

# Presentation: How Many Ways to List:

*Saving Old Town: A Case Study in Community Preservation Planning*

## Instructions:

Read the case study below and create a preservation plan for Old Town, Oregon on the back of this sheet. For the purposes of this exercise assume that the town has been fully inventoried.

As you complete this exercise consider:

- What properties should be individually nominated or included as part of a district
- Could a Multiple Property Document be used?
- How to balance the types of resources, political climate, threats to extant resources, and long-term preservation goals when making preservation decisions.

## Case Study:

Old Town, Oregon was founded in 1880 as a small logging town with a single mill. The arrival of the railroad later in the decade made the burgeoning town a major transportation hub, and soon more mills and other industries arrived. In addition to exporting lumber, agricultural goods made their way from the surrounding country side to Old Town for export. The city flourished from 1900 until the early 1930s when the declining economy forced the town into recession. During WWII the agricultural and lumber industry revived, but it was the construction of Fort Old Town, a training center for the U.S. Army Air Corps, that drove the local economy. The base closed in 1953 and industry again withered, but by this time the town was part of the larger metropolitan area. During this period, many residents lived in Old Town and commuted to Big City for work.

Factors affecting preservation in Old Town:

- There is an opportunity to expand the existing Old Town Downtown Commercial Historic District to include similar resources left out of the original district. Most business owners support the district, but there are a few vocal critics.
- Other than a few buildings in downtown already in the historic district, few resources exist from Old Town's initial period of development between 1880 and 1900. Still standing is the family home of the first lumber Mill owner, which also served as the first post office and general store. Also still in existence is a portion of the original 1880s rail grade, now abandoned, and an associated rail bridge, and a dilapidated produce warehouse at the other end of town.
- Many resources from the second period of development (1900 and 1930) still exist, including several potentially-eligible neighborhoods, two of which housed workers from the several lumber mills, the original City Hall, two schools, a Grange, the city-owned train station, and several commercial buildings adjacent to the existing downtown historic district. Of this group one neighborhood and the Grange have already expressed interested in listing.
- The 1933 Civilian Conservation Corps-constructed high school is not listed in the National Register, but most residents consider it the "best" building in town. The current owner, and close friend of the Mayor, operates a successful brewpub in the building and would like to list the building to take advantage of tax credits.
- The old Army Air Station now serves as the municipal airport, and the original airstrip, two hangars, and several auxiliary buildings are eligible for listing and are still in good condition. Unfortunately, these buildings are slated for demolition for a new city golf course.
- In the postwar period Old Town expanded quickly. Over 65% of the total building stock was constructed between 1945 and 1970. While there are currently several eligible neighborhoods, commercial centers,

and individually noteworthy buildings around town, these resources are not considered “old” by most and are being redeveloped rapidly.

## Old Town Preservation Plan

### Instructions:

List the top 3 priorities for listing. Historic Districts and Multiple Property Documents count as a single nomination, even though they may include many different resources.

For the purposes of this exercise, consider that a single MPD covering the entire history of the town is not economically possible or politically feasible.

### Top Preservation Priorities

### Nomination type

1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____

### Questions to consider:

What are the most important factors in prioritizing which resources to list?

What properties did you choose not to include in your top 3 and why?

What further information would have been useful in making preservation decisions?

### **Instructor Prompts:**

- Ask what types of resources participants considered most important and why
- Ask if anyone had a particular strategy – either to get the most resources listed, minimize potential conflict or build support, or to focus on the most important buildings.
- Compare and contrast methodologies offered by the audience, ask participants if they agree with particular approaches, what they might do differently.
- Ask individual what their top three choices were, ask the group how many agree
- Invite folks to make the case for their properties, why those?