

# *Chapter Eleven*

## **Rehabilitation, Redevelopment, and Conservation**

### **Introduction**

The Rehabilitation, Redevelopment, and Conservation Element establishes guidance for achieving:

1. Preservation and reuse of buildings of historic value and architectural character;
2. Redevelopment of the built environment, including the elimination of blight in residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial districts;
3. Conservation of one-family housing within Pioneer neighborhoods, including the reclamation of one-family homes converted for multiple-family use;
4. Increase in home ownership within established Pioneer neighborhoods;
5. Development of high quality in-fill projects to stabilize and enhance neighborhoods and commercial districts; and
6. Appropriate large-scale redevelopment in areas where increased residential density, flexible lot development standards, introduction of mixed residential and non-residential uses, and revitalization of declining commercial areas can help to accomplish identified goals in target areas.

This element seeks to build on the foundation of the City's past successes in historic preservation and redevelopment, adapting and expanding in response to changing needs and priorities.

### **Rehabilitation**

Rehabilitation largely consists of historic preservation. This section will discuss why historic preservation is important, the purpose and intent of historic preservation, historic preservation in relation to land use activity, historic designations, historic contexts for preservation in Provo City, past historic preservation efforts, surveys of historic resources, incentives, and future actions.

#### **Why is Historic Preservation Important?**

Preservation of historic buildings enriches the lives of all who reside in or visit Provo by providing a greater understanding of the history of the community and contributing to the visual character and appeal of the city, particularly within the central neighborhoods. History is found not only in written form, but within the homes, stores, churches, factories, and civic buildings interwoven through the fabric of the city. Buildings have their own historic sagas to tell about their age, prestige, function, and importance. As a collective whole, buildings tell the city's history, chronicling the growth, character, and culture of Provo.

Preserving elements from every period of history is important. When we lose historically significant buildings, we lose the sense of place these structures create. Additionally, in order for us to understand the present and future, it is important for us to see and appreciate the progress that has been made since settlement. The ability to appreciate such progress is, in large part, accomplished through the architecture of the past.

While saving the past is important, preserving every old building is not necessary to achieve an understanding of Provo's past and to ensure that the character that is Provo is retained. Buildings which should be preserved are those which best represent their historical period and can be adapted to functional uses that are economically viable, without sacrificing the uniqueness of their age and architectural style.

### **Purpose and Intent of Historic Preservation**

The 1990 Utah State Historic District Act granted counties, cities, and towns the power to preserve, protect, and enhance historic and prehistoric areas and sites within their jurisdiction. In agreement with this act, the Landmarks Ordinance, passed by the Municipal Council in 1994, identified the following components of its purpose and intent:

1. To safeguard the City's historic and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in its landmarks and historic districts.
2. To revitalize neighborhoods by restoring confidence and creating an environment conducive to reinvestment and continued maintenance;
3. To stabilize and enhance property values;
4. To foster community identity and civic pride;
5. To protect, enhance, and perpetuate the use of structures, sites and areas that are reminders of past eras, events, and persons important in local, state or national history; or which reflect the distinct phases of the city's, state's, or nation's cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural heritage;
6. To educate citizens about Provo's history;
7. To promote compatible new development while at the same time protecting the old;
8. To protect and enhance the City's attraction to residents, tourists, and visitors, and to serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry;
9. To strengthen the economy of the City;
10. To generally improve the quality of life in the City; and
11. To maintain community integrity for future generations.

### **Historic Preservation and Land Use Activity**

In the past, zoning has not been conducive to the historic preservation effort. High density residential redevelopment has been allowed in older areas with concentrations of historically significant properties. Introduction of higher densities and the escalation of land values have actually promoted the demolition of older structures because of financial disincentives for retaining one-family homes and smaller neighborhood-compatible commercial uses. Where one-family neighborhoods are still viable, the City hopes to eliminate incentives to demolish older homes. As with other neighborhood conservation efforts, zoning can be a tool to strengthen neighborhoods and

support the restoration and reuse of historic properties. The City, in its desire to have a zoning system that is compatible with its historic preservation program, has provided for specialized uses only within historic buildings to increase incentives for appropriate reuse of these structures.

Zoning is only one element which affects the relationship between historic preservation and land use. The Landmarks Commission has duties which are related to land use activity. In the Landmarks Preservation Title of the Provo City Code, the Landmarks Commission is given the following powers and duties (when relying on the ordinance, use should consult Title 16 for the most updated requirements):

1. Conduct – or cause to be conducted – a survey of the historic, architectural, and archaeological resources within the community. The survey shall be compatible with the Utah Inventory of Historical and Archaeological Sites. Survey and inventory documents shall be maintained and shall be open to the public. The survey shall be updated at least every ten years.
2. Recommend to the Municipal Council the designation of historic sites and landmarks.
3. Review applications for Certificates of Historic Appropriateness concerning any alteration or construction affecting a designated or formally nominated historic resource, including, but not limited to, alterations that require a permit from the Building Inspections Division.
4. Review all applications for rezoning, conditional use permits, and variances which apply to designated or formally nominated historic resources. Recommendations of the Commission shall be forwarded to the Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment, or Municipal Council, depending on which body makes the final decision on the matter.
5. Review applications for Redevelopment Agency rehabilitation and historic preservation loans to determine the historic appropriateness of the application. Recommendations of the Commission shall be forwarded to the Municipal Council.
6. Recommend future policies and programs to the Municipal Council, which will further the purposes of historic preservation, and carry out such programs and policies as directed by the Municipal Council. The Landmarks Commission shall prepare and recommend a historic preservation element in the Provo City General Plan.
7. Review and comment upon nominations for the National Register of Historic Places as referred to the Landmarks Commission by the Utah State Division of History.
8. Provide the Planning Commission with a regular update of historic preservation projects in the community.
9. Support the enforcement of all State laws relating to historic preservation.

### **Historic Designations**

Designation is the legal listing of a site, structure, building, natural feature, or district as a historic site or landmark. A historic site is any district, building, structure, object, or site formally designated to the Provo List of Historic Sites. A landmark is any property or structure formally designated to the Provo Landmarks Register. Historic sites and landmarks differ in the nomination process and designation requirements.

### *Historic Sites*

Any person, group, or government agency may nominate a property for listing in the Provo Historic Sites List. Completed Intensive Level Survey documentation for each nominated property must be submitted in duplicate to the Landmarks Commission which, in turn, will review and evaluate the property. Any district, building, structure, object or site may be designated to the Historic Sites List if it meets all of the criteria established in Chapter 16.04, Provo Historic Sites List, Provo City Code.

### *Landmarks*

Official nominations of properties to the Landmarks Register must originate with the owner of the property, the Landmarks Commission, or the Municipal Council. Completed Intensive Level Survey documentation for each nominated property must be submitted in duplicate to the Landmarks Commission, who will review the documentation for completeness, accuracy and compliance with the set criteria. The Commission forwards its recommendation to the Municipal Council. The Municipal Council may then, by approval and passage of an appropriate resolution, designate properties to the Landmarks Register. To be designated to the Landmarks Register, a particular district, building, structure, object or site must meet the criteria established in Chapter 16.05, Provo Landmarks Register, Provo City Code.

## **Historic Context for Preservation in Provo City**

### *Pre-settlement Era, 1776-1849*

Although there are no remaining structures from the pre-settlement era, it is known that early explorers surveyed the land and trapped animals. In 1776, Spanish explorers led by two Franciscan priests arrived in the area in search of a route from Santa Fe, New Mexico, to Monterey, California. Fathers Antasio Dominguez and Silvestre Velez de Escalante were guided by a desire to bring Christianity to the Native Americans. Efforts to reach California failed, but the friars explored much of Utah Valley, developed good relations with local Native Americans, and planned to return in order to establish a permanent settlement. Due to changes in the Catholic Church, the two never returned,— but their legacy is seen in the St. Francis Catholic Church, originally operated by Franciscan clergy and constructed in the Spanish Mission Style.

Trappers led by Etienne Provost were the next visitors to this region. They were attacked by Native Americans at the Jordan River. Only two survived, one being Provost. In memory of the trappers, a nearby river was named after Provost, and – from that river – the name of our city originates: Provo.

### *Settlement Era, 1849-1869*

Fort Utah, the first Mormon colony in Utah outside the Salt Lake Valley, was established in 1849, near present day Provo City. A fort was built for security because of hostilities with Native Americans. In time, relations between the settlers and the Native American inhabitants became less turbulent, and settlers moved from the confines of the fort. Early homes constructed outside the fort were built with logs running both horizontally and vertically, using mud to fill the gaps. Soon, an adobe yard was established, providing sufficient materials to build a meeting house, a pottery, a tannery, a saw mill, flour mills, commercial shops, and many one-story and two-story residences. In the mid-1860s, fired brick production impacted the appearance of Provo's buildings. Red and

yellow brick structures stood alongside, or replaced, earlier gray adobe buildings. Structurally superior to adobe, fired brick allowed for larger, taller, and more permanent buildings. Crowning architectural achievements of the late Settlement Era include the Provo Tabernacle, Opera House, and Utah County Courthouse.

#### *Economic Cooperation and Expansion, 1870-1899*

The Transcontinental Railroad and cooperative Mormon economics arrived in the 1870s, bringing industrial and commercial expansion to a mostly agrarian community. Expansion brought growth and wealth, allowing development of the city's architecture. Wealthy, influential entrepreneurs made their marks by building impressive commercial structures along West Center Street and University Avenue, as well as mansions and large homes along East Center Street. Foundries, machine companies, iron processors, and manufacturers produced sophisticated churches, schools, stores and dwellings.

The Victorian era came to Provo, with its philosophy of flamboyance and extravagance. Local architecture combined older pioneer forms with fashionable Victorian ornament. Gothic Revival found its way to Provo in the 1870s, as did Italianate styling in the 1880s and a variety of Victorian styles, especially Queen Anne, Victorian Eclectic and Victorian Romanesque, in the 1890s. By 1880, brick and stone buildings of multiple masses, roofs, porches, and ornamentation appeared. The Education Building of Brigham Young Academy is the epitome of the Victorian vision of the picturesque.

#### *Early 20th Century Growth and Development, 1900-1945*

Continued prosperity allowed for construction. From 1900 to 1905 the Knight Block, with its landmark clock tower, and a square-towered bank to the west were built on the north corners of University Avenue and Center Street, by then the main intersection of Provo. These proud commercial structures, along with the new Knight Mansion on East Center Street, reflected the wealth of mining magnate and businessman Jesse Knight. During this decade, most of the school structures on the Brigham Young Academy campus were built.

Growth continued through the 1910s and 1920s, although fewer architecturally impressive structures were built after passage of the Sixteenth Amendment, requiring the payment of income taxes. Brigham Young Academy became Brigham Young University and expanded northeastward up the bench where new facilities, such as neoclassical and the limestone Maeser building, were built. Older neighborhoods south and west of campus began to change as student apartments replaced older homes.

From 1910 to 1930, the prevalent new house type was the Bungalow, built in many stylistic variations. The two-story neoclassical Utah County courthouse, designed by architect Joseph Nelson, is an important public edifice from the era. On the heels of World War I, Columbia Steel's Ironton plant, built southeast of the city in the 1920s, provided further economic stimuli to Provo's economy. Toward the end of the 1920s and into the 1930s, stylistic changes were apparent as period cottage styles, especially those of English influence, were seen in small homes and educational buildings such as Amanda Knight Hall.

In general, construction and growth slowed significantly during the years of the Great Depression. Government-sponsored building projects kept some of the work force employed during the decade between the Depression and America's involvement in World War II.

#### *Post-War Modern Era, 1946-Present*

World War II had a marked impact on Provo due to construction of the Geneva Steel Plant, which employed many residents. After the war, a boom in growth was experienced both in the general populace and at BYU. The campus expanded dramatically after 1951, and the city continued to grow around it. New post-war styles were introduced, among them the World War II cottage and the ranch house. Modern materials and architectural styles had become highly varied.

At present, a variety of buildings combine to give insight into what Provo is like today and what it was like in the past. Each building offers a glimpse of both the needs and desires of those who built it, whether fort dwellers entering the wilds for the first time as seen in the functionality of a log cabin, or entrepreneurs at the turn of the century in their Victorian Style-Colonial Box Revival homes, or contemporary business executives realizing a vision through the construction of modern-day corporate headquarters. The integration of structures from all time periods provides a rich diversity of buildings on the landscape.

#### **Past Historic Preservation Efforts**

Early efforts to preserve buildings have been sparse, but increased interest in historic preservation is augmenting the efforts put forth by both private citizens and the City. Nominations of several properties to the National Historic Register have resulted from grassroots endeavors. Additionally, the designation of the downtown portion of West Center Street as a National Historic District is the result of work by the private sector, as was the creation of Provo Town Square at the northwest corner of University Avenue and Center Street. Much of the initial preservation in Provo was motivated by the efforts of its citizens.

Work conducted by the City includes a 1980 survey of historic locations in Provo. The survey was completed as a result of work on neighborhood revitalization and reinvestment. Unfortunately, the survey was not used until around 1994. From 1980 to 1994, some locations in Provo had been listed on the National Register for Historic Sites, but efforts at creating a local landmarks register were unsuccessful. Over the years, Provo City has tried to encourage the preservation of historic buildings by providing certain regulatory incentives through its zoning ordinance.

Authority was given to the Planning Commission (before the creation of the Landmarks Commission) to designate "historic buildings." Once designated, buildings were eligible for land use activities that may not have ordinarily been permitted in a particular area. Adaptive re-uses of properties were permitted as "conditional uses," and were approved by the Planning Commission. However, the Planning Commission did not feel qualified to make the determinations as to the qualifications of a building as historic. As a result, the Planning Commission recommended the Municipal Council adopt legislation authorizing the appointment of a Preservation Commission to make such decisions.

In 1993, renewed interest in historic preservation, along with the recommendation of the Planning Commission, led to the creation of a study committee whose purpose was to write a Landmarks Preservation Ordinance for Provo City. This ordinance, passed by the Municipal Council in December 1994, gave authority for a Landmarks Commission. Since the formation of the Landmarks Commission, commissioners have met regularly to create a base for historical preservation upon which the City can build. The commission has worked to include National Historical Register sites on the Provo City Local Landmarks Register. In addition to designating individual sites, the commission has proposed historical districts to preserve the appearance of specific neighborhoods. The commission is continuing in its efforts to add individual sites and districts to the register, as well as making efforts to inform and educate the public on the benefits of historic preservation.

### Surveys of Historic Resources

A survey of 286 city blocks was conducted from 1995 to 1996, identifying potentially eligible sites for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. It was a reconnaissance-level survey of 3,100 sites in a survey area bounded on the east by 900 East, on the south by 600 South, on the west by 900 West, and on the north by an irregular line running mostly along 700 North. The boundaries were selected because earlier surveys found this area of Provo contains the oldest and the greatest concentration of potentially eligible sites. The 3,100 sites were evaluated based on their eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Four designations were assigned: A, B, C, and D. The “A” sites are those which are eligible and architecturally significant. The “B” sites are eligible. The “C” sites are ineligible due to alterations. The “D” sites are out of the time period. The numbers of sites, by category, are found in Table 11.1, Historic Survey.

<b>TABLE 11.1 HISTORIC SURVEY</b>		
<b>Type of Site</b>	<b>Number of Sites</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A Sites	190	6.1%
B Sites	1,422	45.9%
C Sites	310	10.0%
D Sites	1,178	38.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,100</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The number of sites fifty years of age or older is 1,922, or 62% of the surveyed sites. Thirty-eight percent, or 1,178 of the sites, were built after 1946. This number may actually be lower because the survey includes many World War II-era buildings, which may date from just before or after 1946. Most World War II-era buildings were recorded as built in 1950. Also, those commercial facades clearly dating after 1946 were rated “D,” although some of them may have pre-structures hidden behind their facades, in which case they might be – invisibly – “C” structures.

## **Incentives**

In order for a preservation program to function well, there must be incentives for property owners to appropriately preserve historic structures, rather than substantially modifying or replacing them. Preservation incentives are usually either community-based or economic-based. Provo City is doing more to encourage both types of incentives.

### *Community-Based Incentives*

1. Designation of the structure, site, or district as a historic site or landmark provides publicity and information distribution about why that resource is important.
2. A plaque can be placed on the property declaring it is either a historic site or a landmark.
3. Activities, such as home tours, receptions, lectures, educational programs, and celebrations, give members of the community a sense of historical importance.
4. Awards for outstanding preservation efforts recognize individual and business efforts and their contributions to the community.

### *Economic-Based Incentives*

1. Loans could be offered to owners of landmarks and historic sites by the City. These loans are to be low-interest and used for rehabilitation or preservation.
2. Building code exceptions may be given in the event of the rehabilitation of a landmark.
3. Assistance from the Landmarks Commission may be received in applying for grants or tax credits for rehabilitating properties.
4. Zoning incentives, such as special consideration in the granting of zoning variances or conditional use permits, may be given to encourage preservation.
5. Federal tax credits are available to those owners of historic properties that meet the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and are reviewed by the National Park Service.
6. State tax credits are available to those qualified rehabilitation expenditures of more than \$10,000 incurred in connection with any residential historic building which is certified by the State.
7. Matching grants stimulate private investment in historical buildings. These grants are so stimulating that it has been found that, for each dollar of public grant money given, many additional dollars are spent.

## **Future Actions**

Preservation will not occur without action. Measures need to be taken by the City to ensure the preservation effort continues in the positive direction it has been moving in the last few years. Through legislation and education, preservation efforts in Provo can be strengthened. The following list includes recommendations for future actions:

1. *Strengthen the Demolition Ordinance:* Since the 1980 survey, approximately 350 potentially eligible sites have been demolished. This amounts to more than 10% of the buildings in the area and about 20% of the total number of historic buildings. At this rate, the city's historic building stock would be lost within the next seventy-three years. To absolve the City from unnecessary demolitions, the demolition ordinance should be strengthened. Since the 1995 survey, at least an additional 11 eligible structures have been demolished.

2. *Create a Partnership between Community Identities:* Concerted efforts must be made between Provo City preservation efforts and organizations such as NeighborWorks to improve the quality of the housing stock while revitalizing neighborhoods.
3. *Educate the Community:* The key to a successful preservation program is community involvement. Education and training seminars for homeowners, investors, builders, and developers in subjects such as researching your own home, completing a National Register Nomination Form, and historic building rehabilitation tax credits, are needed to involve community members.
4. *Retain Existing Historic Districts:* Provo's Center Street / University Avenue Commercial District and the Brigham Young Academy complex remain intact architecturally and should be retained as historic districts.
5. *Continue Designations of Historic Sites and Landmarks:* With the completion of the reconnaissance survey, information is available for the continuance of the designation of historic sites and landmarks. This is especially important for the "A" sites which have not previously been designated as historic.
6. *Create Historic Districts:* Rather than designate sites individually, areas with high concentration of eligible buildings may be designated as historic districts.
  - a. There are two types of historic districts: local and national. Local districts protect local resources through control of building and demolition permits. National historic districts are formed to make as many properties as possible eligible for federal and State tax credits. Historic districts eliminate the need to designate every site within the districts as historical, making them not only time effective, but allowing for the preservation of neighborhood character.
  - b. A National Historic District has been created from 100 East to 600 East, between 500 North and 500 South, where approximately 70% of the properties are potentially eligible (the East Central Historic District Map is maintained by the Community Development Department). Another district may be formed in the West Center Street Area, where a solid group of homes and a few commercial buildings exist on the north side of West Center Street between 632 West and 850 West, and along the south side of the street in the 700 block. Of the properties in this proposed district, 79% are potentially eligible.
7. *Consider Funding a Matching Grant Program:* Such a program stimulates private spending and could be used to target rehabilitation in a particular area such as storefront renovations in the downtown district, or for individual sites throughout the community.

## **Redevelopment**

Provo's ability to conserve and improve its stock of private houses, apartment buildings, commercial and industrial structures, and public facilities is largely dependent on three factors: 1) the willingness of the private sector to invest, 2) the ability of the City to effectively plan and administer programs for conservation and redevelopment, and 3) access to supplemental funding, including various forms of federal assistance. To create an atmosphere attractive to private investment where such an atmosphere does not already exist, the Redevelopment Agency has been given tools to partner with private investors.

Redevelopment objectives and methods should always be tailored to providing the necessary and sufficient catalyst to stimulate private investment in behalf of the City's goals, exploiting powerful economic forces in ways productive for the community, rather than trying to reverse these forces. The Redevelopment Agency will never have sufficient resources to take the place of the private sector, nor should it. Its role must therefore focus on: 1) brokering redevelopment deals; 2) finding solutions to financing gaps; 3) improving the governmental environment in which quality private development can thrive; and 4) working in other limited ways to promote reinvestment, particularly in Provo's older areas.

The cost of redeveloping previously built-out areas can be high, particularly when compared to developing raw land. The costs of passing over old areas when their buildings and other infrastructure become obsolete, in favor of moving ever farther outward from the center with new development, are, however, also high – although these costs are difficult to quantify. These costs include increased travel, time lost to commuting and the associated increased air pollution, inefficient provision of utilities and government services, and excessive or untimely land consumption. Much of the function of redevelopment agencies is to help the conservation and redevelopment of older areas to remain competitive.

The Provo Redevelopment Agency was established under Utah law primarily to form redevelopment project areas and carry out redevelopment projects in these areas. In order to address these goals, the Provo Redevelopment Agency was endowed with tax increment financing and occasionally eminent domain powers, tools granted by the Legislature to redevelopment agencies. Over time, the Provo Redevelopment Agency has also assumed other roles, resources, and responsibilities delegated to it by Provo City to further the original conservation and redevelopment objectives.

### **Redevelopment Project Areas**

At this time, three redevelopment project areas, formed in accordance with State law, function in Provo. They are 1) the Central Business District, 2) South University Avenue, 3) Project Area Number Four (Provo Towne Centre Mall area). These project areas have all existed for several years and, over time, are losing some of their original redevelopment powers; for example, the Redevelopment Agency's power of eminent domain no longer exists in any of these areas.

#### *Central Business District*

In the Central Business District, redevelopment is used to strengthen downtown economic conditions while preserving the historic qualities of central Provo. The specific goals for the Central Business District development project area are to:

1. Maintain and enhance the Central Business District as the business and financial center;
2. Maintain the Central Business District as a government center by encouraging the centralization of city, county, state, federal, and judicial activities in the Central Business District;

3. Encourage the continued viability of retail and service businesses, including specialty types of retail that may be unique to downtown;
4. Encourage the promotion and development of the conference center and facilities in downtown Provo in an effort to attract conferences and serve the traveling public; and
5. Maintain and enhance the dining, entertainment and cultural opportunities of the Central Business District.

Toward achieving these goals, the Redevelopment Agency has identified the following projects, as well as others which may be considered in the future:

1. The west half of the block bounded by 100 North, 100 West, 200 North, and Freedom Boulevard should be redeveloped, probably as either an expansion of the court facilities or as an office building. The Redevelopment Agency has sold this property to the State courts system with the understanding that a new courts building would be erected there within an agreed upon period of time.
2. Following completion of the Sears store at the Provo Towne Centre Mall, the former Sears, covering the block between 100 West and Freedom Boulevard from 200 North to 300 North, was sold to the Redevelopment Agency. The buildings on this site currently are being leased to various businesses. Eventually, however, this property will be redeveloped, probably as a master-planned combination of retail and other complementary uses.
3. On the block bounded by Center Street, University Avenue, 100 West, and 100 North, the Town Square parking structure was originally designed to provide for the later addition of two floors, which may yet be built at some point in the future.
4. With downtown Provo continuing to evolve as the preeminent business, financial, and government center of Utah County, the need for office space will also grow. Adaptive reuse of existing buildings will help to meet the demand, but construction of additional new office space will also be central to the downtown redevelopment strategy. New “Class A” downtown office space is particularly lacking and deserves attention.

The Redevelopment Agency’s role in recent years has tended toward providing downtown parking structures to serve office and other development, and this is expected to continue. There will be cases, however, where the Redevelopment Agency helps to assemble sites and otherwise foster new building construction downtown. The current effort to develop a new building at the southeast corner of the intersection of 100 North and University Avenue is an example of this. The Redevelopment Agency has also acquired properties on this block farther south on University Avenue to eventually enable additional office building development.

5. The retail, service, and restaurant sectors will also continue to be a key part of the downtown character, particularly as they cater to people living, working, and seeking

educational, cultural, and entertainment opportunities in and near downtown. In large measure, this will occur as a natural outgrowth of drawing people downtown for these other activities. There will also be a continuing Redevelopment Agency role in promoting the preservation of historic blocks of continuous buildings, built to the sidewalk, along parts of Center Street and University Avenue where these continuous facades have best maintained their original qualities. Many such buildings will continue to house specialty retail, service, and restaurant businesses.

The Redevelopment Agency will also help to redevelop infill buildings in the downtown. The site of the former Paramount Theater, at 61 East Center, is an example of this. The Redevelopment Agency has acquired the property and is working toward private-sector development of a new building compatible with the old in terms of scale, placement on the lot, use, and architectural style. New downtown offices and other buildings should also be planned feature retail, commercial services and restaurants on their ground floors and should be designed with traditional storefront-type windows, entries, signage, and other features which will invite pedestrian activity along the street.

6. A resurgence of new downtown housing on the upper floors of retail and office buildings is a trend sweeping the country in the early years of the twenty-first century. The viability of this type of housing is suggested by the Village at Riverwoods in north Provo and the Wells Fargo Tower in Downtown. There is evidence that a latent, untapped market for this type of housing exists downtown among downtown workers, aging baby-boomers seeking to downsize their homes and be close to amenities, and others. New downtown residents will be a key part of the downtown land use mix by adding to the customer base of downtown businesses and generally increasing the round-the-clock vitality of the district. Upper-floor housing should occur both in new buildings and in vacant or underutilized parts of existing buildings.

#### *South University Avenue*

The South University Avenue development project area was created primarily to beautify the south entrance to the downtown and to keep automobile dealerships in the University Avenue and 300 South corridors.

Over time, however, prevailing business trends have drawn the larger, new-car dealerships to other locations, and little redevelopment has occurred in this project area. Consequently, the major focus of this redevelopment area has shifted away from auto dealerships and more generally toward encouraging strong, attractive businesses along South University Avenue.

#### *Project Area Number Four (Provo Towne Centre Mall area)*

Project Area #4 was created to redevelop the area between University Avenue and Interstate-15, south of 1100 South. Through the establishment of this project area, a blighted area was transformed into a large regional shopping mall, which improves the entrance to the city at its south I-15 interchange and greatly enhances the city's economic health. These goals for achieving economic growth, redeveloping under-utilized commercial areas, and improving the gateways to

Provo are being achieved further through the recent development of a large, new retail home-improvement center south of the mall. Several older motel and commercial properties have also been recently demolished for redevelopment with new free-standing restaurant businesses, which will contribute to the appearance and vitality of the S. University corridor adjacent to the mall and enhance the entryway to the Provo Towne Centre. The mall may also add other anchor stores in the future.

#### *Future Redevelopment Project Areas*

Areas of Provo suitable for commercial development are generally built out. Consequently, most future commercial expansion will need to take the form of carefully-planned redevelopment in existing built-up areas.

As Provo's infrastructure and, particularly, its commercial-industrial districts continue to age, the City will be alert to additional areas where redevelopment may be a valuable tool. Residential development should play a part in some of these locations. Each such area would be scrutinized carefully, and in the light of public involvement, to verify that designation as a redevelopment project area is a necessary and appropriate means of accomplishing the City's objectives.

#### **Other Redevelopment Planning and Resources**

Provo receives grants from the Federal government which, in many cases, are used to further the City's redevelopment objectives. These grants are used both in redevelopment project areas and in other targeted areas. Chief among these grants are the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and the HOME Investment Partnerships Grants, but the City also has been awarded several Special Purpose Grants and other federal funding for undertaking specific projects. CDBG and HOME require adoption of a five-year consolidated plan with annual-update "Action Plans" to guide the use of these funds. In order to understand the full scope of Provo's redevelopment, neighborhood conservation, and reinvestment planning policies, one should review this General Plan in tandem with the consolidated plan and its annual updates.

## **Conservation**

Provo, and Utah County in general, have enjoyed a period of considerable growth and economic prosperity. This period has also brought about steeply rising housing demand and attendant high housing costs. In suburban areas, the increased demand has precipitated a boom in new housing construction; but in older neighborhoods, such as Provo's Pioneer neighborhoods, it has led to a general shift from owner-occupied homes to renter-occupied units (both conversion of individual homes and replacement of homes by large multi-family complexes). This shift received additional strength from the pro-growth strategies of the 1977 General Plan. Neighborhoods which were once strong one-family areas were rezoned for higher-density residential development. This has happened during a time of neighborhood transition, when the aging of the homeowner population has caused many homes to come on the market.

Redevelopment for multi-family housing occurred, but not with the results anticipated. Economic pressures and housing demand were not sufficient to encourage assemblage of parcels for larger-scale redevelopment. Design guidelines were not adequate to blend moderate scale projects into the established neighborhoods or to encourage respect for the traditional, but varied, architectural styles that contribute significantly to the character of many neighborhood streets. Apartment buildings of mediocre design and poor relationship to their surrounding environs were scattered throughout the Pioneer neighborhoods of the city. These occurred without regard for transition between these new uses and surrounding homes and without regard for appropriate timing and sequencing of these higher-density projects. The orientation of the new buildings often bore no relationship to the sidewalk-lined streets, replacing street-friendly facades and entry walkways with street-facing end walls and commercial-standard driveway ramps.

In many areas, one-family homes, built during a time when little or no off-street parking was needed for individual families, were converted to multiple units. These conversions often occurred without required approvals or permits, and increasing numbers of homes became rental-only units. Renter occupants replaced many long-time owner occupants. Over-occupancy of these dwellings became a common complaint. Yards were paved over to create parking for multiple “single” tenants (occupancy by multiple, unrelated individuals), and residents became more transient due to the seasonal fluctuations of student housing demand.

With these changes came widespread disinvestment in the existing housing stock, as maximization of rental income replaced pride of ownership as a fundamental driving force among property owners. In general, cost of housing became inflated as off-site owners found they could collect higher rents from multiple “single” renters than from families. These inflated property values also contributed to higher costs for the land acquisition and assemblage that would be necessary for more comprehensive and coordinated redevelopment. In some cases, homes converted to rentals have been allowed to deteriorate, intentionally, as part of an investor strategy to eventually replace the homes with more multi-family projects. Seeing their neighborhoods decline around them has led still more owner occupants to abandon their neighborhoods in favor of absentee owners.

The changing character of Provo’s central neighborhoods in recent decades is manifested in the physical condition of the neighborhoods and in social conditions. In many instances, the neighborhoods today are characterized by:

1. An older housing stock with limited appeal to contemporary home owners (i.e., small rooms, too few bedrooms and baths, obsolete systems);
2. The growing obsolescence of the neighborhoods’ old infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, underground utilities);
3. An influx of new, generally lower-income, non-student households into neighborhoods not immediately adjacent to Brigham Young University;
4. A trend toward absentee landlords whose primary interest is usually short-term economic gain, resulting in a great decline in the property maintenance and reinvestment which come with pride of ownership;

5. Conversion of older homes into multiple apartments, often with haphazard floor plans and little regard for building codes and overcrowding;
6. Breakdown of neighborhood civic tradition as long-time residents are replaced in large numbers by transitory renter households, frequently with little interest in community involvement;
7. High turnover in public school enrollment, resulting in challenges in educational achievement; and
8. Decline in the downtown retail district as confidence in the future of Provo's Pioneer neighborhoods wanes.

Yet, many people have recognized the value of the traditional grid-street layout, pedestrian-scale blocks lined with sidewalks and trees, street-oriented homes with varied – but compatible – architectural styles, and location of neighborhood schools within walking distance of the homes they serve. A positive result of the inflated property values may be that fewer homes than anticipated were lost to redevelopment, allowing time for a resurgence in interest in these traditional neighborhoods.

Today, Provo is working to conserve and restore a strong civic fabric to its central neighborhoods through a combination of initiatives which focus on 1) promoting home ownership and 2) establishing and implementing reasonable, effective development codes. These neighborhoods, with their broad park strips and – frequently – large, old street trees, their charming architectural styles, and their nearness to downtown-area employment, shopping, and cultural opportunities, present a package of lifestyle assets which are attractive to many households. These are values upon which the City must capitalize for its overall social and economic health. Zoning and other codes in central neighborhoods should reinforce the traditional, one-family residential land uses, building types, lot sizes, and layouts which contribute to this package of lifestyle assets.

It would be unrealistic and unfair to many of Provo's own residents if this neighborhood conservation strategy were seen as an attempt to eradicate rental housing from the central neighborhoods. Rental housing in these areas will always be a necessary part of the community and may attract families that, while not in a position to become homeowners, may make a longer-term commitment to neighborhood residency and integration than expected under today's declining conditions. The neighborhoods must, however, re-establish and reinforce a basic framework of owner-occupant households who will maintain the civic traditions, norms, and continuity from which all residents – be they owners or renters – can benefit.

Furthermore, careful attention must be paid to the physical forms which the rental housing takes. It must be of a physical scale, orientation to the street, and architectural style so as to be compatible with the surrounding traditional, one-family development. Failure to pay attention to the physical form of rental housing in the past has contributed to the condition of central-area neighborhoods today.

The conservation and redevelopment of Provo's central neighborhoods is a complex matter and requires a multidimensional approach. Zoning is often an indicator of existing use, and zones

established in conflict with those uses can, as described in the previous paragraphs, have serious negative impacts within a community. Zoning may also be used, however, to facilitate change when it reflects goals established through sound planning principles and practices.

The establishment of the Residential Conservation (RC) Zone and creation of a Project Redevelopment Option (PRO) tool have worked together to create an opportunity to slow down the transition that resulted from the previous high-density zoning in the Pioneer neighborhoods, while recognizing legally established uses that resulted during this time period. These tools provide an opportunity to step back, evaluate the present and future needs of the neighborhoods, and make informed choices about specific redevelopment proposals. They also provide an opportunity to help stabilize spiraling property values, opening new doors for reestablishment of owner occupancy in these neighborhoods. The application of the Accessory Apartment (A-overlay) zone to one-family (R1 zoned) neighborhoods, formerly zoned for higher-density as R2 and R2.5, has allowed the creation of accessory dwelling units within one-family dwellings, with the goals of providing financial assistance to owner-occupants of the homes and providing affordable housing for residents of the accessory dwelling units, while discouraging two-family (duplex) dwellings that are typically rental-only units. These have proved to be successful tools for stabilizing and revitalizing these neighborhoods.

While proper zoning and other regulatory controls and redevelopment activities must be part of the solution, success will also require attention to law enforcement, physical infrastructure, public perception, and other issues in the neighborhoods. Tools to accomplish these objectives include:

1. On-street parking permit programs or other on-street parking controls, as over-occupancy complaints are often driven by excessive on-street parking;
2. Proactive zoning enforcement – rather than complaint-driven enforcement – of occupancy, parking, business use in residential areas (other than permitted or conditional home occupations), and other violations that lead to dissatisfaction within neighborhoods;
3. Greater flexibility of land development standards in Pioneer neighborhoods to encourage revitalization and reuse of homes that may not meet today’s standards for families without expansion of living area.

It is anticipated these tools will increase home ownership, enable residents to acquire individual housing equity, enable neighborhoods to strengthen community-held assets, and stabilize property values. These results will then encourage families, retirees, single professionals, and others desiring the values of a stable, centrally located, community-based neighborhood to move back to the Pioneer neighborhoods and invest in the long-term viability of Provo as a city. Committed, well-organized residents will continue to be crucial to the successful implementation of strategies to reclaim and conserve one-family homes and to reestablish a foundation of owner-occupancy within Provo’s Pioneer neighborhoods.