



Culture in Columbia: Art, History, & Design

What are our cultural resources?

As a municipal government, the City helps foster and preserve our cultural resources. Columbia is involved in providing spaces for and funding the arts and the design and preservation of our built environment. Specific to the comprehensive planning process, the SC Code of Laws indicates that cultural resources include historic buildings and structures, commercial districts, residential districts, unique, natural, or scenic resources, archaeological, and other cultural resources.

What is a cultural plan?

A cultural plan is a community conversation that identifies opportunities for broadening public participation in arts and cultural activities. The City of Columbia and One Columbia for Arts and History are collaborating to facilitate the cultural planning process for Columbia. Conversations lead by the project team have involved a broad cross sector of our community and focused on four core areas:

- Economic prosperity for the Columbia region
- Cultural vitality
- Social and cultural equity
- Ways to embed arts and culture across the City's Comprehensive Plan

Stay Tuned!

We'll be hosting a second round of public open houses for Columbia Compass in February 2019. The project team will provide an analysis of the data we've gathered and what we've heard from you - and we'll be asking for your feedback on preliminary recommendations.

Did you know?

Arts drive our economy. Columbia has 686 arts-related businesses, and the arts generate a total annual economic activity of \$64.7 million! Local and state revenue from the arts in Columbia is \$7.3 million, and the average spending per person at an arts-related event (excluding admission) is \$35.08. -Arts & Economic Prosperity Study (2016)

What is Amplify?

AMPLIFY is the name and brand given to the to this cultural planning process. As the name implies, the planning process will highlight existing arts, cultural, and heritage resources in Columbia and throughout the Midlands, and recommend ways to strengthen these valuable assets in our community as part of developing a document draft.

Outreach to Date:

- 90 meetings
- 59 locations
- 1,000+ engaged citizens
- 423 recorded responses to the Amplify online survey



Emerging Themes:

During Amplify and Columbia Compass meetings, some initial themes have emerged that will lead to draft recommendations. As key recommendations are drafted, themes may condense or shift in focus.

- Leadership & advocacy for the arts
- Spaces for art, including non-traditional spaces
- Valuing artists: normalizing their work
- Arts learning & mastery: what we want for our children
- History: tangible and intangible heritage
- Investment: a systems approach

Why Preserve?

Historic preservation is the practice of protecting buildings, landscapes, and objects of local or national import. The modern preservation movement took shape alongside the environmental movement in the 1960s and like many resources in the natural environment, historic resources are non-renewable. Once a historic resource is gone, it is gone forever.

Historic preservation provides local benefits:

- Protects historic and architectural resources;
- Encourages sustainable use of resources and reduces waste;
- Provides a sense of place and continuity;
- Creates more jobs than the same amount of new construction, with wages likely to feed back into the local economy;
- Protects the local character of an area, attracting visitors, potential residents, and investment.



\$180.5M
invested in SC through
the use of historic tax credits

In addition to the above benefits, there are a number of other economic incentives to preserve historic structures. Tax credits and abatement programs are available for the preservation and re-use of residential and commercial properties. **Locally, millions of dollars have been invested in local historic buildings through the use of the Bailey Bill, which has also served as catalyst for revitalization efforts.**

Did you know?

Renovating a historic building in the City of Columbia can mean long term savings on your property tax bill. The City administers the Bailey Bill, which requires a qualifying investment of 20% of the historic structure's value. Once an application is approved, the property tax value is frozen for 20 years.

Design Matters.

Who we are as a city is in a large part defined by our built environment. The design and accessibility of our neighborhoods, our business districts, and our public spaces are cited in comments by residents and visitors alike. Quality design is contextual and distinctive, and engages with passersby.

Design isn't just about buildings - for example, a catalyst for the revitalization of Main Street was the streetscaping project (widened brick sidewalks, reduction of vehicle lanes, lighting and planting). In fact, nationwide, streets are the lifeblood of our communities and the foundation of our urban economies. They make up **more than 80% of all public spaces in cities** (NACTO Urban Street Design Guide). A great streetscape could include engaging storefronts or residential structures, public art, seating and other furnishings, shade, and safe access for pedestrians and other vulnerable users.

What ever happened to that survey?

We'll be releasing a summary shortly of the feedback we received from the Columbia Compass interactive online survey released in the Fall of 2018. We had 1,197 responses, and we are so grateful for your thoughtful comments. We'll be incorporating what we heard from you into our next round of public meetings and in our recommendations.

Columbia Compass is the update to the City of Columbia's Comprehensive Plan. To learn more about the process and planning efforts, please visit www.columbiacompass.org.

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