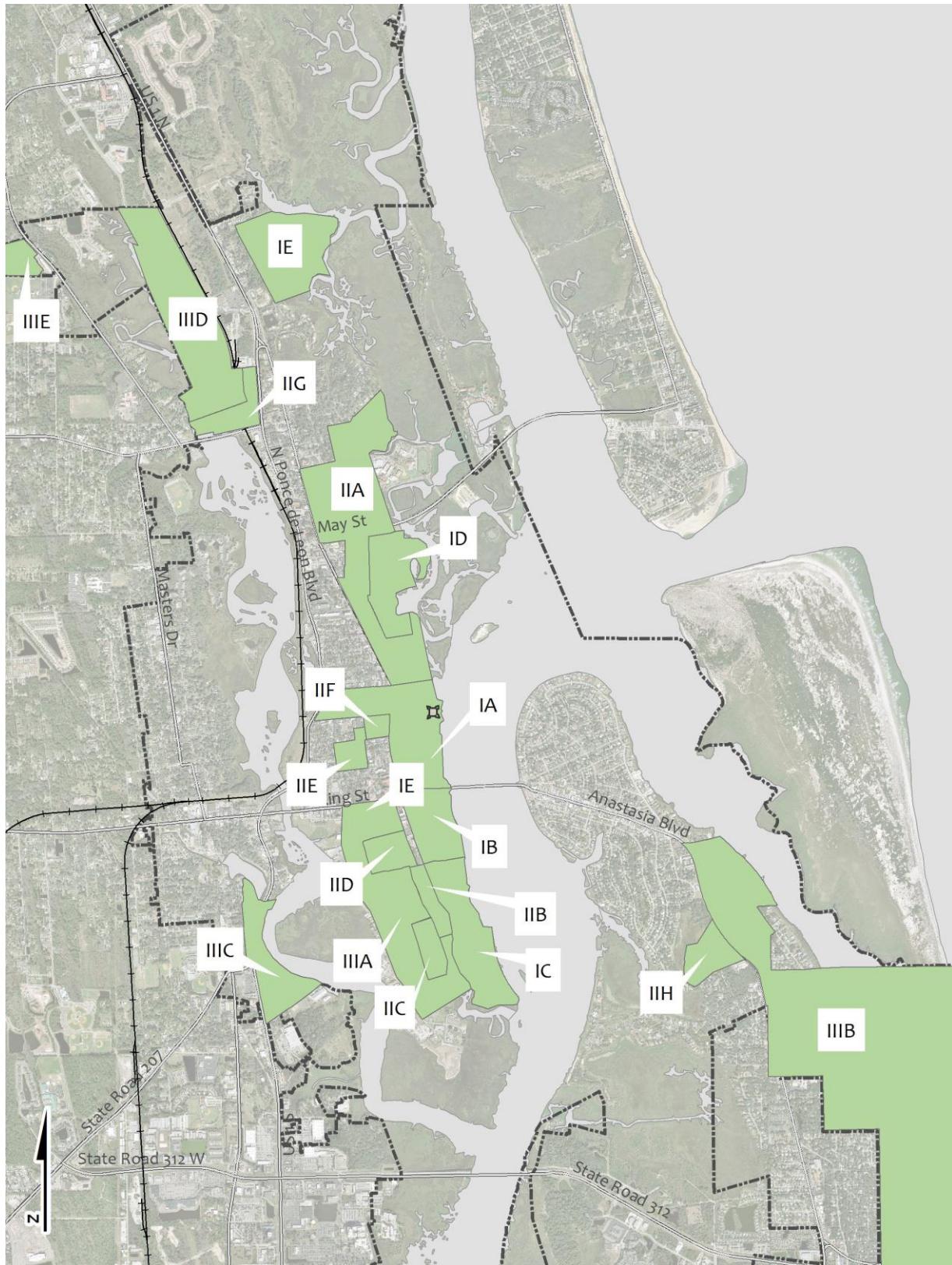
Figure 4.16: St. Augustine Archaeological Zone map.

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consists of an area containing historic resources from the 17th to the 20th centuries; Archaeological Zone I-D consists of an area containing the original settlement of St. Augustine in 1565 and important Indian mission settlements and prehistoric sites. Archaeological Zone I-E consists of an area containing the site of Ft. Mose.

2. **Archaeological Zone Number II** relates to areas containing important known archaeological sites and includes the following subzones: Archaeological Zone II-A consists of an area containing portions of Hospital Creek, numerous prehistoric and historic Indian sites, farmsteads, plantations and possible military sites. Archaeological Zone II-B consists of an area containing the Lincolnville Dump area on the edge of Maria Sanchez Lake; Archaeological Zone II-C consists of an area containing the Pocotalaca Indian Mission; Archaeological Zone II-D consists of an area containing the Palica Indian Mission; Archaeological Zone II-E consists of an area containing the Tolomato Mission; Archaeological Zone II-F consists of an area containing the Tolomato Cemetery; Archaeological Zone II-G consists of an area containing the Ft. Mose Line and other fortifications and the Fairbanks Plantation site; and Archaeological Zone II-H consists of an area containing Old Quarry Road.

3. **Archaeological Zone Number III** relates to areas having a high potential for historic/prehistoric archaeological sites and contains the following subzones: Archaeological Zone III-A consists of an area containing the Lincolnville portion of the city; Archaeological Zone III-B consists of an area containing portions of Anastasia Island; Archaeological Zone III-C consists of an area containing Oyster Creek; and Archaeological Zone III-D consists of an area containing portions of the eastern edge of the San Sebastian River, west of the FEC Railroad, north of SR 16; and Archaeological Zone 111-E consists of a property located on the west side of Lewis Speedway between Red House Branch Creek and Varella Avenue.

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Architectural Guidelines for Historic Preservation (AGHP)

Architectural guidelines are basic standards used to review, direct, and regulate rehabilitation and maintenance, new construction, and demolitions in the locally designated historic preservation zoning districts. The last update added changes in 2011 to allow some design flexibility for architectural styles for the Historic Preservation-1 zoning district. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation have been supplemented by the AGHP as a specific set of guidelines tailored to the unique mix of architectural styles in St. Augustine.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Updated 2017)

Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

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Current Historic Preservation Program

The City of St. Augustine's preservation program has deep traditions and the protection it offers is embraced by the community as a means of protecting the city's unique historic character. The current historic preservation program has served the city well since the establishment of the Historic Preservation Zoning Districts in 1971 and the Archaeological Preservation Ordinance in 1986. However, there are new challenges, including development pressures, sea level rise and natural hazards, and increased demolition that could be met with an improved regulatory framework, which can further protect the city's historical resources and character. Finally, there are large areas of the city with historic resources that have no protection outside of the existing demolition review process which can have a significant impact to the historic setting and integrity of remaining historic resources.

Each of the eight strategy themes of the 2018 City of St. Augustine Historic Preservation Master Plan have been used to evaluate the current preservation policies and procedures and identify the participating agencies and individuals:

A. City-Wide Planning

The City Commission is responsible for budgeting, setting priorities and making final decisions on some applications including demolition of Colonial buildings and designation of local Historic Districts. Historic preservation goals, objectives and policies are outlined in the current Historic Preservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. In effect, the city implements preservation activity through the Zoning Code.

Based upon the City Code of Ordinances Section 28-181, the purpose of historic zoning district regulations are:

- **To safeguard the heritage of the city** by preserving the district(s) which reflect noteworthy elements of the cultural, educational, social, economic, political and/or architectural history.

- **To educate the citizen** to realize, understand, and appreciate the city's rich heritage.

Figure 4.17: The historic Civic Center (1935) at 10 South Castillo Drive is owned by the city and functions as a visitor information center today.

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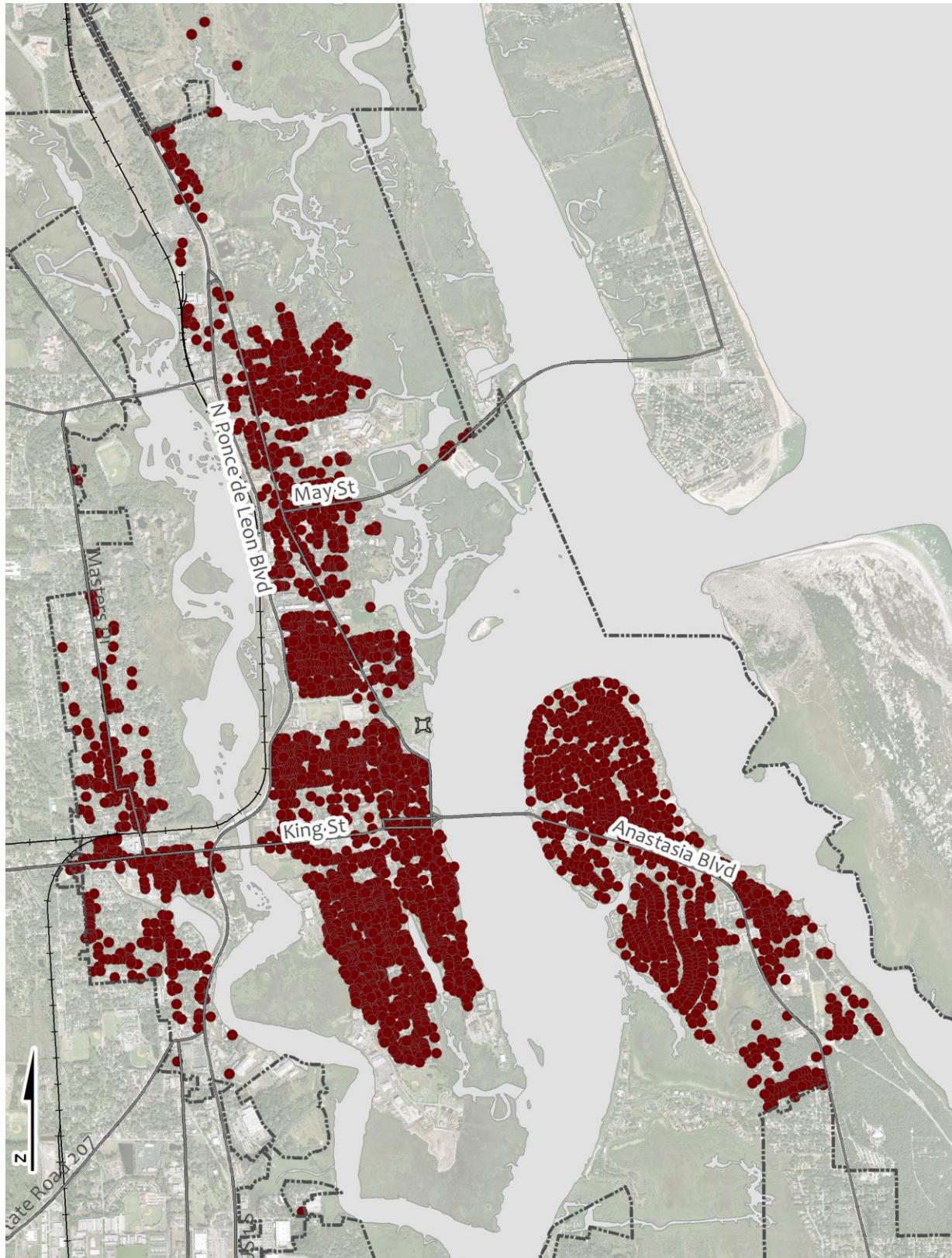
Figure 4.18: Inventory of historic properties recorded on the Florida Master Site File.

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- **To stimulate a greater awareness and sense of pride** in the founding of the city and the contributions it has made to the state and nation.

- **To develop an atmosphere and feeling of old**, historic St. Augustine by encouraging the preservation and restoration of historic structures within the districts.

- **To improve the environmental quality and overall livability** of the historic section of St. Augustine.

- **To stabilize and improve property values** in the district and to allow uses that encourage the restoration and conservation of historic sites and structures.

- **To promote the use and preservation of the district** for the education, welfare and pleasure of residents of St. Augustine and St. Johns County, and of the state and nation as well.

- That these aforementioned goals and objectives of the historic district be achieved and implemented through the establishment of and enforcement of the general district guidelines and specific district regulations.

B. Historic Preservation Inventory

City staff and paid consultants have been primarily responsible for conducting surveys of historic properties and neighborhoods and evaluating them for potential historic significance. The first comprehensive inventory was conducted from 1978 to 1980 which later was used to successfully list the Model Land Company, Abbott Tract and Lincolnville as National Register Historic Districts. Surveys since that time led to the completion of other National Register historic district nominations (refer to St. Augustine's Historic Resources) as well as inventories for potential National Register historic districts like Davis Shores and Lighthouse Park.

The city regularly provides information for addition to the FMSF including inventories for potential historic districts and updating the inventory with previously unrecorded resources, research regarding specific properties, as well as providing documentation prior to approval of some demolition applications as mandated by HARB. In 2016 the St. Augustine National Register Historic District was updated with a current architectural survey and in the prior year a survey was conducted on Anastasia Island including Davis Shores. Also, major archaeological investigations conducted over the last 75 years within the Town Plan Historic District have been recorded with the FMSF and the initial phase of translating this information in to a GIS platform was started. Grant funds were successfully awarded for these projects which represents a backlog of activity since the last partial architectural survey was completed in 2006. The most recent National Register District nominated by the city was designated in 2011 and no additional local districts have been designated. Records provided to the state inventory are also maintained and accessible locally in the Planning and Building Department and a portion of the records are available online through the city's mobile website (www.staugustineexplorers.com).

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C. Historic Preservation, Conservation & Zoning

Most of the regulations governing the Historic Preservation program can be found in Chapter 28, Article II, Division 3 (Historic Architectural Review Board) of the City of St. Augustine Zoning Ordinance supported by the AGHP. The local ad valorem tax exemption program is codified in Chapter 2, Article VII Historic Preservation Property Tax Exemption.

The administration component of the historic preservation program provides the operating framework for the Historic Architectural Review Board and its staff, who supports HARB and interacts with the public and other city departments in support of preservation policies and standards.

Historic Architectural Review Board

The summarized duties of the HARB include:

- **Reviewing of Certificate of Appropriateness** (COA) applications for properties located in Historic Districts HP-1 through HP-5 and on properties facing HP-1, HP-2 and HP-3

- **Reviewing of Certificate of Demolition** (COD) applications for properties 50 years old or older and/or recorded on the Florida Master Site File, or designated as a Local Landmark (Refer to *D. Reducing Historic Building Demolition*)

- **Designation of properties as Local Landmarks**

- **Providing recommendations** to conserve historic districts and protect historic resources as well as advise property owners, various agencies and the city on the effects of proposed projects with historic preservation goals

> Most of the regulations governing the Historic Preservation program can be found in Chapter 28, Article II, Division 3 (Historic Architectural Review Board) of the City of St. Augustine Zoning Ordinance.

Figure 4.19: A Mediterranean Revival building (ca. 1930) at 107 St. George Street undergoing rehabilitation following approvals through the COA process.

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The five locally designated Historic Districts receive the greatest level of protection from HARB, requiring review of proposed exterior alterations to buildings, structures and to a degree their sites. Proposed projects are reviewed for compliance with the city's Architectural Guidelines for Historic Preservation. These guidelines provide a local interpretation of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, addressing issues specific to the historic resources of St. Augustine.

City Historic Preservation Staff

The Historic Preservation Division is part of the city's Planning and Building Department and includes both historic preservation and archaeology programs. The administration of the Historic Preservation Ordinance is supported by a full-time Historic Preservation Officer and another professional staff member. Archaeological responsibilities are carried out by one full-time archaeologist and several volunteers through the St. Augustine Archaeology Association. These staff members review building and development permits, archaeology applications, and produce staff reports for the HARB hearings in addition to providing data and recommendations for city preservation policies. The City Archaeologist reviews permits for buildings, right-of-way, and utilities; conducts all aspects of archaeological research as well as curating artifacts and records from thirty years' worth of previous archaeology investigations.

City Planning and Zoning

The City Code establishes zoning districts that regulate use as well as building height and size, lot coverage and setbacks. The Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) is supported by professional planning staff that conduct development reviews, manage special projects, and develop comprehensive planning policy.

D. Reducing Historic Building Demolition

HARB reviews applications for partial or full demolitions of buildings and structures listed on the Florida Master Site File, which are 50 years old or older, or which have been locally designated as a Landmark. In its review of demolition applications, HARB can:

- Postpone demolition for up to 12 months to allow consideration of alternatives to demolition after which the applicant must reapply and another postponement could be issued for up to 12 months
- Deny a request for demolition of a building that meets the definition of exceptional significance, is a contributing property in a National Register Historic District or a property that is individually listed in the National Register
- Recommend local Landmark status for a property determined to be of exceptional significance

Although the expanded demolition review has helped to save some properties, areas of the city are facing an increase in demolition and construction of replacement buildings that are often incongruent with surrounding historic neighborhood character while other areas of the city are being impacted from incremental removal of historic fabric. In the Lincolnville National Register Historic District, there have been 102 demolitions of contributing buildings which is just over 18% of the total number of contributing buildings in the district.

HARB reviews applications for partial or full demolitions of buildings and structures listed on the Florida Master Site File, which are 50 years old or older, or which have been locally designated as a Landmark

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Figure 4.20: Trinity Independent Church (ca. 1913) at 84 Bridge Street is benefitting from the Lincolnville CRA's institutional fix-it-up program to develop an engineering plan to restore the tower and the sanctuary space so that it can be occupied once again.

E. Economics

Property owners in St. Augustine have potential access to three economic incentive programs. These include the Historic Preservation Property Tax Exemption (ad valorem) program, the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit program for commercial properties and the 2013 Lincolnville Community Redevelopment Area. Qualification for these programs is based on types of improvements, property use and property location.

F. Hazard Mitigation

Hazard mitigation in St. Augustine is led by the St. Johns County Division of Emergency Management with participation by the city's emergency response representatives. With a growing awareness related to the potential impacts of hazards on St. Augustine, the city is reviewing hazard mitigation planning options that support the protection of historic resources. Special emphasis has recently been placed on the threats associated with environmental changes. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity has completed two reports for St. Augustine through the Coastal Resilience Pilot Projects program. The City of St. Augustine Coastal Vulnerability Assessment study was undertaken to evaluate coastal hazard risk and vulnerability to inform adaptation planning measures that may be integrated into existing local planning, policy an budgeting mechanisms. Furthermore, following the recovery from Hurricanes Matthew and Irma there may be hazard mitigation funding for additional research and prevention measures.

Historic Preservation Property Tax Exemption (ad valorem) Program

The City of St. Augustine has adopted ordinances allowing partial ad valorem tax exemptions for historic properties which have completed approved restorations, rehabilitations or renovations. The 10-year exemption applies to ad valorem taxes levied by the City of St. Augustine on the assessed value of the qualifying improvements.

Lincolnville Community Redevelopment Area

The Lincolnville CRA has a mission to support and preserve the quality of life for residents by eliminating blight, while protecting and enhancing the characteristics that make the community unique (i.e. history, architecture, the natural and built environments, culture, and diversity) through community planning, redevelopment activities, and effective partnerships with neighborhood organizations.

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G. Archaeology

Based upon a property's location and extent of proposed work, construction projects involving ground disturbance may also be subject to investigation by the City Archaeologist prior to the commencement of construction as outlined in the City of St. Augustine Archaeological Preservation Ordinance (adopted 20 December 1986). A City Archaeologist administers the City of St. Augustine Archaeological Preservation Ordinance and is supported by the volunteer efforts of the St. Augustine Archaeological Association and a facility that houses the archaeology laboratory.

H. Education & Advocacy

In addition to Historic Preservation staff, there are several organizations and institutions that provide education opportunities regarding historic resources in St. Augustine. These organizations and institutions provide valuable resources and community engagement for historic preservation in St. Augustine. City staff participate in these events with attendance, sponsorship, and leadership. Public interaction and outreach opportunities occur through the performance of staff responsibilities while archaeological projects are under excavation and while providing customer service for development applications. Additionally, staff contribute to existing social media, website, and paper copy materials while also providing regional and national representation during speaking engagements for conferences and special events.

Figure 4.21: An archaeological exhibit in the historic Civic Center was installed in 2016 which conveys the evolution of the St. Augustine Town Plan through the Colonial periods in artifacts, maps, scaled replicas, and informational panels. The project was financed in part with historic preservation grant assistance provided by the Florida Department of Historical Resources and earned an award from the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation.

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Conclusion

The city's preservation program has successfully preserved many of the city's historic and cultural resources above ground and below ground. Over time the city has developed both an archaeological ordinance and a preservation ordinance to govern development activities in areas recognized by the city and the National Register for their significance. Participation in the state and national preservation programs was formalized with the city's designation as a Certified Local Government and the city has continued to support and/or sponsor additional National Register designations. Finally, there are dedicated professional staff and tangible resources that are provided as references to the community to support sensitive property stewardship.

In the last 32 years, however, there has not been a comprehensive evaluation of the city's historic preservation program. The community's preservation ethic should be matched within the regulatory framework and programs can be improved to incorporate new technologies, materials, and environmental challenges. A broader perspective toward neighborhood preservation and identifying methods to address emerging issues such as sea level rise should include leadership from the city and community members. In the following chapters, recommendations are provided in detail through strategies, tasks, and first steps that are organized by the eight themes identified from the public workshops. These chapters represent the proposed 2018 City of St. Augustine Historic Preservation Master Plan that will guide the preservation program in a strategic manner that updates current policy, offers more community participation, and promotes and preserves the historic and cultural resources of the city.