

## Urban Cultural Landscapes & The Spirit of Place



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## Introduction to Urban Cultural Landscapes



- Historic urban landscape (HUL) = urban cultural landscape
- Landscape is primary factor for building cities
- Interaction nature/culture
- 2003-2008, intensive discussions grappling with the meaning, character and values residing in HUL

# Heritage Values Reside in Places



- Direct link of heritage values to spirit of place
- Landscape is the original canvas of urban form
- Human/landscape interaction evolves
- Communicates unique urban landscape spirit
- HUL embodied in co-evolution of place/humanity

# World Heritage, Vienna, 2005

Convened to address growing concerns about change/degradation of urban heritage values, issues are:

- Lack of documentation of tangible & intangible values in HUL
- Landscape stratification of previous & current urban dynamics
- Growth pressures, financial gain
- Adequacy of management plans
- Role of contemporary architecture in heritage – context of new buildings
- Changing cities- emphasis on the non-local processes of tourism & urban development, outside actors of change.



## Historic Urban Landscapes:



- Have heritage values, comparable to architecture
- Are worthy of conservation as expressions of spirit of place
- Have unique identity and character of place
- Are shaped through time as combined words of humanity and nature

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## Historic Urban Landscapes:



- Exhibit processes of continuity & change in context
- Express multiple embedded tangible/intangible values
- Should be recognized, documented, analyzed and retained as expressions of values and spirit of place

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# HUL Diversity & Authenticity



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## Tangible Heritage in Historic Urban Landscapes

- Natural Systems
- Land Uses, Patterns, Clusters
- Spatial Organization
- Visual Relationships
- Topography, Surface Drainage
- Vegetation
- Circulation Systems
- Water Features, Natural & Constructed
- Non-Habitable Landscape Structures
- Spatial Character, Form and Scale of Habitable Structures
- Vocabulary of Site Furnishings & Objects



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## Intangible Heritage in the Cultural Landscapes

- Worship
- Ritual
- Festivals
- Traditional music, dance
- Pilgrimage
- Commemoration of past events
- Traditional practices
- Gathering place for native plants
- Gathering place for craft materials
- Iconic shared community place of memory & present use



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## Educational & Community Involvement Tools

- Publicity in local media
- Community projects
- Oral history recording
- Informational meetings
- Key person interviews
- Exhibitions based on heritage
- Community preservation standard setting through examples
- Influencing of neighbors with peer discussion
- Volunteering at local historic places
- Skill development workshops
- Place-based local celebrations and remembrances



## Financial Tools

- Public Capital Improvements
- Ongoing Public Maintenance Funding
- Private Building and Property Maintenance
- Purchase and Resale with Conservation Restrictions
- Revolving Loan Fund
- Long-Term Lease of Heritage Properties
- Mutual Covenants
- Outright Purchase of Key Properties
- Conservation Easements
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Donations of Heritage Property to Reliable Stewards
- Funding for Urban Heritage Conservation Agencies
- Grant programs for urban intangible and tangible heritage actions
- Taxation laws favoring Preservation

## Advisory Tools



- Documentation of Tangible Community Heritage
- Documentation of Intangible Community Heritage
- Viewscape Mapping for Building Height and Placement
- Holistic Planning Process that incorporates Urban Heritage & Values
- Various types of plans for Conservation, Preservation and Management of Community Character and Individual Urban Features
- Plans that incorporate Heritage Values of Parks and Open Space, Transportation, Public-Rights-of-Way, Streets, Trees, Public Facilities, etc.
- Plans for Conservation of Natural/Cultural Resources

## Regulatory Tools

- Design Review
- Easement Law
- Zoning Ordinance
- Urban Viewscape Controls
- Historic Commission Law
- Tree Protection Ordinance
- Scenic /Historic Overlay District
- Legislation specifically addressing urban heritage stewardship and management



## In Conclusion

- Spirit of Place resides in HUL
- Evolved urban cultural landscapes express tangible & intangible values
- Thorough heritage documentation is key
- Local leadership is a cornerstone
- Diverse tool kit can be applied in concert with each other
- Overriding goal is to manage urban continuity and change to retain tangible and intangible value



## Our Challenge



- Defining the limits of continuity, continuing evolution & acceptable change
- Managing HUL in a locally rooted process