

2025

PRESERVING DALLAS



Executive Summary: The Economic Impact of Historic Preservation in Dallas

Completed by PlaceEconomics for the City of Dallas

Key FINDINGS



1.5%

of Dallas' land area is designated as a historic or conservation district.



Population density in historic districts is

33%

higher than undesignated neighborhoods.



Historic districts have a **greater diversity of housing units** than the city overall.

The Basics

- Historic districts make up 0.6% of the land area and 1.0% of the population of Dallas. Conservation districts make up 0.9% of the land area and 1.4% of the population.
- Historic districts and conservation districts are dense in population and housing units. Both types of districts have a higher population density than the rest of the city; local historic districts have around 2,000 more people per square mile than the rest of Dallas.
- Historic districts display a greater variety of housing typologies than the rest of the city. 53% of housing units in historic districts are found in multi-family apartment buildings, compared to 48% in the rest of the city. Conservation districts, on the other hand, are overwhelmingly single family.
- There are 8,336 single family houses in Dallas that are 100 years old or more that are not designated in either historic districts or conservation districts.

Demographic Diversity

- In the aggregate, historic districts and conservation districts have a higher share of White population than the rest of the city. However, at the neighborhood level, several districts are more diverse than the city as a whole, including Tenth Street, Wheatley Place, South Boulevard/ Park Row and Lake Cliff historic districts and South Winnetka Heights, North Cliff, Greiner, Page Avenue, Bishop Arts, and Rawlins conservation districts.
- While the Black population has remained relatively stable in historic districts since 2010, it has increased by a modest amount in conservation districts. Both historic districts and conservation districts have seen a decline in Hispanic population since 2010.
- The median household income in Dallas historic districts is \$79,727. The median household income in conservation districts is \$126,437. These are both higher than the city's 2023 median household income of \$67,760.
- Dallas is a majority renter city, and this is true in historic districts as well. However, conservation districts are majority owner-occupied.



857
jobs

created by
historic tax credit
activity each year.



Heritage visitors
spend more than

\$2.5 billion

annually in Dallas.



In 2024, the average single
family home in a historic
district was valued around

15% more

than a property in the
rest of Dallas.



47%

job growth in commercial
historic districts, compared
to 22% in the rest of Dallas.

Building Investment

- Historic tax credits have created, on average, 585 direct jobs and 272 indirect/induced jobs, each year since 2010.
- Historic tax credits have created, on average, \$39,126,741 in direct labor income and \$20,282,183 indirect/induced labor income, each year since 2010.
- Local governments have been major beneficiaries of the significant increase in historic preservation tax credit activity. Historic tax credits have created, on average, \$339,021 in direct local tax revenue and \$1,549,488 indirect/induced local tax revenue, each year since 2010.
- Construction activity in historic districts generates over 400 jobs, over \$26 million in labor income, and over \$1 million in local tax revenue each year.

Heritage Tourism

- Heritage tourists to Dallas stay longer, visit more places, and spend more money per day than non-heritage visitors.
- While overall heritage visitors represent just over a third of total visitation, they represent 42% of visitor spending. Heritage visitors spend more than \$2.5 billion annually in Dallas.
- Heritage visitor expenditures generate over 22,000 jobs and \$900 million in labor income each year. More than \$90 million in local tax revenue generated annually by heritage visitor expenditures.

Property Values

- The average value of single family homes in historic districts and conservation districts are higher than in the rest of Dallas, with conservation districts substantially higher. In 2024, the average single family home in a historic district was valued around 15% more than a property in the rest of Dallas, whereas the average single family home in a conservation district was valued around 79% more than a property in the rest of Dallas.
- Over the last fifteen years, the average per square foot value of homes in Dallas has increased significantly, with properties in the conservation districts increasing most rapidly and houses in the local historic districts appreciating at a rate largely parallel with the rest of the city.

Jobs and Business in Commercial Historic Districts

- Commercial historic districts saw significantly higher job growth than the rest of Dallas. Where Dallas overall saw around 22% job growth, commercial historic districts saw a 47% increase in jobs between 2010 and 2022. Approximately 5% of all Dallas job growth took place in commercial historic districts.
- Commercial historic districts have seen a greater increase in jobs at new businesses, jobs at small businesses (those with less than 20 employees), and jobs at large companies of over 500 employees than the rest of Dallas.
- Commercial historic districts have a higher share of creative class and knowledge worker jobs than the rest of Dallas.



Pre-1970 housing
makes up

38%

of all housing
units in Dallas.



Rents and property
values in Pre-1970
housing are

lower

than in the rest of Dallas.



\$325

value of tree benefits
per square mile in
historic districts
and conservation
districts

Older Housing and Affordability

- Older housing (built prior to 1970) is an important stock of housing in Dallas, making up 38% of all housing units. Housing built prior to 1970 tends to have smaller unit sizes, be in average or better condition, and have lower rents and property values. This suggests that older housing is an important source of naturally occurring affordable housing in Dallas.
- Residents in neighborhoods with a concentration of older housing are more likely to be non-White, and specifically more likely to identify as Hispanic. Overall, 53% of the residents in the older housing study area are Hispanic, as opposed to 39% in the rest of the city.
- Single family residences built before 1970 have a property value per square foot that is 15% less than properties built after 1970.
- Rents in neighborhoods with a concentration of older housing are around 9% less than block groups with a concentration of housing built after 1970.
- Both owners and renters in older housing are slightly less likely to experience housing cost burden than those who live in housing built after 1970.
- Rents in historic districts specifically are slightly lower than in the rest of Dallas. The median rent for the city overall is \$1,403, but in historic districts the median rent is \$1,377. The median rent in conservation districts is higher at \$1,623.

Environmental Sustainability

- Demolitions in local historic districts since 2010, though few, have contributed over 21 million pounds of demolition debris, 85% of which could have been saved from the landfill if a deconstruction ordinance was in place.
- Residents in local historic districts travel fewer vehicle miles each year, use public transit more, and emit fewer annual green house gasses.
- Conservation districts have significantly higher tree canopy coverage than the rest of Dallas.
- On a per square mile basis, trees in historic districts and conservation districts contribute \$365 worth of eco-benefits to Dallas. This is more than twice the eco-benefits per square mile of trees in the rest of Dallas.