

# HISTORIC PLAN



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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Adopted by City Council on November 7, 2012

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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## **Introduction**

Location .....	1
Plan Development.....	1
Purpose .....	1
Vision .....	1

## **Goals, Policies and Action**

Goal 1 .....	2
Goal 2 .....	2
Goal 3 .....	3

## **Registers..... 4**

City of Reno Register of Historic Places .....	4
State of Nevada Register of Historic Places .....	4
Federal Register .....	4

## **Districts**

Historic Districts .....	5
Conservation Districts .....	5
Powning Conservation District.....	6
Wells Avenue Neighborhood Conservation District .....	7

## **Appendixes**

Appendix A – Glossary of Terms .....	10
Appendix B - Groups and Organizations.....	14

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Location**

The Historic Plan was developed to address all parcels in the City of Reno including parcels in the sphere of influence (SOI).

## **Plan Development**

In 2006, the City of Reno began working in cooperation with the Historical Resources Commission (HRC) to establish city-wide historic policies. The Historic Plan was developed through a lengthy public involvement process including meetings with a working group of stakeholders. Goals were developed which are supported with policies and actions to further establish and maintain the City of Reno's historic resources, i.e. buildings, sites, structures, objects etc.

## **Purpose**

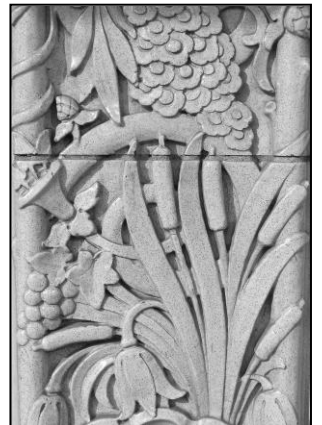
The key concept of the Plan is to develop mechanisms to identify buildings, sites, structures, or objects that are prehistoric or historic and are listed or are eligible for listing on the National, State, or City Registers of Historic Places and to raise community awareness of historic resources. The historic resources range in architectural styles throughout the City, from Queen Anne and Bungalow to Commercial and Art Deco and include structures such as the Virginia Street Bridge, as well as landscapes and streetscapes, such as mature trees, landscaping and street widths. These historic resources exemplify and reflect cultural values and economic, political, and architecture history of Reno, working together to create a historic framework of Reno's sense of place.

The need for a historic plan is also provided in NRS 278.160(d), which states that the "master plan may include a historic properties preservation plan." Specific criteria for historic properties preservation plan includes "an inventory of significant historical, archaeological, and architectural properties and a statement of methods to encourage the preservation of those properties."

## **Vision Statement**

*Identify, recognize, and encourage the preservation of Reno's historic resources that include historic buildings, structures, objects, neighborhoods, emigrant trails and highways, archeological sites, and landscapes in an effort to foster civic and neighborhood pride so that future generations will have the opportunity to appreciate and understand Reno's unique cultural heritage.*

This vision statement was created to establish the key principles for this Plan and to allow this Plan to serve as the primary document for the protection, maintenance, and acquisition of historic resources within the City of Reno.



## **GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTION**

Reno has a variety of architectural styles, significant historical routes, and unique structures spread throughout its boundaries. The diversity and widespread location of historic resources makes preservation a challenge in our community. Specific goals, policies, and actions have been developed to facilitate and address the historical concerns. The overarching goals are tied to supporting policies and specific actions. The policy amplifies the goal statement and the action provides a more specific description of proposed implementation of the action. City staff will work with the HRC to monitor and implement the following goals, policies, and actions. The need for additional staff, with education and experience in historic preservation, should be reviewed in the future so historic resources are maintained in the City.

### **Goal 1: The City should identify, recognize, and increase historic resources**

**Policy 1.1:** Historic resources should be identified to preserve and to protect and to increase public awareness of historic resources in the City of Reno.

**Action 1.1:** The *Historical Resources Commission Survey* should be updated, as needed and as directed by the HRC, to identify properties that are or will reach the 50 year status within the next two decades.

**Policy 1.2:** Increase the number of properties and landmarks on the city, state, and national registers that are within the City and sphere of influence.

**Action 1.2:** Identified historic properties' owners should be contacted and notified of their property's historic status. The requirements of the city, state, and/or national registers should be explained and property owners should be encouraged to register their property.

**Policy 1.3:** Recognized historic resources should be acknowledged and mechanisms developed to preserve all historic resources within the City of Reno.

**Action 1.3:** A program should be established to recognize, list, maintain, and rehabilitate historic properties and landmarks.



## Goal 2: The City should strive to protect historic resources

**Policy 2.1:** Historic characteristics should be respected and maintained when possible and new development should demonstrate an effort to retain the historic character throughout the City.



**Action 2.1:** Guidelines should be established to address modifications to historic properties, to maintain and preserve overall character, architectural styles, and preserve a sense of place. Any new construction should preserve the historic character of the area and neighborhood character and design should be maintained. The guidelines should include building in context to the surrounding area through building scale and density, landscaping, signage, building material, etc.

**Policy 2.2:** An incentive program should be developed for property owners to maintain and protect historic resources.

**Action 2.2:** A variety of tools and/or mechanisms should be developed to provide incentives or funds to ensure historic preservation.

## Goal 3: Districts should be establish throughout the city to preserve and maintain historic resources

**Policy 3.1:** Historic and conservation districts should be encouraged where historic resources are located.

**Action 3.1:** Historic and conservation districts guidelines should be developed.





## **REGISTERS**

### **City of Reno Register of Historic Places**

The City of Reno Register of Historic Places was established along with Reno's historic preservation ordinance in 1993. The body that administers the City Register and the City's preservation ordinance is the HRC. The purpose of the City Register is to recognize and honor buildings and sites that are important to Reno's history and to our sense of community. The preservation ordinance recognizes the importance of maintaining our historic character, so the City Register carries with it minimal requirements, which pertain only to exterior modifications. Exterior modifications involving



substantial change to buildings listed in the City Register of

Historic Places require a Certificate of Appropriateness approved by the HRC before a building permit is issued. The intent of these regulations is to insure that buildings, structures, or districts on the Register shall be in harmony with their surroundings. It is not the intention of these regulations to require the reconstruction or demolition of individual or original buildings, to prohibit the demolition or removal of such buildings, or to impose architectural styles from particular historic periods



### **State of Nevada Register of Historic Places**

The State of Nevada has a State Register of Historic Places that was created by the state legislature in 1979. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) administers the State Register. The State Register recognizes and honors designated property and does not place any requirements or restrictions on the property.

### **National Register**

The National Register was established in 1966 with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The NHPA came out of national concern over the effects of major highway-building and post-war development on the historic fabric of our country. The National Register is intended to recognize and honor properties, specifically sites, districts, buildings, structures, and objects, that are significant in local, state, and/or national history. The NHPA also guides federal agencies to consider the effects of their activities on historic resources. Private property owners listed in the National Register does not place any conditions or restrictions on the property. The recognition can bring benefits in the form of rehabilitation tax credits and federal and state preservation grants.

## **DISTRICTS**

The establishment of districts throughout the city increases public awareness, education, and visibility of Reno's historic resources and brings greater appreciation of the resources. These districts have the potential to create a greater sense of community and to create economic benefits for the area especially when linked with other areas and/or programs.

When and where Reno's unique architectural structures have been built make the tasks of identifying and creating specific protected areas difficult. However, there are neighborhoods that have either consistency in architectural styles or a specific design/layout. These historic resource areas have been previously recognized as: Downtown, Newlands, Plumas, Ralston, Wells, and the West University. These areas are not officially designated as historic or conservation districts; however this Plan encourages the development of districts and these areas and other areas should be reviewed to see if any are viable as either a historic or conservation district.

### **Historic Districts**

Historic Districts are definable geographical areas that contain a number of related historic sites, buildings, structures, features, or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development, and have been designated on a local, state, or national register or historic places. The District may encompass a neighborhood or may comprise of individual elements separated geographically but linked by association or history. Districts can include but are not limited to architecture styles, neighborhood design, locations of historical significance, or clustering of structures of importance. Creating historic districts brings a sense of community and pride to the neighborhood or area that is designated. Districts bring public awareness and interest to an area of historical importance and significance. Districts have the potential to be an economic benefit to the designated area, protect values of property, and bring localized and regional tourism to the area. Historic districts are regulatory by nature and require acceptance by property owners prior to establishment.

### **Conservation Districts**

A conservation district provides for a method of achieving preservation without regulations of a traditional historic district approach. A conservation district can include historic resources that share a similar form, character, unique elements and/or visual qualities derived from a combination of topography, vegetation, space, scenic vistas, architecture, unique features, or places of natural or cultural significance, that create a district which exhibits stability, livability, and specific identity.

A conservation district is designated through the establishment of precise boundaries and is non-regulatory. The designation does not impose on property owners any regulatory requirements other than those currently required through zoning. The Historic Plan establishes the conservation district and no other ordinance is required. Conservation districts will provide educational opportunities to residents and property owners. Information



on what makes the conservation district unique and how to best preserve and enhance their appearance should be addressed through specific guidelines for each conservation district.

A comprehensive survey of the conservation district should be conducted to identify elements which make the conservation district a unique stand-alone area. Simple design changes to the right-of-way including signage, lighting, corner monuments, street signs, etc. can give the conservation district a cohesive feel, while maintaining individual property rights. Street signs, entrance markers, and other types of identifiers will facilitate this process. By identifying each area, conservation districts will be distinct and foster a sense of community belonging.

### **Powning Conservation District**

The first designated conservation district located in the City of Reno is the Powning Conservation District. The Powning Addition was established by C. C. Powning in the 1880's. The earliest buildings were modest in size and were typically working-class homes, however significant buildings are now found in the area designed by well-known architects. Some of the buildings in the area include the McKinley Park School, Lora J. Knight House, Ginocchio Craftsman style home, Lear Theater (First Church of Christ, Scientist), Ambassador Apartments, 20th Century Club and a Hewitt Wells designed contemporary office building.



To distinguish the area as the Powning Conservation District, distinct and unique standards should be developed for signage, lighting, street signs, and other unique amenities, including corner monuments, entrance markers, and other types of identifiers. These standards will be developed under the direction of the City Council as funds become available. HRC and City staff should develop informational guidelines to maintain the character of the area and address future developments.

The Powning Conservation District includes parcels north of the Truckee River, south of parcels that front Second Street, west of Arlington Avenue, and east of Keystone Avenue. The District boundary is shown below.



**Wells Avenue Neighborhood Conservation District**

The second designated conservation district located in the City of Reno is the Wells Avenue Neighborhood Conservation District. After the death of Sheldon O. Wells in 1900, his son-in-law Samuel Wheeler managed Wells' estate. In 1905, Sheldon O. Wells' estate was approved to be subdivided into the Wells Addition. With the Wells Addition came Wells Avenue, which established the eastern boundary of Reno and also



*Reid's Cash Grocery Store,  
Wells Avenue at Moran Street*



extended Cheney Street as its southern boundary. In 1909, trolley service was extended to the area, increasing access and providing a connection for residents of the Wells Avenue Neighborhood to other parts of Reno.



*137 Burns Street, in the Wells Avenue Neighborhood Conservation District*

Many of the residences in the area pre-date the mid 1940's and are characteristic of the time period in which they were constructed. Since the Virginia and Truckee Railroad bordered the Wells Addition to the west, the area fostered a unique character which includes an eclectic mixture of vernacular architectural styles that span several decades. The different architectural styles include Queen Anne Revival, craftsman type Bungalows made of brick and cut rock, Minimal Traditional, and Ranch styles.

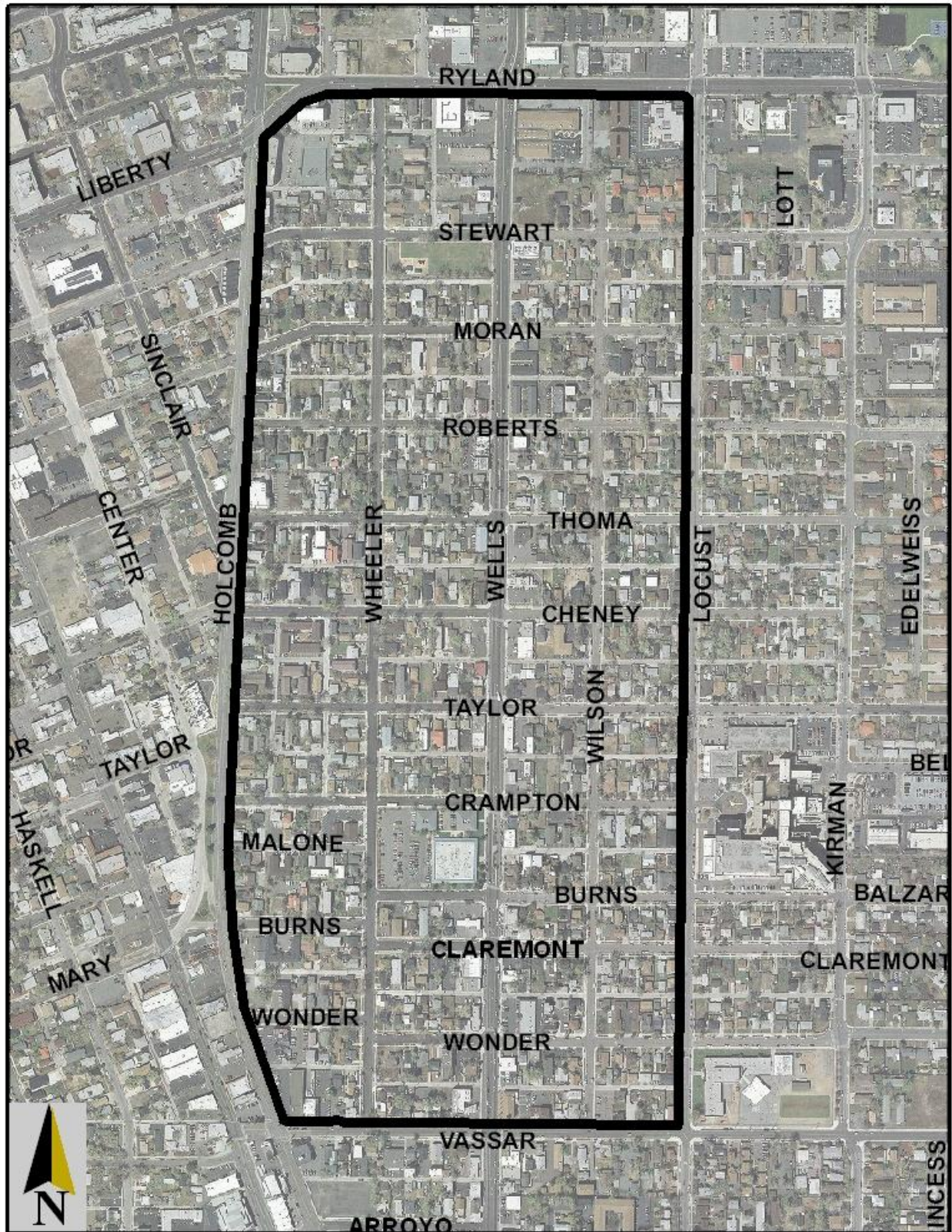
The area experienced a rapid change from primarily residential use to becoming a commercial corridor with the emergence of the Lincoln Highway, a transcontinental highway that was connected to Wells Avenue. The increased demand for services that was created by the Lincoln Highway travelers resulted in the conversion of former residences to commercial uses and new commercial development.

To distinguish the area as the Wells Avenue Neighborhood Conservation District, distinct standards should be developed for signage, lighting, street signs, and other identifiers including, but not limited to, corner monuments and entrance markers. These standards will be developed under the direction of the City Council as funds become available. Information guidelines should be developed to maintain the character of the area and address future developments.

The Wells Avenue Neighborhood Conservation District includes the parcels located south of Ryland Street, north of Vassar Street, east of Holcomb Avenue, and west of Locust Street. The District boundary is shown below.



Wells Avenue Neighborhood Conservation District Boundary



## **APPENDIXES**

### **Appendix A – Glossary of Terms**

**Adaptive use**—the process of converting a building to a use other than that for which it was originally designed.

**Alteration**—any act or process that changes one or more of the exterior architectural features of a structure, including but not limited to the erection, construction, reconstruction, or removal of any structure.

**Archaeological site**—a location that has yielded or may yield information on history or prehistory, or that contains physical remains of the past. A place containing evidence of previous human activity that has been or can be investigated by an archaeologist.

**Architectural significance**—importance of a property based on physical aspects of its design, materials, form, style, or workmanship.

**Building**—a resource, such as a house, barn, store, hotel, factory, or warehouse that shelters some form of human activity.

**Certificate of Appropriateness**—a document awarded by a preservation commission or architectural review board allowing an applicant to proceed with a proposed alteration, demolition, or new construction in a designated area, district, or site, following a determination of the proposal's suitability to applicable criteria.

**Certified Local Government**—a local government that has met special requirements set by the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service, and is eligible to receive 10 percent of the Historic Preservation Fund to finance local historic preservation activities.

**City Register of Historic Places**—established by ordinance 4313, the city register is a listing of properties important in the prehistory and history of the City of Reno.

**Conservation District**—is a geographically definable area that conveys a distinct character that demonstrates its history and development patterns.

**Construction**—the act of adding to an existing structure or the erection of a new principle or accessory structure on a lot.

**Contributing resource**—a building, site, structure, or object that adds to the historic significance of a property or district.

**Cultural resource**—structures, buildings, features (roads, ditches, bridges, etc.), and historic and prehistoric archaeological sites.



**Demolition**—the complete or constructive removal of any or part or whole of a building or structure upon any site when same will not be relocated to a new site.

**Design**—quality of integrity applying to the elements that create the physical form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.

**Design Guidelines**—criteria developed by a preservation commission, board, or review body to identify design concerns in an area or historic district, and to help property owners ensure that rehabilitation and new construction respect the character of designated buildings or districts.

**Design review**—the process of ascertaining whether modifications to historic structures, sites, or districts meet standards of appropriateness established by a governing or advisory review board.

**Determination of eligibility**—an action through which the eligibility of a property for National, State, or City Register listing is confirmed without actual listing in a register.

**District**—a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

**Eligibility**—ability of a property to meet the National, State, or City Register criteria.

**Exterior architectural appearance**—the architectural character and general composition of the exterior of a structure, including but not limited to the kind and texture of the building material, and the type, design, and character of all windows, doors, landscape elements, light fixtures, signs, and appurtenant elements.

**Evaluation**—process by which the significance and integrity of a historic property are judged and eligibility for the National, State, or City Registers is determined.

**Historic**—related to the known or recorded past.

**Historic district**—a significant concentration or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, and or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

**Historic function**—use of a district, site, building, structure, or object at the time it attained historical significance.

**Historical Resources Commission**—the board of citizens created by City of Reno ordinance 4313, and charged with enforcing provisions of local laws governing historic districts and buildings.

**Historical significance**—the importance of an element, building, or site owing to its involvement with a significant event, person, or time period, or as an example of a past architectural style.



**Historic resource**—(or property) any prehistoric or historic district, building, site, structure, or object; specifically, any such resource that is listed in or eligible for listing in the National, State or City Registers of Historic Places.

**Historic survey**—a comprehensive survey or inventory involving the identification, research, and documentation of buildings, sites, and structures of any historical, cultural, archaeological, or architectural importance.

**Integrity**—the unimpaired authenticity of a property’s historic or prehistoric identity, evidenced by surviving physical characteristics.

**Inventory**—see historic survey.

**Landmark**—a designated building, site, or structure having historical, architectural, or archaeological significance.

**Landscape**—the whole of the exterior environment of a site, district, or region, including landforms, trees and plants, rivers and lakes, and the built environment.

**Listing**—the formal entry of a property in the National Register of Historic Places, the State Register of Historic Places, or the City Register of Historic Places.

**Mitigation**—any action taken to reduce environmental impact; methods include avoidance, documentation, or moving the affected building or structure.

**National Register of Historic Places**—the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.

**Nomination**—an official proposal to list a historic resource in a historic register.

**Noncontributing**—a building, site, structure, or object that does not add to the historic significance of a property or district.

**Notification**—process through which property owners, public officials, and the general public are notified of nominations to, listings in, and determinations of eligibility for the National Register.

**Object**—a construction artistic in nature, or technologically significant, relatively small in scale, and simply constructed, such as a statue, train engine, or milepost.

**Ownership**—legal status in which an owner holds fee simple title to a property, or a portion of it.

**Physical characteristics**—visible and tangible attributes of a historic property or group of historic properties.

**Prehistoric**—related to the period before recorded history.

**Preservation**—generally, saving from destruction or deterioration old and historic buildings, sites, structures, and objects, and providing for their continued use by means of maintenance, restoration, rehabilitation, or adaptive use. Specifically, the act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of a building or structure, and the existing form and vegetative cover of a site.

**Property**—area of land containing a single historic resource or a group of resources, and constituting a single entry in the National Register, State Register, or City Register of Historic Places.

**Reconstruction**—the act or process of reproducing by new construction the exact form and detail of a vanished building, structure, or object, or part thereof, as it appeared at a specific period of time.

**Rehabilitation**—the act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration that makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those features of the property significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values.

**Registration**—process by which a historic property is documented and nominated for listing in the National, State, or City Register of Historic Places.

**Removal**—any relocation of a structure on its site or to another site.

**Renovation**—modernization of an old or historic building that may produce inappropriate alterations or eliminate important features and details.

**Repair**—any change that is not construction, removal, or alteration.

**Resource**—any building, structure, site, or object that is part of or constitutes a historic property.

**Restoration**—the act or process of accurately recovering the form and details of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of removal of later work or by the replacement of missing earlier work.

**Revitalization**—the imparting of new economic and community life in an existing neighborhood, area, or business district while at the same time preserving the original building stock and historic character.

**Setting**—quality of integrity applying to the physical environment of a historic property.

**Site**—location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses significance independent of the value of any existing structure at that location.

**State Register of Historic Places**—created by Chapter 383.085 of the Nevada Revised Statutes, the State Register is a listing of properties important in the prehistory and history of Nevada.

**Street furniture**—municipal equipment placed along streets, including light fixtures, fire hydrants, police and fire call boxes, signs, benches, and kiosks.

**Structure**—a functional resource constructed for purposes other than to provide shelter, such as a bridge, windmill, or silo.

**Note:** Words not defined above shall have the meaning commonly assigned to them. The reference for common meanings shall be the latest edition of Webster's *New World Dictionary-College Edition*.

## **Appendix B - Groups and Organizations**

The Reno community has many active historic preservation groups. These groups are important in the identification and preservation of the community's historic resources. They are also great resources for historic resource owners to learn more about researching and documenting the history of the resource.

The HRC has recently (2006/2007) published educational materials that include resource guides for historic resource owners wanting to list their resources, walking guides and maps for residents and visitors, and an new interactive website listing current resources and locations.

Community Development Department  
1 East First Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
P.O. Box 1900, City of Reno, NV 89505  
<http://reno.gov/index.aspx?page=87>

Historic Reno Preservation Society (HRPS)  
P. O. Box 14003  
Reno, NV 89507  
<http://historicreno.org/>

Historical Resources Commission  
c/o Claudia Hanson, HRC Liaison  
Community Development Department  
P.O. Box 1900, Reno, NV 89505  
(775) 334-2381

<http://www.reno.gov/hrc>

The Nevada Historical Society  
1650 North Virginia Street, Reno, NV 89557  
(775) 688-1190  
[www.Nevadaculture.org](http://www.Nevadaculture.org)

Getchell Library/322  
The University of Nevada Reno  
1664 North Virginia Street, Reno, NV 89557  
(775) 784-6500  
<http://www.library.unr.edu/>

The State of Nevada  
State Historic Preservation Office  
100 North Stewart Street, Carson City, NV 89710  
(775) 684-3448  
[www.Nevadaculture.org](http://www.Nevadaculture.org)

Washoe County Assessor's Office  
1001 East 9th Street, Reno, NV 89501  
(775) 328-2270  
<http://www.washoecounty.us/assessor>

Washoe County Library  
301 South Center Street, Reno, NV 89501  
(775) 785-4190  
<http://www.washoe.lib.nv.us/>

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