

# SALEM RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

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## ESSEX COUNTY LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

### MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM



Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Essex National Heritage Commission

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## INTRODUCTION

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Essex County is known for its unusually rich and varied landscapes, which are represented in each of its 34 municipalities. Heritage landscapes are places that are created by human interaction with the natural environment. They are dynamic and evolving; they reflect the history of the community and provide a sense of place; they show the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns; and they often have scenic qualities. This wealth of landscapes is central to each community's character; yet heritage landscapes are vulnerable and ever changing. For this reason it is important to take the first steps towards their preservation by identifying those landscapes that are particularly valued by the community – a favorite local farm, a distinctive neighborhood or mill village, a unique natural feature, an inland river corridor or the rocky coast. To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC) have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program (HLI) to communities in Essex County. The primary goal of the program is to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected. The focus is on landscapes that have not been identified in previous survey efforts in a given community. Another important goal of the program is to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes.

The methodology for the Heritage Landscape Inventory program was developed in a Pilot Project conducted in southeast Massachusetts. It is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land* which has provided guidance for the program in Essex County. In short, each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the DCR-ENHC consulting team. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting at which interested residents and town officials offer community input by identifying potential heritage landscapes. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, usually accompanied by other community members. This group visits the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathers information about the community. The final product is the Reconnaissance Report, prepared for each participating community. It outlines the history of the community; identifies the resources and documentation that provide background information; provides a short description of the priority heritage landscapes visited; discusses planning issues identified by the community; and concludes with a brief discussion of survey and planning recommendations. A list of the heritage landscapes identified by the community is included in the Appendix.

## SALEM HISTORY

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Salem's distinctive landscape features — its coastline, harbors, rivers, wetlands and varied topography — were instrumental in shaping the history of the community from the earliest use of the area by Native Americans through the long tradition of land use that continue today.

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Prior to European settlement, the Salem area was inhabited by members of the Pawtucket group (also called Penacook) who were found in coastal areas from Massachusetts Bay north to York, Maine. The rich fishing grounds offered by Salem's estuaries would have provided a plentiful source of food. Native American transportation routes in the area probably emphasized water travel along the shoreline, with coastal trails as well as inland routes along rivers and streams and throughout the region.

One of the first English settlements in North America was established in Salem in 1626 by colonists from Cape Ann. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries Salem became a center of fishing, shipbuilding and international trade. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the port of Salem was second only to Boston in New England trade volume. The wealth and sophistication of the community were reflected in the mansions built in the Chestnut Street area and around the newly landscaped Common. Salem's golden age of international trade was permanently disrupted by the War of 1812. As ships grew larger in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Salem's shallow harbor could no longer accommodate them and residents turned to other industries such as shoe making, leather processing and textile production.

Concurrent with 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial growth, Salem's residential neighborhoods expanded to include crowded tenements along the waterfront that accommodated the growing immigrant population; gracious houses around the Common for wealthier residents; and farms and country estates in outlying parts of the community. A major fire in 1914, which began in Blubber Hollow and spread southeast to the Harbor, destroyed portions of the downtown, including mills and nearly 3,000 residences. Many of the downtown commercial buildings date to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding. More downtown buildings were lost in the 1960s and 70s when they were demolished as part of the city's urban renewal program, which was later amended, resulting in restoration and renovation of many historic buildings and streetscape improvements.

Salem was an important business, legal and retail center in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is also the seat of the Essex County government. Today the city retains an industrial sector and is also a major tourist destination and home to important historical institutions such as the Peabody Essex Museum and the Salem Maritime National Historic Site. Unlike many Essex County communities, the population of Salem remained relatively stable through most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with 36,000 residents in 1900 and approximately 40,400 by 2000.

## **RESOURCES AND DOCUMENTATION**

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This section of the Reconnaissance Report identifies planning documents and tools that provide information relevant to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program.

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## **Massachusetts Historical Commission Inventory**

The Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets is a statewide list that identifies significant historic resources throughout the Commonwealth. In order to be included in the inventory, a property must be documented on an MHC inventory form, which is then entered into the MHC database. This searchable database, known as MACRIS, is now available online at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc>.

Salem's extensive inventory is the third largest in the state with a total of 4,037 resources listed which date from 1637 to 1995. The majority of these resources are buildings but there are also several hundred area forms that address neighborhood character and streetscape. Survey work was begun in the 1960s with additional survey, organized by neighborhood, undertaken in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. Many of the earlier forms were done by volunteers, while later forms were prepared by preservation consultants or Planning Department staff and are typically more comprehensive. Archaeological sites, landscapes and other non-traditional historic resources are under-represented.

## **State and National Registers of Historic Places**

The National Register of Historic Places is the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that have been determined significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. Salem has eight National Historic Landmarks and seven Massachusetts Landmarks. The city also has 17 National Register districts. There are 31 properties individually listed in the National Register. There are also properties associated with several thematic and multiple property National Register nominations including Diners of Massachusetts, First Period Buildings of Massachusetts, Lighthouses of Massachusetts and the Salem Multiple Resources Area. All National Register properties are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places.

Salem has 16 properties under preservation restrictions. Most of these were established when the properties received grants from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Preservation restrictions are usually drawn up in accordance with MGL Chapter 183, Sections 31-33 but there may also be preservation restrictions in Salem that did not follow this procedure. A preservation restriction runs with the deed and is one of the strongest preservation strategies available. All properties that have preservation restrictions filed with the MHC under the state statute are automatically listed in the State Register.

## **Local Historic Districts**

Local historic districts, which are administered at the municipal level, are special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected by a local historic district commission. Salem has four local historic districts: Derby Street Historic District (1974, 95 properties), Lafayette Street Historic District (1985, 36 properties), McIntire Historic District (1981, 424 properties) and Washington Square Historic District

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(1977, 46 properties). Properties in local historic districts are automatically listed in the State Register.

### **Planning Documents**

Salem's Open Space and Recreation Plan was last updated in 1996. At that time the city owned 561 acres of parks and recreation land; 129 acres of conservation land; and 63 acres of cemeteries. Public lands owned by other municipalities, the state and the federal government totaled 370 acres, with additional acreage, including many of the islands, owned by non-profit organizations. The plan, which involved extensive community participation, focuses on three major areas of concern: landscape values, recreation and conservation. It also highlights the importance of a large area in the southern part of the city that includes Highland Park, Thompson's Meadow, the Forest River Conservation area and portions of the Salem Highlands as a regionally important open space network in a densely settled portion of southern Essex County.

Salem has undertaken several other recent planning initiatives that relate to community preservation and resource protection. All documents are available at the Salem Department of Planning & Community Development. They include:

- *Salem Design Manual, Design Guidelines for Commercial Properties*, 2004
- *Neighborhood Master Plan for the North River Canal Corridor*, 2003
- *Fort Lee and Fort Pickering Conditions Assessment, Cultural Resources Survey and Maintenance & Restoration Plan*, 2003
- *Burial Ground Planning Project*, 2002
- *Salem Harbor Plan*, 2000
- *City of Salem Master Plan Update and Action Plan*, 1996

Another key document that is directly related to heritage landscapes is the Salem Preservation Master Plan commissioned by the Planning Department and the Historical Commission. Although the report was completed in 1991, it provides excellent background on Salem's historic resources and early preservation activity within the community. The comprehensive recommendations of the report include Salem Historical Commission policies and procedures; survey recommendations; stewardship of public buildings; designation and protection of resources; consideration of project impacts; land use planning; preservation ordinances; public awareness; and archaeology. While substantial progress has been made on implementing the recommendations contained in the report, many of the tasks identified at that time remain uncompleted, and are still valid recommendations today.

### **Planning Ordinances and Other Tools**

Salem has a six-month demolition delay ordinance, which is administered by the Salem Historical Commission. Properties that were constructed 50 or more years ago cannot be demolished until six months have passed or a waiver of demolition delay is granted by the Historical Commission. The ordinance includes criteria

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to be considered by the Commission when determining its recommendation regarding the waiver of the demolition timeframe but does not articulate a notification or hearing process. The Salem Redevelopment Authority also has design review over all buildings in Redevelopment areas with a requirement for historic preservation.

## **PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES**

Salem's Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by approximately a dozen residents, some representing city boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on July 19, 2004. During the meeting residents compiled a lengthy list of the city's heritage landscapes, which is included in the Appendix. Once the comprehensive list was created, attendees were asked to articulate the value of each landscape and to identify issues relating to its preservation. Based on the information gathered, community members identified a group of priority heritage landscapes to be visited by the consulting team during the fieldwork. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued, contributes to community character and is not permanently protected or preserved.

This section describes the priority landscapes that are the focus of the reconnaissance work in Salem. In most instances intensive survey work will be needed to fully document the physical characteristics and the historical development of the landscape. These heritage landscapes, which are listed alphabetically, represent a range of scales and types of resources.

### **Bridge Street Neck, Common and Derby Street**

The Bridge Street area northeast of downtown extends from the North River on the west to Salem Harbor on the southeast and from Salem Common on the south to the Danvers River and the Salem Beverly Bridge on the north. It is comprised of three sub-areas: Bridge Street Neck, the Common and Derby Street.

Bridge Street is one of the oldest streets in Salem and the Neck was one of the first parts of Salem to be settled. Although none of the original buildings remain, the area includes middle class and worker housing from the 18<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Bridge Street area also includes industrial buildings and a large natural gas tank as well as two hotels, a marina and a shopping complex. There are ropewalks stretching from the Salem Common to Collins Cove. The Common area is significant as the site of the first muster and as an early designed public landscape. It is also known for the high style houses that surround it. The Derby Street area includes the Salem Maritime National Historic Site, the House of the Seven Gables and Nathaniel Hawthorne's birthplace as well as small-scale vernacular housing. Residents value the diversity of housing types from gracious Federal style mansions around the Common to worker housing along Bridge Street and Derby Street; the mix of residential and small neighborhood commercial properties; the road patterns and streetscape; and the relationship to waterfront areas.

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Derby Street and the area surrounding the Common are already listed on the National Register and included in local historic districts. Bridge Street Neck has been well-documented on MHC inventory forms and has been proposed as a local historic district, but the designation has been opposed by local residents. Bridge Street is also scheduled for roadway improvements following the construction of the Bypass Road.

### **Broad Street Cemetery, Charter Street Cemetery and Howard Street Burying Ground**

Community members identified three city-owned burial grounds as priority landscapes. They include Charter Street Cemetery, the city's oldest burial ground established in 1637, Broad Street Cemetery established in 1655, and Howard Street Burying Ground established in 1801, each of which has ongoing issues related to preservation, use and interpretation. All are individually listed in the National Register. Salem's historic burial grounds are central to its municipal identity, particularly older ones in the downtown area, yet over the years they have suffered from deferred maintenance and vandalism. In 2000 the burial grounds were included on Historic Salem Inc.'s "Most Endangered Resources" list. A Burial Ground Planning Project that included Broad Street, Charter Street, Howard Street and Friend's Cemeteries, was completed in 2002. The project was envisioned as the first step in a long-term planning process to preserve and protect the city's burial grounds. Its overall goal was to retain the historic integrity of the burial grounds while maintaining their accessibility. Key objectives were preserving and protecting landscape features including monuments while enhancing entrances and circulation systems. Since that time a concerted effort to upgrade maintenance has resulted in improved conditions. Additional funds will be needed to implement the remaining recommendations, particularly those related to stone conservation.



### **Kernwood/Cabot Farm Area**

The northwest corner of Salem, bounded by North Street on the south and bisected by Kernwood Street/Liberty Hill Avenue, includes several large institutions that give the area a surprisingly rural character. The Kernwood Country Club, a former farm that was developed as a country club in the early

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20<sup>th</sup> century, includes a golf course designed in 1914 by noted golf course designer Donald Ross, a club house and barns associated with earlier agricultural use. Adjacent to it is Saint Mary's Catholic Cemetery, a large late 19<sup>th</sup> century cemetery still in active use. Across from the country club is McCabe Park and Marina, with Greenlawn Cemetery, a 55-acre city-owned 19<sup>th</sup> century cemetery, to the south. The area is also noteworthy for the presence of Cabot Farm, a large family-owned property with open fields and limited agricultural use that lies adjacent to the Danvers River. At the meeting, residents expressed particular concern about Cabot Farm, which is privately owned and vulnerable to development.

### **Pioneer Village**

Pioneer Village, located in Forest River Park, was constructed by the city in 1930 to celebrate the Massachusetts tercentenary. The intent was to re-create Salem as it would have appeared at the time of John Winthrop's arrival in 1630. Noted antiquarian-architect George Francis Dow oversaw the project, which featured various types of early colonial dwellings including dugouts, wigwams and thatched roof cottages; plants known to have grown in the Salem area in 1630; and a recreated sawpit, salt works and blacksmith shop. Pioneer Village opened in June 1930 and remained a popular tourist destination until the 1950s when it gradually deteriorated due to fires, vandalism and neglect. In 1986, after the Salem Park Commission had voted to demolish the village, a team of volunteers and museum professionals began raising funds to restore it. In the ensuing years they rebuilt structures, cleared brush and replanted the historic gardens. The village reopened for the 1988 tourist season, with a grand opening in June 1990. Today it is once again boarded up and neglected, and was included on Historic Salem Inc.'s "Most Endangered Resources" list for 2003. The village was leased to the House of Seven Gables until 2003 and is currently leased to Salem Preservation Inc., a non-profit organization that is working on drainage improvements and hoping to open the site to the public in the near future. The key issues are stabilizing the fragile village and making it financially viable as an educational resource and tourist attraction.

### **Salem Neck**

Salem Neck, which juts out into Salem Sound dividing Beverly and Salem Harbors, is one of the most distinctive areas of the city, with a unique collection of historic resources and panoramic waterfront views. The Salem Willows Historic District (NR, 1994) includes Salem Willows Park and Fort Lee. Adjacent to it is the Juniper Point residential neighborhood. Winter Island, which is connected to Salem Neck by a causeway, is discussed below.

The Salem Willows area was named for the willow trees planted in 1801 as a shaded promenade for patients convalescing at the smallpox hospital at the end of Salem Neck. In 1883 much of the neck became a trolley park that included landscaped grounds, a shorefront walkway, restaurants and a carousel. Salem Willows Park still functions as a recreation area where visitors can stroll along the waterfront, listen to a concert at the bandstand, enjoy the attractions in the arcade, or try some salt water taffy or Hobbs Popcorn — a local favorite. The

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park, with its spacious grounds, dramatic views of Beverly across Salem Sound and many entertainments, attracts a regional audience. The city recently completed landscape improvements that included new walkways, site furniture, signage, historic lighting and an improved parking lot layout.

Fort Lee, a Revolutionary and Civil War fort with earthworks and canon mounts, lies at the southern end of the park. The fort was included on Historic Salem Inc.'s "Most Endangered Resources" list in 2001. A key recommendation was preparation of a comprehensive historic preservation and archaeological report to guide the restoration of the historic fort and landscape, which was completed in 2003. Since that time progress has been made in clearing some of the overgrown vegetation on the fort, but major work is needed to stabilize and restore the ruins.

The third historic area on Salem Neck, located at the easternmost part of the neck is the Juniper Point residential neighborhood. It was established as a tenting ground in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and later became a neighborhood of picturesque summer cottages, most of which are now year-round residences. The compact seaside neighborhood with narrow curvilinear streets consists of small to medium late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century houses set close together on small lots with little setback. Residents at the landscape identification meeting indicated that MHC survey forms had been completed for the neighborhood, although they are not yet listed in the online MACRIS database. The favorable seaside location of the Juniper Point neighborhood makes it vulnerable to major expansions of existing houses as well as tear downs.



### **Salem Woods (Great Pasture)**

The area known today as Salem Woods was first used by Native Americans. In the Colonial period it was held by European settlers as common land, called the Great Pasture. A stone wall built prior to 1800 (much of which remains) defined the perimeter. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, rights to the land were owned by several prominent Salem families. In 1855, the proprietors of the land established the Great Pasture Corporation. In 1906, the city of Salem purchased the area for use as a park, soon named Highland Park. Over the past century, however, some of the park has been designated for other uses. The park has always had a large wooded area with a network of trails through it. Salem Woods is part of a larger system of open space and natural areas that also includes Thompson's Meadow

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and the Forest River estuary, one of the largest undeveloped land parcels in Salem. The Friends of Salem Woods was formed in 1991 to preserve the woods and to encourage passive use for education and recreation.

Salem Woods was highlighted in both the heritage landscape meeting and the 1996 Open Space and Recreation Plan. It was also included on Historic Salem Inc.'s 2002 "Most Endangered Properties List" in recognition of its importance as both a natural and cultural landscape, due to the concern that a possible expansion of the golf course could result in a loss of historic landscape, plant materials and archaeological resources. The City Council initiated the creation of a Conservation Overlay Zoning District, which is under legal review.

### **Winter Island**

Winter Island is no longer literally an island as it is connected to Salem Neck by a causeway. Over the years it has served a multitude of purposes including coastal defense, fish drying, shipbuilding and public recreation. From the Civil War until 1971 Winter Island was largely under federal authority, most recently as a Coast Guard station. Most of the island is now city-owned, although some parts are still in private or state ownership. Historic resources include Fort Pickering, Winter Island Light, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century seaplane hanger and other military structures, and park land including landscaped grounds, campgrounds, boat ramp and concession stand. Salem State Maritime Laboratory and Smith Pool are on the city side of the Neck just before the causeway. The park is heavily used especially in summer months. Issues related to preservation and use of Fort Pickering have been addressed in a recent plan undertaken by the City of Salem in conjunction with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, but there are many competing interests and no overall vision for the island. Historic Salem Inc. included Winter Island on its "Most Endangered Properties List" in 2000 and lists its current status as showing signs of improvement.

## **PLANNING**

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### **Preservation Strategies**

Salem's dramatic coastal landscape and rocky uplands played a critical role in the settlement and historical development of the community and remain among the city's most important assets. Salem is also fortunate to have an unusually large and rich collection of historic resources. The city has already taken important steps to preserve its most significant buildings and natural areas. It is now looking beyond these well-known resources to the landscapes, streetscapes, neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that define the overall fabric of the city. Like most Essex County communities, Salem is under intense pressure for development, especially in waterfront areas. Special places within the community such as hilltop vistas, walkways to the sea and small-scale residential neighborhoods that were once taken for granted are now more vulnerable than ever to change.

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## **Planning Issues**

In addition to the priority landscapes listed in the previous section, residents identified general issues related to heritage landscapes and community character. Each of the critical planning issues affects at least one of the priority landscapes. These issues are listed in alphabetical order. Community members also expressed interest in learning about preservation tools and strategies that have been effective in other Massachusetts communities and in identifying sources for preservation funding.

### ***Burial Grounds and Cemeteries***

Salem has already taken several important steps to preserve its historic burial grounds. MHC inventory forms have been completed for eight burial grounds and four, including the three identified as priority landscapes, have been listed in the National Register. The Burial Ground Planning Project completed in 2002 includes detailed recommendations and cost estimates for preserving the city's four oldest burial grounds. The primary challenges at this point are three-fold: obtaining funds to implement the recommendations (especially conservation of tombs and headstones); providing public access while safeguarding the fragile historic landscape; and assuring skilled long-term stewardship.

### ***Coastline and Islands***

Salem is fortunate to have extensive shoreline frontage, about half of which is publicly owned. However, much of the remainder is used for industrial purposes and is not accessible to the public. The entire coastline, especially the harbor, is a fragile area facing multiple pressures for change that threaten traditional water-oriented uses and natural resources. Public access to the shore is an important issue. One of the most critical areas is Winter Island, an area that faces many pressures for use. Residents also expressed concern about Salem's many islands, which are visually important to the community but mostly inaccessible to the public. Some waterfront uses were considered eyesores, such as the Franklin Street junkyard that abuts the North River. The Salem Harbor Plan completed in 2000 addresses many issues of public access and funding needs for coastal areas, particularly Winter Island.



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### ***Downtown***

The downtown area extends from Bridge Street on the north to South River on the south and from North/Summer Streets on the west to the Salem Common on the east. Most of the area is included in a National Register District. It also falls within the jurisdiction of the Salem Redevelopment Authority. Most of the downtown structures date from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a few 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings remaining as well. Major changes to the downtown streetscape occurred in the mid-1970s when over 350 wooden buildings were razed in the name of urban renewal and a number of large new buildings and a pedestrian mall were constructed. At that time the city also made a major investment in public streetscape improvements, which complemented the character of the older buildings. In the intervening years there has been some erosion of public improvements and some changes that are not compatible with the historic character of the downtown area. The new *Salem Design Manual*, funded in part by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, provides design guidelines for buildings and streetscape improvements in commercial areas. The downtown public spaces and their associated amenities greatly enhance the quality of life in Salem. They are part of the fabric of the community that makes the city a special place for visitors and residents alike.

### ***Gateway Landscapes/Urban Entrance Corridors***

Salem residents also expressed concern about three major historic gateways to the community: via North Street (Route 114) from the north; via Bridge Street (Route 1A, Essex Bridge) from the north; and via Boston Street from the northwest. This issue was identified by Historic Salem Inc. in 2001 on its "Most Endangered Properties" list and is now considered to show signs of improvement. Bridge Street is the area facing the greatest potential change, as proposals are currently pending for construction of the Bridge Street By-pass and the reconstruction of Bridge Street. Along Boston Street property owners are working proactively with a city task force to provide streetscape improvements and to find solutions for neglected industrial properties. Other gateways mentioned were: from the southeast via Lafayette Street and from the south via Highland Avenue. While all gateways are considered important aspects of the community, in some cases the streetscape is marred by poorly designed commercial areas, insensitive remodeling, demolition of historic structures, poor lighting and deteriorated roadway infrastructure. The recently completed *Salem Design Manual* addresses some of these issues.

### ***Neighborhoods***

Preserving neighborhood character was a major theme of the heritage landscape meeting. Salem's residential neighborhoods are rich in historic resources and essential to community vitality. While there are many historic neighborhoods in Salem, several were identified by the community as heritage landscapes, representing different historic periods, varied styles of architecture and unique physical qualities and social characteristics. While some neighborhoods have been listed in the National Register and Salem has four local historic districts,

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other neighborhoods have no protection for their historic resources. Almost all of the neighborhoods are facing changes that threaten community character.

Churches, particularly those associated with specific ethnic groups, were mentioned as anchors in their neighborhoods, “powerful” buildings that are important to the streetscape. Another pressure facing historic neighborhoods is increased density. Even neighborhoods that are protected by being in a local historic district are becoming denser through special permits and zoning variances. Increased density puts more pressure on historic structures and also on neighborhood infrastructure such as landscaping and open space, which are being impacted by construction and the need for additional parking.

## **PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Preservation planning is a three-step process: identification, evaluation and protection. Four useful documents to consult before beginning to implement preservation strategies are the Massachusetts Historical Commission’s *Survey Manual* and *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances*; the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s *Reading the Land*; and the Essex National Heritage Commission’s *Essex National Heritage Area Plan*. Each publication provides necessary information for the identification, evaluation and protection of the rich cultural heritage of Massachusetts communities. The recommendations that follow are in two parts. General recommendations are listed first, followed by more specific recommendations.

Each community will have to determine the best way to implement the recommendations discussed below. One approach that might help Salem begin the process is to form a Heritage Landscape Committee, as described in *Reading the Land*.

### **General Recommendations**

Recommendations that apply to a broad range of resources are discussed below. The general recommendations are listed in the order in which they are most logically addressed when applying the three-step preservation planning process as described above. Thus the goal will be to (1) identify, (2) evaluate and (3) protect.

#### ***Preservation Plan***

Salem is fortunate to have had a Preservation Plan completed in 1991 under the auspices of the Planning Department and the Historical Commission. The unusually detailed plan included all aspects of preservation activity in Salem from administrative policies to survey to ordinances to outreach. Each recommendation includes the purpose of the action, a description of the tasks involved, a timeframe, a list of resources available, and who the action should be taken by. Joint review of the status of each of the recommendations contained in the plan by the Historical Commission and the Planning Department would be an

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excellent way to begin to update the plan and to establish new preservation priorities for the city.

### ***Inventory of Heritage Landscapes and Other Historic Assets***

The vital first step in developing preservation strategies for heritage landscapes is to record information about the resources on MHC inventory forms. One cannot advocate for something unless one knows precisely what it is – the physical characteristics and historical development. Although Salem has already done extensive survey work, many of the city's historic landscapes have not yet been documented and some of the older inventory forms may be incomplete. All resources that have been recorded in the past should be reviewed, particularly those documented in the 1960s because survey methodology has changed since that time. New procedures are more comprehensive and link properties in a more coherent way than in the past. Thus, using the MHC survey methodology, record Salem's heritage landscapes on MHC forms beginning with the priority landscapes listed in this report:

- Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not sufficiently documented, beginning with heritage landscapes. Document unprotected resources first, beginning with the most threatened resources.
- Make sure to document secondary features of residential properties, such as barns, stone walls and landscape elements.
- Record a wide range of historic and pre-historic resources including archaeological sites, landscape features and industrial resources.

### ***National Register Program***

As additional survey work is completed, evaluate properties for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Develop a National Register listing plan taking into consideration a property's significance, integrity and vulnerability. Properties that are in need of recognition in order to advance preservation strategies should be given priority.

### ***Burial Grounds and Cemeteries***

Salem has a range of historic burial areas and cemeteries, under both public and private ownership. The documentation and preservation needs vary for each site. The DCR publication *Preservation Guidelines for Municipally Owned Historic Burial Grounds and Cemeteries* provides guidance on developing preservation plans for burial grounds, including identification and evaluation of the resources as well as preservation strategies. Using this guide Salem should:

- Establish community support for burial ground preservation projects, through neighborhood groups who can act as watchdogs and advocates for burial grounds.

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- Explore a wide range of funding sources for capital projects such as tomb repair and monument conservation. These might include state grants, foundations, corporations and local businesses. Use of community service groups may also be appropriate for some tasks.
  - Provide specialized training for workers responsible for burial ground maintenance so they are aware of preservation practices appropriate for historic burying grounds. Develop maintenance plans and checklists specific to each burial ground.
  - Install signage that includes cemetery regulations as well as basic interpretive information. Work with police to assure that regulations are enforced, particularly at night when vandalism is most likely to occur. Consider having interpreter on hand at downtown burial grounds during peak use times to assure that use occurs in an appropriate manner that is not damaging to burial grounds.

### *Neighborhood Character*

Nearly all preservation strategies address neighborhood character in some manner. As described above, thorough documentation on MHC inventory forms is an important first step in the preservation planning process, followed by National Register listing where appropriate. Three preservation tools that are particularly applicable to Salem's historic neighborhoods are demolition delay, local historic district designation (MGL Chapter 40C) and neighborhood conservation district designation. A demolition delay ordinance provides a time period in which the city can consider alternatives to demolition. Both types of districts recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. Each type of district is a local initiative, adopted by a 2/3 vote of the City Council, and administered by a district commission, appointed by the Mayor. As Salem already knows, the strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic resources is local historic district designation, while neighborhood conservation districts are less restrictive but still embrace neighborhood character.

- Amend Salem's demolition delay ordinance to require public notification, including abutters, of proposed demolitions and to specify details of hearing process.
- Determine whether historic neighborhoods such as Bridge Street, Juniper Point or the Point would be appropriate local historic or neighborhood conservation districts. Areas with a high level of historical significance and integrity should be considered as potential local historic districts, while neighborhood conservation districts would be more appropriate for residential neighborhoods that may have less integrity and where more flexibility is needed. Salem is receiving funding from the MHC for the completion of a preservation plan for the Point Neighborhood, which will be a part of the Point Neighborhood Master Plan.

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- Designate historically significant neighborhoods as local historic districts to preserve individual properties as well as neighborhood character. In a local historic district, any proposed changes to exterior architectural features visible from a public right-of-way are reviewed by the locally appointed historic district commission.
  - Alternatively, pass a neighborhood conservation district (NCD) ordinance. Neighborhood conservation districts are special areas that are preserved by regulating scale, massing and materials of additions and new construction. Such districts may be the most appropriate way to preserve the land use pattern of an area where there are changes in materials but the overall size, scale and orientation of structures within the heritage landscape are retained.
  - In downtown areas, identify the critical elements that give the public spaces a unique character. Rigorously apply design guidelines. Establish standards and enforcement practices for all public infrastructure work.



### ***Funding of Preservation Projects***

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing preservation strategies. In recent years, the ENHC has maintained a small grants program for Essex County communities. In addition, both the MHC and the DCR have had funding programs to assist communities in preservation related issues including:

- Survey and Planning Grants administered by the MHC support survey, National Register and preservation planning work.
- The Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF), which is also administered by the MHC, funds restoration and rehabilitation projects.
- The Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program (HLPGP) administered by DCR funds planning, rehabilitation, education and

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stewardship projects focused on historic landscapes, including cemeteries.

Funding for state programs varies from year to year. When planning Salem's heritage landscape inventory program, contact relevant agencies to determine whether funding is available.

Communities that have adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) find it to be an excellent funding source for many heritage landscape projects; however Salem first would have to adopt the Act. While tricky to pass in lean economic times, the number and types of projects that are benefiting across the Commonwealth is worthy of consideration. The CPA establishes a mechanism by which cities can develop a fund dedicated to historic preservation, open space and affordable housing. Funds are collected through a .5% to 3% surcharge on each annual real estate tax bill. The Commonwealth has established a dedicated fund which is used to match the municipality's collections under the CPA.

Adoption of the Community Preservation Act, by a majority vote on a ballot question, fosters partnerships among historic preservationists, conservationists and affordable housing advocates. At least 10% of the funds must be used to preserve historic resources; at least 10% must be used to protect open space; and at least 10% must be used to advance affordable housing. The remaining 70% must be used for one of these three uses as well as recreational needs and can be distributed in varying proportions depending upon the projects that the city believes are appropriate and beneficial. Information about the CPA can be found at [www.communitypreservation.org](http://www.communitypreservation.org).

Salem is a Certified Local Government (CLG) which means that the National Park Service through the MHC has recognized that the city has a local historic district ordinance and keeps accurate records of its jurisdictions. The city must file a comprehensive report each year stating the number and types of cases that come before the commission. In return, the city goes to the top of the list for Survey and Planning funding – a federal funding source of which a proportion must be allocated to CLGs. Salem may apply for matching funds to work on its preservation planning including inventory and National Register program.

### **Specific Recommendations**

#### ***Bridge Street Neck***

An extensive survey of buildings in the Bridge Street area was recently completed, resulting in the designation of more than 400 contributing properties in a new National Register district.

- Designate the Bridge Street neighborhood as a neighborhood conservation district to preserve neighborhood character.

#### ***Juniper Point Neighborhood***

- Review MHC inventory forms for Juniper Point neighborhood.

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- Nominate some or all of the neighborhood to the National Register if determined eligible.
  - Designate Juniper Point neighborhood a neighborhood conservation district to preserve neighborhood character. See the general recommendations section for details regarding neighborhood conservation districts.

### ***Pioneer Village***

This is a unique site that is significant as a Colonial Revival resource as part of the early living history museum movement. With the strong emphasis on tourism in Salem, Pioneer Village has the potential to regain its prominence as a local attraction and educational resource.

- Prepare an MHC area form for Pioneer Village.
- Nominate village to the National Register if determined eligible.
- Initiate advocacy program such as Friends group to gain support for preservation of the village.
- Use Pioneer Village as a project for a graduate preservation class. Explore options at Salem State College or other institutions with historic preservation, cultural landscape preservation or planning courses.

### ***Salem Woods***

- Prepare MHC inventory form for Salem Woods to document cultural resources associated with this landscape, including archaeological resources.
- Nominate Salem Woods to the National Register if determined eligible. The recent successful nomination for Lynn Woods might serve as a model.
- Prepare interdisciplinary management plan for Salem Woods that addresses natural resources, cultural resources and recreation issues.

### ***Winter Island***

The recent Conditions Assessment for Fort Lee and Fort Pickering addresses preservation needs for these two historic structures but does not provide an overall vision for Winter Island, an area with complex resources and multiple uses.

- Secure funds to stabilize the fort, as identified in the maintenance and restoration plan.

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- Prepare master plan for Winter Island that addresses the multiple needs and pressures on the island. Involve all stakeholders in planning process.

## **CONCLUSION**

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The Salem Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Salem and in beginning to think about preservation strategies. However, it is only the first step in the planning process. Landscapes identified in this report, especially the priority landscapes, will typically need further documentation on MHC inventory forms. The documentation in turn can be used to build consensus and gather public support for their preservation. Implementation of recommendations will require a concerted effort of and partnerships with municipal boards and agencies, local non-profits, and state agencies and commissions.

Distribution of this Reconnaissance Report to municipal land use boards and commissions will assist in making this one of the planning documents that guides Salem in preserving important features of the community's character. The tasks that are recommended will require cooperation and coordination among boards and commissions, particularly Salem's Historical Commission, Department of Planning and Community Development and Conservation Commission. It is also advisable to present this information to the City Council and the Mayor, the co-applicants to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program on behalf of the city. Finally distribution of the report to neighborhood associations and other preservation minded organizations such as Historic Salem Inc. will broaden the audience and assist in gathering interest and support for Salem's heritage landscapes.

**APPENDIX: HERITAGE LANDSCAPES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY**

This list was prepared as a summary of the Heritage Landscape Identification meeting held in Salem on July 19 and follow-up fieldwork on September 9, 2004. This is a working list and can be updated by the community. **There may be other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** The chart has two columns, the name and location of the resource are in the first, notes about the resource are in the second. Landscapes are grouped by land use category. Abbreviations used are listed below.

CR = Conservation Restriction                      NR = National Register  
 LHD = Local Historic District                    PR = Preservation Restriction  
 NHL = National Historic Landmark            \* = Priority Landscape

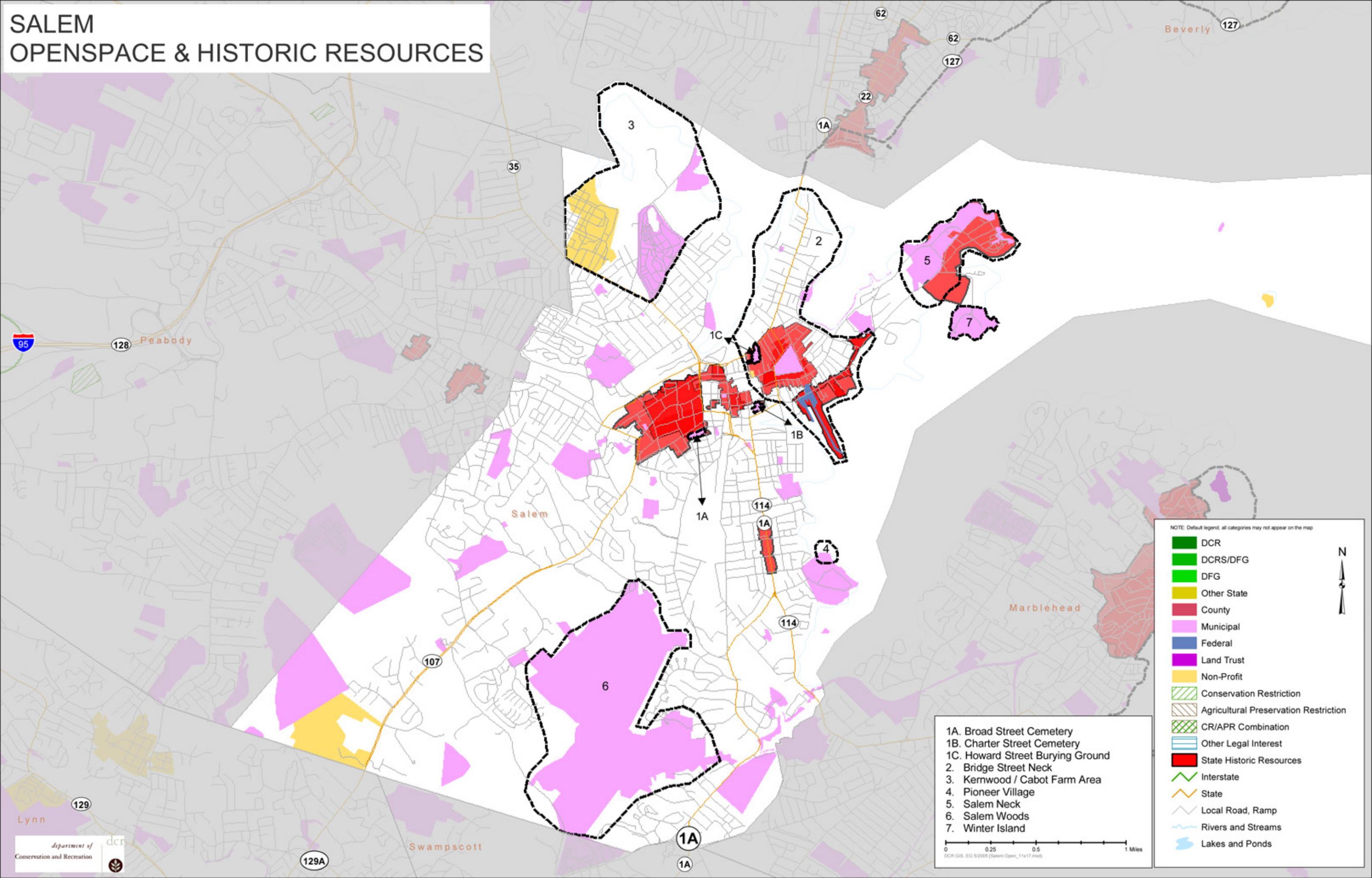
<b>Burial Grounds and Cemeteries</b>	
<b><i>Broad Street Cemetery *</i></b> 5 Broad St	NR. Established 1655, 2.69 acres, city-owned. Use of cemetery for dog walking is a concern to some.
<b><i>Charter Street Cemetery *</i></b> 51 Charter Street	NR. Established 1637, 1.47 acres, city-owned, Samuel McIntyre gravesite. Also known as the Olde Burying Point. Witch Trial Memorial built in 1990s is adjacent.
<b><i>Friends Burying Ground</i></b> 396 1/2 Essex Street	Established 1702. Also known as Quaker Burying Ground.
<b><i>Greenlawn Cemetery</i></b> 57 Orne Street	Established 1807, 55.8 acres. Large city-owned rural cemetery, still active. Known for its horticulture.
<b><i>Harmony Grove Cemetery</i></b> 36 Grove Street	Established 1840, privately-owned 75-acre rural cemetery.
<b><i>Howard Street Burying Ground *</i></b> 29 Howard Street	NR. Established 1801, 2.5-acre city-owned burying ground northwest of Common.
<b>Industrial</b>	
<b><i>Naumkeag Mills</i></b> Congress Street	The Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company was established in 1839. The mill buildings were the first in America driven by steam rather than hydropower. They were destroyed in the fire of 1914. The company rebuilt after the fire and at its peak employed almost 2,000 workers. Its closure in the 1950s was a serious blow to the local economy. Currently an industrial enterprise center.
<b><i>North River Canal Industrial Buildings</i></b>	These buildings illustrate the industrial history of the North River area and the city.

<b>Institution</b>	
<b><i>Salem Jail Complex</i></b> 50 St. Peter Street	Salem Jail was constructed in 1811-1813 and was enlarged in 1884. Until it closed in 1991, it was one of the oldest active correctional facilities in the country. The complex is located at an important visitor gateway within walking distance of downtown. Historic Salem Inc. (HSI) included the jail complex on its "Most Endangered Properties" list for 2000. The Salem Redevelopment Authority is currently completing a reuse study for the site prior to issuing a request for proposals.
<b><i>Salem State College</i></b> Lafayette Street	Main campus built on former Sylvania site is relatively new, but is visually important to the community.
<b>Maritime</b>	
<b><i>Baker's Island</i></b>	Baker's Island Light Station is NR District. Island has sizeable summer community and is visually important but there is no public access. Privately owned except for light house. A portion of the federal property is being de-accessioned.
<b><i>Beverly Harbor</i></b>	Forms northern boundary of Salem. Important views from Salem Neck.
<b><i>Children's Island</i></b>	Formerly Cat Island, owned by Marblehead/Swampscott YMCA.
<b><i>Collins Cove</i></b> Bridge Street	Access points are the Willows, Collins Cove Park and Walkway.
<b><i>Dion's Yacht Yard</i></b> Off Ocean Avenue	100 year-old boat yard near Pioneer Village.
<b><i>Hawthorne Cove Marina</i></b>	Near House of Seven Gables.
<b><i>Misery Islands</i></b>	Great Misery and Little Misery Islands, owned by The Trustees of Reservations. Harbor views, meadows, specimen trees, stands of pines and ruins of 19 <sup>th</sup> century casino hotel. Accessible by excursion boat during summer months or by private boat.
<b><i>Pickering Wharf</i></b> Off Derby Street	Mixed use development along the waterfront near Salem Maritime National Historic Site.
<b><i>Salem Harbor</i></b>	East side of city. Harbor is focal point of community. Once a major port, now serves mostly recreational uses. Major access points at Derby Wharf, Forest River Park, Palmer Cove, Winter Island. Recent harbor plan addresses access issues.
<b><i>Salem Maritime NHS</i></b> Derby St.	NHL, NR. Includes Derby Wharf, Custom House and buildings along Derby Street. Also important for views and public access to water. Buildings around park are not protected.
<b><i>Winter Island *</i></b>	NR. Resources include: Salem State Maritime Lab, military buildings and fortifications associated with Fort Pickering, Plummer Home for Boys, Coast Guard station, lighthouse, Smith Pool, Waikiki Beach. Great views, causeway, docks. Much of island is city-owned, some parts are privately owned. Deteriorated infrastructure.

<b>Natural Feature</b>	
<b><i>North River</i></b>	North River Canal and shoreline. Originally a wide estuary stretching from Mason and Federal Streets nearly to Pope Street. In 19 <sup>th</sup> century river was filled as part of a sewage project. Access at Furlong Park. A Neighborhood Master Plan was completed in 2003 for the North River Canal Corridor.
<b><i>South River</i></b>	Initially a tidal basin, gradually filled to provide land for warehouses, wharves, railroad yards and train station, leaving only short channelized stream which emerges from a culvert under Lafayette Street near intersection with Derby Street.
<b><i>Strongwater Brook</i></b>	Southwestern corner of city.
<b><i>Thompson's Meadow</i></b>	Large wetland area adjacent to Salem Woods owned by town of Marblehead.
<b>Open Space</b>	
<b><i>Fafard Land</i></b> Greenway Rd.	Land left over from development, trail to utility line used informally by hikers.
<b><i>Forest River</i></b> <b><i>Conservation Area</i></b>	138 acres of wetlands, forests, estuary and tidal coves located along the Forest River in the southeastern part of Salem. Was historically a part of Great Pasture.
<b><i>Forest River Park/</i></b> <b><i>Pioneer Village</i></b> *	1907. Large multi-use park. Includes Pioneer Village, living history museum created in the 1930s. Area was reportedly used by Native Americans, may have archaeological potential.
<b><i>Highland Park/</i></b> <b><i>Salem Woods</i></b> * Off Willson Street	Originally part of Salem Great Pasture. Park was established in 1906, includes municipal golf course established in 1933. Historic trail starts at Old Salem Greens Golf Course, goes through Salem Woods. Preserving this is an important goal.
<b><i>Kernwood/</i></b> <b><i>Cabot Farm Area</i></b> * Kernwood Street	Cluster of large, relatively rural land holdings north of Route 114 includes Cabot Farm, Kernwood Country Club (Donald Ross golf course, 1914), Kernwood Marina, McCabe Park and Greenlawn and Saint Mary's Cemeteries.
<b><i>Peabody Watershed</i></b> <b><i>Land</i></b>	146.22 acres, acquired for watershed land, part may be converted to golf course. Possible pesticide concerns.
<b><i>Salem Common</i></b> Washington Street	NR. Initially a training field and later one of the first designed public open spaces in America.
<b><i>Salem Highlands</i></b>	Privately owned parcel on the Peabody line. There is currently a cluster subdivision proposed for this area, which will include single family homes and open space. The area is important because it abuts watershed land.
<b><i>Salem Willows</i></b> <b><i>Park</i></b> * Salem Neck	NR. Established 1883, former trolley park. Includes Fort Lee, a Revolutionary and Civil War fort that was on Historic Salem Inc.'s 2001 Most Endangered List.

<b>Residential / Neighborhood</b>	
<b><i>Bridge Street Neck *</i></b>	NR. Residential neighborhood with commercial uses on Bridge Street. Includes old Salem Jail, Howard Street Burial Ground and many late 18 <sup>th</sup> and early 19 <sup>th</sup> century modest dwellings on Howard Street. Buildings are documented but there is less information on street pattern and streetscape, which also contribute to historic character.
<b><i>Downtown Area</i></b>	Downtown commercial district includes some residences. McIntyre District is just west of downtown. Urban renewal district, undergoing changes.
<b><i>Gallows Hill/Ward 4</i></b>	A key issue in this neighborhood is preserving the 1740 Pope House on Boston Street.
<b><i>North Salem</i></b>	Residential neighborhood bisected by Route 114 includes Harmony Grove Cemetery and Ledge Hill Park.
<b><i>Point Neighborhood *</i></b>	Area south of the downtown, including Russian Orthodox Church, mills, worker housing. Now home to most of the city's Hispanic population.
<b><i>South Salem</i></b>	Area near Forest River Park and Salem State College.
<b><i>Witchcraft Heights</i></b>	Sub-division built in the 1960s.
<b>Transportation</b>	
<b><i>Boston Street</i></b>	Important gateway to Salem with boulevard-like character. Urban entrance corridors were identified as a general issue, with Boston Street as example.

# SALEM OPENSOURCE & HISTORIC RESOURCES



NOTE: Default legend, all categories may not appear on the map

- DCR
- DCRS/DFG
- DFG
- Other State
- County
- Municipal
- Federal
- Land Trust
- Non-Profit
- Conservation Restriction
- Agricultural Preservation Restriction
- CR/APR Combination
- Other Legal Interest
- State Historic Resources
- Interstate
- State
- Local Road, Ramp
- Rivers and Streams
- Lakes and Ponds

- 1A. Broad Street Cemetery
- 1B. Charter Street Cemetery
- 1C. Howard Street Burying Ground
- 2. Bridge Street Neck
- 3. Kernwood / Cabot Farm Area
- 4. Pioneer Village
- 5. Salem Neck
- 6. Salem Woods
- 7. Winter Island

