I, Thomas S DiBello, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Community Planning in Community Planning.

It is entitled:
Vanishing Neighborhood Treasures: Preservation of Historic Places of Worship

Student's name: Thomas S DiBello

This work and its defense approved by:

Committee chair: Menelaos Triantafillou, MLA

Committee member: Colleen McTague, PhD
Vanishing Neighborhood Treasures: Preservation of Historic Places of Worship

A thesis submitted to the
Graduate School
of the University of Cincinnati
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Community Planning

in the School of Planning
of the College of Design, Art, Architecture and Planning

by
Thomas S. DiBello
B.A. History and Geography
Northern Kentucky University

May 2011

Committee Chair
Menelaos Triantafillou

Committee Member
Colleen McTague, Ph.D.
Abstract

Historic buildings are a physical reminder of where a society has come from and how it has changed over time. They reflect the values, the struggles, the advances, the culture, the preferences, the norms, the anomalies, the major historical turning points, and the everyday lives of generations of people. Although progress and change are necessary for the advancement of society, remembering and preserving the origins and achievements of the past are equally as necessary. Of all the historic buildings in American cities, places of worship are among the most representative artifacts of communities, from both the past and present. They are constructed with a desire to celebrate and connect with something greater than the physical world. They evoke emotions, both positive and negative, from those who experience them. They bring skillful art and architecture, as well as a sense of identity to the built environment. They house congregations that in turn serve and foster the well being of the larger community. Whether they are analyzed as living institutions and congregations, purely as historic physical structures of architectural significance, or as a combination of both, they add true and irreplaceable value to American communities. However, like all other elements of the built environment, they are subject to the pressures of time, nature, human behavior, and new development in the name of progress.

Changes in the religious landscape of the United States, movement of populations, and financial burden are putting the historic places of worship in American urban centers, including Cincinnati, Ohio, at risk of being lost to neglect, necessity, or progress. Because of declining support and resources, coupled with the high cost of maintaining historic places of worship, many of these buildings are neglected, abandoned, or sold. They are often demolished in order to
make room for new development or are simply left to deteriorate over time. These buildings are important assets to Cincinnati that should be preserved but they are victims of the same trends that have affected the nation as a whole, becoming increasingly costly to maintain and drained of resources as surrounding communities declined and continue to struggle.

This thesis seeks to analyze the value of historic places of worship in the United States, the complex and interconnected issues facing historic places of worship, and the resources available to preserve historic places of worship in America. It finally seeks to develop recommendations based on the preceding analyses and findings. These are the basic research guidelines that have steered the following study. In an effort to illustrate some of the concepts and issues regarding historic places of worship in the U.S. a brief analysis of the Walnut Hills area of Cincinnati, Ohio will be used as well.
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my Thesis Committee members, Menelaos Triantafillou and Dr. Colleen McTague, for all of their input, guidance, and support throughout the long and constantly changing process of researching and writing this thesis. I would especially like to thank my Committee Chair, Prof. Triantafillou, for keeping me on track and reassuring me when I started to lose sight of the prize.

I would also like to thank my family for all of their love and support, not only during the process of writing my thesis but also throughout my academic career. I always knew that I could come to each of you when I needed an idea, some support, or just a good dose of down time to keep me sane.
# Table of Contents

Abstract .................................................................................................................. ii  
Acknowledgments .................................................................................................. v  
List of Figures ......................................................................................................... vii  
List of Graphs ......................................................................................................... vii  
List of Maps ............................................................................................................. vii  
Chapter 1: An Introduction to Historic Preservation in America ................................ 1  
  1.1 Defining Preservation ..................................................................................... 1  
  1.2 Historic Preservation in the United States .................................................... 3  
Chapter 2: Goals and Methodology ....................................................................... 7  
Chapter 3: A Literature Review of the Value of and Stresses Facing Historic Places of Worship ......................................................................................................................... 10  
  3.1 The Value of Historic Places of Worship ...................................................... 10  
  3.2 Reasons for the Decline and Loss of Historic Places of Worship ............... 18  
  3.3 Summary ....................................................................................................... 24  
Chapter 4: Cincinnati’s Historic Places of Worship: The Case of Walnut Hills ....... 26  
  4.1 Development of Cincinnati, Ohio .................................................................. 26  
  4.2 Historic Places of Worship in the Walnut Hills Area .................................... 30  
Chapter 5: Resources for the Preservation of Historic Places of Worship ............. 39  
  5.1 Programs and Resources for Active Historic Places of Worship ............... 41  
      5.1.1 Constitutionality Issues ........................................................................... 41  
      5.1.2 Public Programs and Funding for Active Places of Worship ............... 47  
        5.1.2.1 The California Missions Preservation Act ..................................... 48  
        5.1.2.2 The Save America’s Treasures Program ......................................... 51  
      5.1.3 Private Programs and Funding for Active Places of Worship ............. 54  
        5.1.3.1 Private Financial Lending Corporations .......................................... 54  
        5.1.3.2 Organizations with Programs for Active Places of Worship ........ 56  
  5.2 Programs and Resources for Inactive Historic Places of Worship ............... 63  
      5.2.1 Adaptive Reuse ...................................................................................... 64  
      5.2.2 Historic Designation .............................................................................. 66  
      5.2.3 Preservation Grants .............................................................................. 68  
      5.2.4 Preservation Tax Credits and Easements .............................................. 72  
  5.3 Summary ....................................................................................................... 76  
Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusions ..................................................... 77  
  6.1 Recommendations for Preserving Historic Places of Worship ................... 77  
  6.2 Conclusions ................................................................................................... 86  
      6.2.1 Recommendations for Future Research ................................................ 89  
Bibliography ............................................................................................................ 91  
Appendix: Walnut Hills Historic Places of Worship Inventory ................................. 96
List of Figures

Figure 1: St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Cathedral, New York City_______________________11
Figure 2: Mother of God Roman Catholic Church, Covington, KY ______________________12
Figure 3: Southern Christian Church, Louisville, KY _________________________________21
Figure 4: Panorama view of Cincinnati in 1866______________________________________29

List of Graphs

Graph 1: Users of Programs in Historic Places of Worship_____________________________15
Graph 2: Programs Housed in Historic Places of Worship________________________________15
Graph 3: Congregations Providing Community Programs______________________________16

List of Maps

Map 1: Cincinnati and Walnut Hills_________________________________________________33
Map 2: Historic Places of Worship in Existence Up to 1950___________________________35
Map 3: Periods of Construction____________________________________________________36
Map 4: Periods of Demolition______________________________________________________37
Map 5: Total Demolished and Total Remaining as of 2011____________________________38
Chapter 1: An Introduction to Historic Preservation in America

1.1 Defining Preservation

In the United States, the phrase “historic preservation” is used to broadly describe the treatment of historic buildings, or historic building intervention. However, within historic preservation there are several types of intervention which include preservation, restoration, reconstruction, and rehabilitation (adaptive reuse) (Tyler 2000). The specific term, “preservation,” refers to the maintenance of a building in its current condition. Although the original fabric of the building may have been altered over the years, preservation recognizes the historic value of those alterations and seeks to maintain them in their current state along with any original features. When dealing with preservation in the most literal sense, the only treatments necessary are standard maintenance and any work needed to prevent further damage.

Restoration, unlike preservation, is strictly focused on the original features of the building. In restoration, the building is returned as closely as possible to its original condition. This may be necessary when significant portions of its historic integrity have been lost due to alteration or time, or when a particular period of its history was uniquely important (Tyler 2000). Reconstruction is similar in principal to restorative intervention. Reconstruction is literally the rebuilding of a historic structure. Again, the focus is on recreating a particular moment or period of history and the original fabric of the structure using replicated materials and design. One major issue in both restoration and reconstruction is the fabrication of history. Restoration or reconstruction of a building should be based on clear and substantial evidence of what the original building actually looked like, whether it be historical, physical, or pictorial. Any construction or rehab not based on clear evidence is irresponsible and presumptuous. Making a
conjecture or guess based on standards of that period or a subjective opinion results in false and misleading history. Also, restoring a building to a particular time in the past may ignore and devalue the natural and true historic evolution of that building. The decision to return a building to a particular period should have substantial justification based on the importance of that specified period (Tyler 2000).

The last type of intervention is rehabilitation, also called adaptive reuse. In adaptive reuse a building’s original function is no longer appropriate, but the historical and architectural integrity of the building is still strong. The building may have significant damage or alteration to historic features or the original use may not fit with current surrounding uses or regulations. In this case, the architectural value of the building may be maintained while the function is updated and adapted. Rehabilitation makes alterations to the original historic structure, but they are separate from original historic elements. The alterations can either be compatible or contrasted with the original elements. If they are compatible, they try to tie into existing elements such as scale, color, materials, or massing, with varying degrees of correspondence to the original elements. If new alterations or additions are meant to contrast with the original elements, then the purpose is to highlight differences and make both old and new stand out as separate but equal (Tyler 2000).

Each of these types of intervention in historic structures is concerned with protecting their historical and architectural value. However, they have different orientations concerning how this protection is achieved and to what level. Preservation is focused on maintaining the status quo. It accepts changes in the historic fabric up to the current moment, but hopes to prevent any future changes. Restoration and reconstruction are specifically focused on a particular moment in the past. They find value not in how the building has changed, but in where
it came from. Rehabilitation focuses more on the future. It allows the building to continue offering functional value while maintaining its architectural integrity. However, even though rehabilitation has good intentions, there is still a risk of losing historic and architectural integrity to excessive alteration.

As discussed, the phrase “historic preservation” is actually composed of multiple views and interventions, including one specifically called “preservation.” Although “preservation” can be used in this more specific meaning, the terms “historic preservation” and “preservation” are used virtually interchangeably throughout the U.S. when discussing the broader topic of intervention in historic buildings and sites, which encompasses all of the afore mentioned strategies. Therefore, for the remainder of this paper the terms “historic preservation” or “preservation” will refer to the broader meaning unless otherwise noted.

1.2 Historic Preservation in the United States

A brief discussion of the development of historic preservation in the United States is necessary in giving context to the preservation of historic places of worship. This development has taken both a public and private path. The earliest American preservation efforts were not driven by a general interest in protecting historic architecture. Instead, they were driven by the strong patriotic interests of private individuals and organizations. One of the earliest major preservation efforts was carried out by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association in 1853 (Barthel 1989). The Mount Vernon Ladies Association’s goal was to preserve the home of George Washington, Revolutionary War hero and first president of the United States, so that future generations would be able to remember the man that many consider among the most important of the founding fathers of the American nation. They presented a petition to the U.S. Congress
asking the federal government to purchase Mount Vernon so that American citizens would be able to visit the grounds at all times. The petition failed, which may reflect the apathetic attitude of the federal government towards preservation of historic sites and buildings at this early phase. The Ladies Association then opted to raise funds as a private organization in order to acquire the property. Funds were gathered from wealthy women from across the country that had an interest in preserving the site. This early successful effort laid the groundwork for future movements by private interests to preserve significant landmarks across the nation. Still, however, the emphasis of early efforts was primarily on landmarks, not on the everyday structures that made up the majority of the historic fabric of the built environment in the U.S. (Tyler 2000).

Eventually the patriotic reasoning for early preservation efforts was joined by a more economic influence. In the wake of the industrialization of the American economy, there emerged powerful enterprising individuals who had amassed great wealth through their capitalist ventures. Among the most powerful were Henry Ford and John D. Rockefeller. Both of these men showed an interest in using historic sites and buildings to advertise their particular view of the history and brilliance of American culture. Rockefeller was persuaded to literally purchase and reconstruct the colonial town of Williamsburg, Virginia, while Ford actually collected and moved numerous historic buildings, primarily the homes and workshops of prominent American inventors and enterprisers, to create the town of Greenfield Village, Michigan. Although most preservationists today criticize their methods of intervention, these examples are still important as early preservation efforts in a time when preservation was still the interest of an elite minority (Barthel 1989).

In the United States governmental system, historic preservation occurs at multiple levels. At the federal level it is overseen by the Department of the Interior, and more specifically by the
National Park Service. As discussed above, in the early days of American preservation activities the federal government took little action to preserve historic sites. In the early 20th century, federal involvement in preservation efforts originated in national parkland protection. The Antiquities Act of 1906 established protections for historic sites and landmarks located on federal lands. It also helped to transfer preservation powers from Congress to the executive branch of government, under the Department of the Interior. In this way, any federal preservation related activity outside of Congressional legislation would be executed more directly and efficiently. The National Park Service (NPS) was established in 1916 within the Department of the Interior to administer the national parks. Over the decades it has played an increasing role in the preservation of both natural and built historic assets (Tyler 2000).

Today, historic sites, structures, and districts are identified and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (National Park Service 2009). The National Register was formed as part of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The 1966 Act, apart from establishing the National Register, authorized federal funding of preservation activities, and established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, which advises the president and reviews federal actions that affect historic properties. The Act also encouraged more state and local preservation efforts and widened the focus of historic preservation from individual landmark sites to a much broader and comprehensive approach, including education, advocacy, and preservation and restoration projects (Tyler 2000). Although National Register designation identifies significant sites, provides guidelines for maintenance and rehab determined by the Secretary of the Interior, and makes listed buildings eligible for use of the Historic Tax Credit, it carries no significant regulatory authority. The only instance in which there is any level of regulation at the federal level is when a federally funded project, such as a road, will have an adverse effect on a historic
property. This process of analysis of the effects of a federal project on historic properties is known as the Section 106 review. If the project is found to have an adverse effect, then the property is documented and there may be an attempt to find an alternative way of executing the project. Although the review is mandatory, it still has no true regulatory authority even if the historic property or site will be adversely affected (Tyler 2000).

States also took on a more proactive role after the 1966 Act. The Act authorized grants to establish state-level offices, called State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), which act as the middle men between state/local preservation efforts and the federal level. Each state establishes a SHPO in order to be eligible for federal funding. The SHPO’s responsibilities include surveying historic properties, processing National Register nominations, administering federal grants, advising and assisting local agencies, consulting on Section 106 review, and reviewing applications for federal investment tax credits (Tyler 2000).

It is at the local level that the regulatory authority finally comes into play. Local jurisdictions and municipalities have the authority to create historic zones and individual designations which carry regulatory powers in the form of design and maintenance guidelines (City of Covington, KY 2002; Tyler 2000). States and local jurisdictions can also offer their own financial incentives, such as grants and tax credits, to encourage historic preservation rather than solely demanding it. Local governments are able to request that the state government designate them as Certified Local Governments (CLG). This certification ties them more closely to the SHPO and gives them access to and priority for certain types of grants.

In 1949, an organization was established to act as a bridge between the private efforts of individuals and organizations and the public efforts of the federal government. This organization was the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The National Trust originated as a quasi-public
entity that received funding from both Congress and the private sector. It was established to help organize the disparate private preservation efforts across the country, assist with national and local preservation efforts, educate and advocate for historic preservation, act as a lobbyist to Congress, and assume ownership of historic properties that are difficult for the federal government to own and maintain. Although the National Trust are charged with acquiring historic properties, they currently only fully administer about twenty and are more interested in finding individuals or organizations to acquire historic properties (Tyler 2000). In 1995, the National Trust decided to forego congressional funding and become fully reliant on funding from the private sector. After a three year phase out the National Trust became independent of funding from the federal government in 1998 (National Trust for Historic Preservation 2009).

**Chapter 2: Goals and Methodology**

One primary purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the value of historic American places of worship, as both physical structures and social institutions. A second goal is to understand the risks facing these historic buildings that lead to their loss. These first two goals are achieved in a review and analysis of the relevant literature regarding historic places of worship. The final goal is to understand what can be done to preserve these buildings, in both form and function, so that recommendations can then be made to communities, interested organizations, and governments in Cincinnati, Ohio. Although the focus will be on Cincinnati and the Walnut Hills area in particular, it is possible that these strategies and recommendations could be applied in communities across the nation. Indeed, many programs and resources that will be discussed are examples from other cities and organizations. The recommendations are not
meant to represent a specific solution for every situation, but to function more as a starting point and guide to help interested parties take the next steps. The goals and objectives, more specifically, are to:

1. Provide an understanding of the ways historic places of worship can have value to a community.

2. Provide an understanding of the cultural, demographic, and financial pressures that put historic places of worship at risk.

3. Analyze the state of historic places of worship in Cincinnati, by focusing on the Walnut Hills and East Walnut Hills neighborhoods.

4. Identify possible strategies for preserving historic places of worship based on examples from other U.S. cities, programs, and organizations.

In order to understand the value of, risk to, and preservation strategies available for historic places of worship in the United States, and specifically in Cincinnati, it was necessary to look at several data sources. General background knowledge concerning religious architecture, historic preservation in America, social impacts of religious institutions, and the trends and reasons for the risk of losing historic places of worship in America is available from published books, articles, and studies. More specific information concerning the Cincinnati area can be gained through searching local records, historic maps, published materials, and local historical resources. Analysis of case studies and programs covering the preservation of historic places of worship were utilized in the search for strategies to be recommended for the study area.

The process of finding and analyzing the necessary background materials for the literature review made use of books, scholarly journal articles, newspaper articles, organization websites, and published studies. In order to understand the context of preserving historic places of worship it was fundamental to know the development of and key players in American historic preservation. General historic preservation reference books and articles, as well as the official
websites of the federal preservation agency and the National Trust were reviewed to gain this information. Understanding the value of historic places of worship also required the use of published materials in books, journals and studies. Materials discussing religious architecture and religious history, as well as materials discussing social studies and trends, were consulted. The data concerning the trends and reasons contributing to the risks facing historic places of worship was primarily found in material discussing social trends, religious architecture, and studies of religious architecture and behavior in America. Common themes and patterns in the materials were synthesized, and relevant information was presented as part of the context and background concerning historic places of worship as they are concerned in the research study.

In order to achieve the remaining goals and objectives of the research it was necessary to consult further published materials. This included historic and contemporary newspaper articles, case studies of places of worship that are at risk of being lost or have been lost, and case studies of places of worship or other organizations/policies that have successfully preserved their historic structures. Websites and literature concerning the available resources and strategies available to both active and inactive historic places of worship were the keys to building a base from which to make recommendations, along with substantial analysis of the legal and economic theories behind preserving historic places of worship. Once the information for the Walnut Hills analysis and the analysis of preservation strategies was collected, it was examined and synthesized in order to clearly organize and communicate the findings.

Throughout the study, there were several parameters that needed to be taken into account when establishing the scope of the thesis research. The chief parameter was the limited amount of time available to undergo the study. Although there were original hopes to do a more comprehensive analysis of the historic places of worship in Cincinnati, the limited amount of
time necessitated a narrower study area, Walnut Hills, in order to effectively complete and utilize the findings. A second major limitation was the availability of resources. When working with older documents and literature, it is not uncommon to be unable to attain certain sources or for the sources to be incomplete. This was often the case when dealing with the historic maps used to compile the inventory of historic places of worship in Walnut Hills. A more detailed description of the methodology and limitations of the Walnut Hills study will be discussed in the chapter discussing Cincinnati and Walnut Hills. A third limitation to keep in mind throughout the study, and especially in the discussion of the resources available for preservation and the resulting recommendations, is that these are not guaranteed to work in every situation. Each historic place of worship has its own unique context and requires an analysis of the issues and options available to its specific case.

Chapter 3: A Literature Review of the Value of and Stresses Facing Historic Places of Worship

3.1 The Value of Historic Places of Worship

Historic places of worship are an important and beneficial resource for many communities. As physical elements of the landscape, they are often architectural and artistic treasures, as well as neighborhood landmarks and reflections of a community’s identity on the built environment. They often evoke emotional responses and reactions of awe and reverence through their very presence and design. As community institutions they offer something more than a physical presence, frequently providing essential social services and support for their congregations and for those outside the worshiping community.
In most U.S. cities today the skyline is dominated by tall commercial buildings, and very often they are massive skyscrapers. These are often built with the most cutting edge materials and design and are immense symbols of the progress and economic power which dominates so much of modern American society. However, the rise of the skyscraper as the king of the built landscape is a relatively recent movement, not truly gaining momentum until the late 19th century in America (Poppeliers & Chambers 2003). Before this time it was not commercial buildings that towered over communities; it was religious structures. The churches, temples, and synagogues of America dotted the landscape, and their towers and steeples could be seen throughout the community. Although the downtowns of most contemporary cities have given over to the towering commercial buildings, the presence of the older places of worship is still strong (see Figure 1). Outside the downtown, the “domes, towers, and spires provide identifying elements in the local skyline,” and houses of worship are among the most architecturally significant buildings in urban neighborhoods (Partners for Sacred Places 1997). In this capacity they act as landmarks and place makers. They create a sense of place and stability in the community. They were designed

**Figure 1**: St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Cathedral in New York City. Built between 1858 and 1879, it is now surrounded, and dwarfed, by towering skyscrapers. (Source: Photo: Bing Maps; Dates: saintpatrickscathedral.org)
to “be an enlivening presence for the community,” and their height and mass were meant to be easily seen and “express a quality of power and presence” (Kieckhefer 2004). They are among the major historical, cultural, and spiritual landmarks on the landscape, but they also act as anchors which give a concrete connection and form to the collective identity of the congregation, and often the surrounding neighborhood. They are a physical sign of the desired permanence of the religious community.

For those who are outside the particular religious community, but are part of the wider community in which the place of worship is located, they are a part of the everyday environment, and their permanence can also convey a sense of continuity and stability for this group (Grunberg & Kors 2009). Indeed, some neighborhoods are so identified by their historic religious structures that they are literally named for them, as is the case with the Mutter Gottes neighborhood in Covington, KY, which is named for its very own Mother of God Catholic Church (see Figure 2) (City of Covington 2002). The impact of a historic house of worship to the identity and sense of place of the greater community is often seen when the buildings are at risk of being lost (Kush, 2010; Vosko 2009). When the building is lost to deterioration or demolition, it is seen as a great loss to the fabric of the entire neighborhood, not just for those who use it for worship but also for those who grew up with the community gatherings of the congregation and the sight of the building as

Figure 2: Mother of God Church, Covington, KY. (Source: Author)
they walked home from school. Apart from their size and prominence, these buildings are also beautifully crafted monuments.

As artistic and architectural treasures, historic houses of worship represent the values of the communities for which they were constructed (Broderick 1958); the values and influences of the architects and artisans that designed and adorned them (Crosbie 2009); the influence of vernacular materials, styles, and cultures on traditional styles; and the religious and cultural diversity of the U.S. (Chiat 1997). These buildings act as “storehouses of American art” which resulted from the efforts of many talented architects, artisans, craftsmen and builders (Partners for Sacred Places 1997). This art is not meant only for the people who worship in these buildings, but also for the wider environment and the communities surrounding them (Kieckhefer 2004). Despite the fact that their construction occurred for a distinct religious purpose originally, they are intimately connected to the wider built environment as soon as the construction begins. From that point forward they are a form of public art that any passerby can enjoy or despise, and they add to the distinct fabric of the built form. The finest craftsmanship and design efforts are often utilized to create spaces grand enough to accommodate large numbers of worshipers (Crosbie 2009) and that are worthy of God (Kieckhefer 2004). This willingness to spend the time and resources to create something of such high quality and artistry reflects the value of the building to the congregation. It also symbolizes the congregation’s commitment to the community. A building of such substance is meant to last, to cement its followers to the community (Grunberg & Kors 2009).

Like all art, historic places of worship are designed to elicit a reaction from the observer and to communicate something for the artist. Places of worship are also, by virtue of their design and function, meant to be sacred spaces. Whether they are seen and valued purely for religious
reasons, for their artistic and architectural form, or for both, these buildings cause virtually every person who experiences them to react in one way or another, usually eliciting a spiritual or sacramental feeling (Grunberg & Kors 2009; Vosko 2009). For those who utilize the building for spiritual purposes, the reaction may be more personal and theological. They are there to commune with God. Whether or not they are there as part of a worshiping community or alone in search of quiet prayer and meditation, they are seeking an experience of something transcendent. For those who are not members of the worshiping congregation, the presence of the building may be nothing more than a familiar landmark or a beautiful piece of architecture. Even for these people the building may have personal value and evoke a sense of the sacred. Responses to religious architecture vary in the level of positivity as well. One observer of a towering, opulently decorated cathedral may see it as an inspiring monument to God, whereas another might feel oppressed by its immensity. The reaction depends on the initial design and connotations of the building itself as well as what the individuals experiencing it bring to it subjectively (Kieckhefer 2004). The response to most historic places of worship results from what is built into their very substance. They are complex and delicate systems of light, shape, size, acoustics, materials, symbolism, artistry, memories, history, experiences, and even smells (Crosbie 2009; Grunberg & Kors 2009; Kieckhefer 2004). These elements are all carefully orchestrated to enhance the experience of the visitor.

Historic places of worship in cities and neighborhoods across the United States have value outside of their physical presence, with the accompanying emotional and place-making benefits, and the artistic beauty contributed to the built environment. Religious organizations, as social and cultural institutions, can be sources of essential services that benefit both their members and non-members in the community. As was discussed above, the presence of a
A historic church, temple, synagogue, mosque, or other place of worship in a community can help anchor that community around a physical structure. That structure often houses important organizations and programs that offer support for substance abuse, grieving families and friends, and badly needed food and/or medical care, among many other services and resources for those in the direst of need. They are usually among the most community oriented institutions in a neighborhood, and their services often supplement services offered by secular organizations and government programs. Youth services, elderly care, moral and spiritual support, artistic and cultural events, fostering of civic participation, volunteerism, and community interests are all part of the array of services and support that religious institutions often graciously provide for their communities. Robert Putnam, in his 2000 book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, states that...
because of the numerous social services and the fostering of civic engagement, religious institutions are a rich source of “social capital.” Social capital is described as the system of relationships and interactions within different levels and facets of communities that provide supports and benefits to particular communities. Sometimes the social capital of one group benefits that group at the expense of another, but in general social capital is something that helps to hold interconnected neighborhoods and systems together (Putnam 2000).

In 1997, the non-profit organization Partners for Sacred Places conducted a study to identify the impacts that historic places of worship have for urban communities across America. Partners for Sacred Places is a non-sectarian, national organization whose main goals are to help congregations and communities act as successful stewards of their places of worship, develop a national network of advocates for sacred places, and enhance public understanding and awareness of the societal value of sacred places (Partners for Sacred Places 1997). After surveying 111 older (pre-1940) churches and synagogues in six American cities (New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Indianapolis, Mobile, Oakland, and San Francisco), in a study entitled Sacred Places at Risk, Partners for Sacred Places had significant empirical evidence to back their claims concerning the importance of saving historic places of worship.

Their key findings are as follows: 93 percent of surveyed

---

**Graph 3: Congregations Providing Community Programs**

- 93% Congregations Providing Community Programs
- 7% Congregations Not Providing Community Programs

Source: Partners for Sacred Places 1997
congregations provide social services to the larger community (see Graph 3), 81 percent of those social service program users are non-members (Graph 1). 76 percent of the congregation-supported services are located in historic religious buildings (Graph 2), and many of the services provided by congregations offer basic and essential needs (over 60 percent of the study congregations operate food pantries, over 50 percent provide clothing, and over 40 percent run soup kitchens). The services and programs are offered to all segments of community populations (young and old, rich and poor, healthy and sick, families and individuals). Art and cultural diversity are encouraged by congregations, which helps to maintain the life and identity of communities. Finally, almost 45 percent of study congregations allow their facilities to be used by local organizations and causes outside of their own programs. (Partners for Sacred Places 1997)

As far as financial and logistical value provided by congregations to the larger community, the findings are just as great. Programs using the historic religious facilities saved an average of $27,000 a year in rent. The total staff time a congregation contributes to community service programs is worth almost $33,000 a year (based on estimated wages) and the average yearly volunteer hours provided by a congregation is 5,300 hours (the equivalent of 132 weeks or two and a half full-time volunteers per congregation for 52 weeks a year) which is valued at $62,382 annually. The congregations in the study give over $17,000 annually for the programs they house, and they cover the utilities and in-kind costs of use of their facilities by outside programs, a cost of over $14,000 yearly. In total, the subsidy provided by the study congregations to their communities was $140,000 a year. The study also states that the full annual budgets of many congregations is equal to their total contribution to the community, meaning that for every dollar received by the congregation a full dollar is given back to the
community (Partners for Sacred Places 1997). Given that these numbers are from 1997, and that the need for these types of social services is perhaps even greater as a result of the devastating economic recession affecting America today, the value of urban congregations occupying historic buildings is very likely even greater as of 2011.

Based on the findings in this study, it can be seen that the social and financial value of congregations with historic places of worship is immense, and that it is primarily by their own initiative that they provide and maintain these essential programs and services. When combined with the emotional, artistic, architectural, and identity and place-making value of historic places of worship discussed above, the financial and social services provided by urban congregations with historic facilities help to illustrate the necessity of preserving these societal treasures. The loss of such resources would have a significant detrimental effect on countless communities in the United States.

3.2 Reasons for the Decline and Loss of Historic Places of Worship

Despite the measurable, and immeasurable, value of historic places of worship to communities across urban America, there are disturbing trends which are spelling disaster for many of these irreplaceable assets. Like all buildings, the historic churches, temples, synagogues, and other religious structures in the United States are constantly at risk of being damaged or destroyed by natural forces such as wind, fire, earthquakes, and flooding. They are also at risk from vandalism such as arson, graffiti, and broken windows. However, there are other forces which act against these neighborhood treasures. Aside from the chance disaster caused by nature or the whim of a criminal, there are societal and financial trends that follow the ebb and flow of American culture and put these buildings at risk. There are four main trends and factors
contributing to the increased risk of losing historic urban places of worship and their congregations which were identified during the review of relevant literature. The first is the migration of populations and, therefore, congregations out of many older American cities and into the surrounding suburbs. The second is the changing religious attitudes and social patterns in American society. The third is the subsequent decline in attendance, membership, and support for historic places of worship as a result of demographic and social shifts. The final factor is the high cost of maintaining historic places of worship. These trends and stresses often combine to put pressure on older places of worship and their congregations.

After World War II, there were major changes in the direction of American culture. Government tax breaks and subsidies for homeowners and a massive new expressway system, also encouraged and funded by the government, made it easier for millions of Americans who had once lived in the dense and thriving urban centers to move farther and farther out of the city centers and into the rapidly expanding suburbs. Cheap mortgages, cheap gasoline, and an extensive and efficient roadway system were the demise of many cities in the Northeast and Midwest that had fueled the very industrial and economic growth that allowed for such innovations (McKee 2007). According to the United States Census Bureau, in 1950 the percentage of the total U.S. population living in the suburbs was 23.3 percent, while the percentage living in the central cities was 32.8 percent. By 1970 it was 37.6 percent suburban...
and 31.4 percent in the central cities. As of 2000, 50 percent of the entire U.S. population lived in the suburbs, whereas only 30.3 percent lived in the central cities (Hobbs & Stoops 2002). The suburban share of the total population more than doubled over those 50 years, while the central city share actually declined by 2.5 percentage points (see Graph 4).

As more of these new middle class Americans moved out of the cities, the urban areas became drained of financial, human, and social capital. With the loss of such resources, provided primarily by the higher-income families that had made the exodus to the suburbs, it became difficult to maintain basic institutions in the urban cores, including schools, stores, and churches (Putnam 2000). This trend was intensified by what is frequently termed a “white flight” out of the cities, in which the predominantly white middle class would virtually abandon neighborhoods after their neighbors’ homes began filling with African Americans and other minorities, many of which were of lower income (Hulsether 2007). The major organized religions also followed this trend. Catholics, Jews, and Protestants all moved to the suburbs and drained their central city colleagues of membership and support (Hulsether 2007). For many of the older urban congregations the loss of membership resulted in the loss of their places of worship, and for some, such as Catholic parishes, this literally meant the destruction of physical territory. The old congregations and their buildings often lost their central role in the declining neighborhoods as their support, usually the younger, middle class generations, abandoned them. Over the subsequent decades, even the African American populations that had filled in the old white neighborhoods and places of worship have increasingly moved to the suburbs (McKee 2007).
Coupled with the significant population movements of the second half of the 20th century is a general switch in American religious attitude. For some, this change has been one of religious preference. For others, it has been a decline in the actual belief and involvement in any organized religion. During the post-WWII decades, America entered a period of great prosperity, but simultaneously it entered a period of cultural and social turbulence. Social movements during the 1960’s and 1970’s often had a progressive, anti-authoritarian message. The old religious institutions were often seen as too rigid and controlling. Developments in birth control and sexual freedom often ran counter to traditional religious doctrine and morals. Increases in financial freedom and educational attainment may have contributed to a more material and intellectually oriented population that no longer needed religious institutions to guide life decisions. There was also a rise in non-denominational Christian religions that offered a more hands on, personal spirituality that appealed to the younger generations produced by the Baby Boomer generation (Vosko 2009).
These new congregations often have a similar mentality to that of traditional Protestant religions concerning the role of religious architecture and art. For them, the church building can be respected as a symbol, but “profound internal religious orientation should not depend on architecture” (Homman 2009). The newer theological trends in America are moving further away from the older theologies, in which the building and art were important to the religious connection with God. Instead, importance is primarily within the congregation itself. By catering to the newer religious demographics, often centered on the suburban population and young, energetic professionals in the urban environments, these new denominations are successfully attracting new members while the older religions are mostly struggling to keep their current members. Newer congregations, because of their different cultural priorities, often require a radically different building design than the historic places of worship already in existence. They do not emphasize symbolism and art, but rather a more pragmatic, “big box” design that often results in religious structures that more closely resemble athletic arenas, convention centers, or auditoriums (see Figure 3). Coincidently, these newer structures are often cheaper and quicker to construct, making it even more difficult for historic congregations and structures to compete with the changing religious tide (Vosko 2009).

As the preference of religious Americans has drifted away from the traditional established religions, the numbers of Americans who regularly attend their place of worship or even identify with an organized religion have declined. This combination is further draining support and resources away from the many historic places of worship in America’s cities. According to The Barna Group, an organization which has been tracking American religious behavior since 1984, one out of every three adults were classified as unchurched (which means they have not attended a religious service during the past sixth months) as of 2007 (The Barna
Group 2007). When unchurched children and teens are added to the total unchurched adults, the actual number of persons who do not regularly attend a religious service is about 100 million, or about one third of the entire U.S. population. Since the 1960’s and 70’s Americans have become about 10 percent less likely to claim church membership and the actual attendance and involvement in religious activity has declined anywhere from 25 to 50 percent, depending on how truthful the attendance responses to survey questions actually are (Putnam 2000). The percentage of Americans claiming no religious preference at all has increased from 3 percent in 1957 to 14 percent in 2000 (Hulsether 2007). As evidence of this decline in religious activity in the older religions, many Catholic dioceses across the U.S. have been shrinking. Between 1990 and 2003 the dioceses across several states, including Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia had lost parishes (individual communities centered on a church which make up a diocese), and the total number of parishes nationwide fell from its peak 19,331 in 1995 to 18,634 in 2007 (McKee 2007).

This decline in religious membership and involvement, along with the change in religious preference and attitude discussed earlier, has significantly drained the resources of the older religious institutions, especially those in older urban areas with historic places of worship. Looking again at the Catholics as an example, there have been declining numbers of priests and increasing drain on financial resources (McKee 2007). About 3,200 of the 18,634 parishes in 2007 had no resident priest to help lead the community. Only 33 percent of American Catholics claimed to go to church on Sundays in 2007, as opposed to 74 percent in the late 1950’s. This has dramatically decreased the income gained from congregation donations, as has the negative publicity from the sex abuse scandals which plagued the U.S. Catholic Church during the 2000’s. The scandals often led to expensive legal settlements which drained Church funds and
precipitated the need to sell Church assets, including real estate. These trends have put major strain on urban congregations with historic places of worship.

Adding further pressure to these historic places of worship is the cost of maintaining the buildings themselves. According to the *Sacred Places at Risk* study (1997), many of the historic places of worship surveyed had significant repair needs. Over one third acknowledged having serious roof and gutter issues that could lead to chronic water penetration, and one fifth of the congregations also faced structural problems, such as wall cracks and roof beam issues, which can threaten structural stability and congregation safety. Although these historic sacred places are built to last, they still require constant, and expensive, maintenance. The religious leaders and congregation volunteers are usually not well equipped or prepared for serious maintenance issues, mechanical problems, and property upkeep and, therefore, may ignore or not even notice growing problems. The study also found that, on average, the congregations spend about a third of their annual income on property maintenance. Specifically, a quarter of the congregations spent 40 percent or more on property care. At the time of the study (1997), the anticipated repair needs for the average congregation would cost $225,000, and even more in earthquake prone areas (Partners for Sacred Places 1997). With most congregations barely able to maintain the buildings in their current condition while continuing their programs and community social services, the costs of major repair and maintenance needs are often too much to handle.

### 3.3 Summary

The United States has an established record of preserving historically and architecturally significant buildings throughout the nation. This extends through all levels of government and the private sector. Historic buildings are often preserved based on the arguments that they are
important cultural and even economic assets that are necessary elements of the built environment of American communities. Historic places of worship, including churches, temples and synagogues are no exception. As physical buildings they are irreplaceable historic and architectural monuments. They often have higher qualities of construction and craftsmanship that reflect their value. They also provide non-tangible benefits aside from beautifying their communities. They can anchor a community identity and have emotional value for groups and individuals. In addition the congregations housed within them provide significant social benefits and services utilized by entire communities.

However, these societal treasures are under increasing strain from multiple pressures which put them at risk of being lost, along with their accompanying benefits. Several coinciding trends have contributed to the increased risk of losing historic places of worship in American urban communities. The movement of large populations out of the urban centers and into the surrounding suburbs, along with growing preference for alternative religious traditions over traditional religious institutions, and the decline of strong religious involvement and identification, has drained support and resources from many of these historic and architectural landmarks. Combined with the high cost of maintaining such structures, many congregations are struggling to stay afloat, let alone keep their beautiful buildings in sound condition. It is clear that these buildings are too valuable to simply ignore and that something must be done to preserve them as historic and architecturally significant structures, as well as essential community institutions and contributors to the wider social wellbeing.
Chapter 4: Cincinnati’s Historic Places of Worship: The Case of Walnut Hills

4.1 Development of Cincinnati, Ohio

Cincinnati is one of the main metropolitan regions in the state of Ohio, and because of its location on the Ohio River, which acts as a state boundary, it also extends its influence over regions of Indiana and Kentucky. The area that would become Cincinnati was originally settled as Losantiville in 1788 as a military outpost in what was still very much the western frontier of the United States (Giglierano and Overmyer 1988). The small settlement was renamed Cincinnati in 1790, and after hostilities with Native Americans were ended in 1795 the town began its transition from a garrison settlement to a commercial center. It focused on trade along the Ohio River and began to develop its own manufacturing ventures during the early 1800’s. As its economic base grew, so did its population. By 1819, the town was incorporated as a city. In 1829 the city increased its connection to the rest of the U.S. with the construction of the Miami and Erie Canal. The mid-1800’s marked the rise of the railroad as the dominant form of transportation in the U.S., and although Cincinnati remained primarily attached to its river and canals, it too embraced the growing railroad system. A second major feature of the region also influenced the development of the city. Cincinnati was first settled on the fertile basin formed by the Mill Creek as it emptied into the Ohio. The basin was surrounded by a ring of steep hills which contained the city’s growth and created dense urban neighborhoods. Early on only the wealthy could afford to leave the increasingly dense basin area and settle on the surrounding hilltops. However, with the onset of advances in transportation, especially cable cars, inclines and streetcars, more and more of the surrounding hills and beyond could be developed. Those
who could left the crowded basin and the city continued to expand through annexation. By the early 1900’s, Cincinnati had become a major regional transportation, commercial, and industrial hub.

However, just as the development of automobiles, highways, and suburbs resulted in the decline of countless urban core areas across America in the post-World War II era, the historic basin area and even the first ring hilltop neighborhoods and suburbs in the Cincinnati region also felt the effects of the new suburban culture. The river and canals had given way to the railroads, which in turn gave way to the automobile and highways. The meatpacking and manufacturing that had developed in Cincinnati declined, and the downtown area lost its commercial dominance to the rise of suburban strip malls. As the wealthier middle class white populations vacated the urban cores, they were replaced by lower income populations which were usually comprised of African American and Appalachian minority groups (Giglierano and Overmyer 1988). In an attempt to clean out the slums and poverty that had developed in the old urban core, massive urban renewal and highway construction projects literally cleared out entire neighborhoods in the mid-to-late 1900’s. This only contributed to the displacement and further decline of the urban populations and their surroundings. Although there have been multiple attempts to redevelop the historic core of Cincinnati, with varying periods and levels of success, over the last 50 years or so, many older neighborhoods are still feeling the impact of urban sprawl. Adding insult to injury is the current economic recession which is threatening the urban, as well as many suburban, areas in the Cincinnati area.

As was mentioned in the preceding literature review, Cincinnati’s historic places of worship have also felt the pressures of shifting demographics and social trends. As the city grew rapidly during the 19th century, so did its collection of beautiful places of worship (Hanrahan
The area was primarily Protestant Christian in its early years, though there were also important Jewish developments and the eventual predominance of the Catholic Church in the 1830’s and 1840’s due to an influx of immigrants. Among the numerous impressive places of worship that rose out of the city’s many neighborhoods were such gems as St. Peter in Chains Roman Catholic Cathedral, the Isaac M. Wise Temple (which was also the center of Reform Judaism in America), and St. Xavier Church. Before the rise of the skyscrapers in the 20th century, the skyline was dominated by the spires and bell towers of its multitude of churches and synagogues (see Figure 5 below). Even today, outside of the Central Business District, the skylines of many neighborhoods are defined by the remaining places of worship. However, as the population of the urban core became smaller and poorer, many of the congregations struggled to remain viable and maintain their buildings. Many were forced to follow their members to the suburbs or combine with other struggling congregations throughout the city. Some of the abandoned buildings were simply left to decay, which is still occurring to this day, while others were demolished to make room for new development, which is too often just a parking lot. Not all of the old places of worship have been left to decay with the passage of time and the falling rains. Some have been recycled by new congregations or have been adaptively reused in an effort to revive them as living elements of the urban fabric, while still more have continued to house their original congregations who stubbornly hold out. Still, there are increasing pressures on many of Cincinnati’s historic places of worship as their structural integrity continues to degrade and desire for development space presses down on them.
Figure 4: Panorama view of Cincinnati in 1866 (Glazer 1967)
4.2 Historic Places of Worship in the Walnut Hills Area

In order to gain a more focused and localized understanding of how many of the trends discussed above have affected the historic places of worship in Cincinnati, it makes sense to look at the neighborhood scale. The area known as Walnut Hills, which actually comprises the Walnut Hills and East Walnut Hills neighborhoods, is an effective microcosm of the trends that Cincinnati experienced as a whole. It is situated in an area of hilltops to the east of the basin area. Walnut Hills is bounded by Eden Park to the south, Interstate 71 and Reading Road to the west, and Victory Parkway to the east. I-71 and Victory Parkway converge to form the northern boundary. East Walnut Hills lies directly east of Walnut Hills. It is bounded by Victory Parkway to the west, Columbia Parkway to the south, Torrence Parkway to the east, and a series of residential streets to the north, including Lincoln Ave, De Sales Lane, and Dexter Ave. Although it is technically two separate neighborhoods, they have a similar background and development and for the purposes of this study will be referred to generally as “Walnut Hills.”

The area remained largely undeveloped land throughout the earliest years of Cincinnati’s development. In 1794, the Reverend James Kemper bought a large tract of land on the hilltops overlooking the Cincinnati basin on the east side (Existing Conditions Summary 1969). He originally used the land for farming, and the population was essentially composed of his family. He called to the area “Walnut Hills” in reference to the preponderance of walnut trees growing on his land. In 1829, Rev. Kemper donated ten acres of his land for the development of Lane Seminary by Lyman Beecher, father of Harriet Beecher Stowe who would later write the influential novel, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. The area slowly began to develop over the first half of the
1800’s. Because it was located atop the hills that bounded Cincinnati, it was not practical for most Cincinnatians to live there and travel to the downtown basin area on a regular basis. Therefore, the early residents of the Walnut Hills area, apart from the Kemper family, were wealthier citizens who could afford the time consuming and expensive travel up and down the hillsides. The area developed into a park-like suburb of Cincinnati. It was the setting for the mansions of some of Cincinnati’s wealthy patrons. There was also a significant population of African Americans living in the northern half of Walnut Hills, who most likely worked on farms or for the wealthy residents in the southern regions of the neighborhood. Because of the isolation of Walnut Hills from the downtown commercial district, it developed its own commercial center at the intersection of Gilbert Avenue and McMillan Street, which became known as Peeble’s Corner. By 1869, the Walnut Hills suburb had been annexed by Cincinnati and became one of its most successful neighborhoods. At the time it, was still considered primarily a suburban neighborhood and remained a wealthy residence for those who could afford to travel up and down the basin hillsides. However, the advent of cable cars, inclines, and eventually electric streetcars in the late 1800’s allowed more and more people to begin moving out of the basin and the population of Walnut Hills grew. By the early 1900’s the population had reached roughly 15,000 (Folkers 1975). Peeble’s Corner became one of the major commercial centers outside of the downtown commercial district. East Walnut Hills followed much of the same overall development pattern, though the area was settled a little later during the 1840’s by Catholic families and was annexed by Cincinnati shortly after the western area of Walnut Hills in 1873 (Folkers 1975).

Walnut Hills continued to develop as a commercial and transportation hub of the Cincinnati region, and remained a wealthy middle class residential neighborhood until the 1950’s.
when the development of new suburbs farther out began to sap the population and residents of the basin and its surrounding neighborhoods. The wealthy middle class white population of Walnut Hills began to migrate out of the area and in their place came an influx of African Americans and Appalachians of lower income. These populations had been displaced by the destruction of their previous neighborhoods during the urban renewal projects and highway construction projects during the mid-to-late 20th century. As these lower income minority populations began to move into Walnut Hills, the white middle class residents continued to move out, and actually migrated more quickly as the new populations came in (Walnut Hills Neighborhood Study 1979; Folkers 1975).

As these trends washed over the Walnut Hills area, the religious landscape also was affected. As was mentioned above, Walnut Hills began as a predominantly white Protestant and Catholic (in the east) neighborhood. During the early 20th century, the Jewish population of Cincinnati, which had originally resided in the western neighborhoods of the Cincinnati basin, began to move out to the hilltops of Walnut Hills. However, as the new suburbs began to develop and the poorer minorities began to also migrate to Walnut Hills, the Jewish residents again moved farther out. The new predominantly African American population of Walnut Hills utilized the churches and synagogues left by the fleeing middle class white populations for their own places of worship (Hanrahan 2008). Because the new populations migrating to Walnut Hills were of lower income, the neighborhood began to suffer from deterioration and decline over the post-WWII decades. Crime and blighted physical conditions increased, and buildings, including the numerous places of worship, suffered as well. Despite the influx of the replacement population and the recycling of the places of worship, churches and congregations “faced the issue of leaving Walnut Hills after a large number of their members moved out of the community.” (Hill
Some places of worship have been lost to the construction of major roads and highways, such as Dr. Martin Luther King Drive and I-71. Others have been torn down or left to deteriorate, such as the Walnut Hills Presbyterian Church, of which only the bell tower remains surrounded by a parking lot.

As part of the analysis of the development of historic places of worship in Walnut Hills a basic inventory was developed in order to better illustrate the spatial distribution and historic development of the buildings. However, there were several significant limitations and assumptions that were taken into account during the process of creating the inventory. The first assumption that was made was that the geographic scope of the study area would be limited to the neighborhood boundaries as defined by the City of Cincinnati and the Cincinnati Area Geographic Information Systems (CAGIS), a local mapping institution. This boundary is the same as was described in the overview of the Walnut Hills area above. To reiterate, the western border is defined by Interstate 71 and Reading Road, the southern border lies along Eden Park and Columbia Parkway, the far eastern border is created by Torrence Parkway. The border then turns west, along Lincoln, De Sales, and Dexter, until it turns north along Victory Parkway and
converges in the north with I-71. The boundary between Walnut Hills and East Walnut Hills lies along Victory Parkway as it cuts through the area, but, for the purposes of this study, the two neighborhoods were considered as one general area. It should be noted that this boundary definition may vary depending on differing viewpoints or contexts.

A second assumption was the definition of “historic.” For the purposes of this study the only requirement for being considered historic was to have been built before 1950. This cutoff point was chosen for a few key reasons. One is that after 1950 the population shifts from the older urban neighborhoods to the suburbs was beginning. After 1950, the number of new and architecturally significant places of worship being built in an older urban neighborhood such as Walnut Hills would be greatly reduced, if any significant new structures were constructed at all. A second reason is that the 1950 cutoff point generally coincides with established historic requirements of preservation organizations such as the National Trust and the National Register. Although their requirement is technically that the building be 50 years or older, the roughly 60 year period between 2011 and 1950 can be considered a close enough approximation for this study. A note on the types of buildings considered “significant” seems appropriate at this point. Essentially, a significant historic place of worship is one of substantial size, architectural detail, or impact on the surrounding streetscape. Based on this broad definition, many of the smaller “storefront” places of worship that developed in the last half century would not be considered for this study.

Also helping to define the parameters of the study were a few key limitations. The first was time. Because of several key deadlines and unexpected developments or changes, it was not possible to undertake a more comprehensive approach in terms of geographic area analyzed and data collected. A second limitation was the availability of resources, especially when combined
with the time limitations. The information for the inventory was gathered strictly from historic Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. These maps were developed by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company throughout a period stretching from about the 1860’s to the 1970’s. They were only updated periodically and not all of the volumes survive or are easily available. In the case of the Walnut Hills area, complete records could be gathered for the years 1891, 1930, and 1950. Other years were either incomplete or outside of the historic time range. Although many of the historic places of worship in Walnut Hills were constructed earlier than 1891, the period covered by these three sets of maps is sufficient to help illustrate the basic development and distribution of the area’s historic places of worship. By cross referencing the different maps with each other and with current maps, it is possible to discern, very generally in most cases, during what set of years a building or road, or any other feature of the built environment, appeared or disappeared. Based on this method, there were three periods during which Walnut Hills’ historic places of worship appeared: Prior to 1891, between 1891 and 1930, and between 1930 and 1950. The
disappearance of the historic places of worship also corresponded with three periods: Between 1891 and 1930, between 1930 and 1950, and between 1950 and 2011.

The resulting inventory found that over the period spanning from 1891 to 1950 there were a total of 35 separate places of worship that were either already in existence as of 1891 or constructed up to 1950 (see Map 2). These 35 structures were generally clustered in the western half of the Walnut Hills area, though there were several significant structures located in the East Walnut Hills neighborhood as well, including the St. Francis De Sales Roman Catholic Church. Many of the African American congregations were located in the northern half of the study area, which is in keeping with the historical development of the area in which the wealthier white population settled in the southern half and the African American population settled in the northern half. Many of the historic places of worship were built along a few major roads, including McMillan Street, Gilbert Avenue, and Madison Road, all of which are major east-west or north-south thoroughfares within and through Walnut Hills and the Cincinnati region. The remainder of the structures were dispersed throughout the smaller residential sections of the area.
Of those 35 individual places of worship, 16 (45.7%) were present as of 1891, 17 (48.6%) were built between 1891 and 1930, and only 2 (5.7%) were built between 1930 and 1950 (see Map 3). This is a clear reflection of the growth of the Walnut Hills area prior to World War II and the subsequent shift towards the suburbs. As was discussed above, Walnut Hills was in its prime during the period between the mid 1800’s and the early 1900’s, becoming a significant economic and residential center in the region. Spatially, the distribution of the historic places of worship also follows a fairly standard development pattern. The structures in existence as of 1891 were generally more clustered toward the center of the western portion of the study area, mainly in the vicinity of the intersection of McMillan and Gilbert. This would make sense considering that this represents the center of the early growth in the area. Only three places of worship were located in the eastern half of the study area by 1891, reflecting the relatively late development of the area when compared to the western region. Again, the majority of the African American congregations were located in the northern portion of the area. The distribution of those places of worship that appeared between 1891 and 1930 is much more
widely disbursed. They began to fill in the residential areas surrounding the central intersection of McMillan and Gilbert as the population increased and commercial development grew. By 1950, only two new places of worship had been constructed, one in the far north of the study area and the second in the eastern portion. Again, this lack of activity in the period between 1930 and 1950 reflects the leveling off of the area’s growth and possibly even the beginnings of its decline.

The trends illustrated by the pattern of loss of the historic places of worship in Walnut Hills are no less telling of the area’s development. Of the 35 total places of worship that were on the landscape at one point over the periods covered, 13 were lost between 1891 and 2011. Six were lost between 1891 and 1930, one was lost between 1930 and 1950, and another six were lost between 1950 and 2011 (see Map 4). Among those lost from 1891 to 1930 were all of the original African American congregations in the northern portion of Walnut Hills. While this may seem to be an unequal rate of loss on the African American population in the north, it seems to actually be the result of those
congregations expanding and constructing new places of worship in the same region. In fact, the number of African American places of worship in that northern portion of the study area experienced a significant gain of four new churches in addition to the three that were replaced. The six that were lost between 1950 and 2011 seem to be the result of new developments in the post-war period. At least one of the two lost in the northern portion would appear to be the result of the construction of Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, a new major east-west roadway that cut across Cincinnati. The three that were lost along William Howard Taft Road, another major east-west artery through Cincinnati, were replaced with parking lots. The most famous of these lost historic places of worship is the former Walnut Hills Presbyterian Church, of which only the bell tower remains surrounded by a rundown parking lot. Losing a historic place of worship for the construction of a road is difficult enough, but losing several only to be replaced by what are essentially vacant lots is even more difficult to rationalize. Although a significant portion of the total 35 historic places of worship have been lost over the decades (13 buildings, or 37.1%), an even greater portion (22 buildings, or 62.9%) have thankfully been able to remain intact (see Map 5). However, it is important to keep ahead of the curve and proactively preserve and maintain those that still remain before they are faced with the risk of being abandoned or demolished.

Chapter 5: Resources for the Preservation of Historic Places of Worship

It has been shown that historic places of worship are valuable from multiple vantage points. They act as architectural treasures and provide a sense of place, identity, and heritage to communities. They also often house organizations that provide beneficial and even essential
social services. They are a reflection of society’s values and culture, both past and present. It has also been shown that these historic community treasures have been, and continue to be, strained and abandoned because of a number of factors. Demographic and social trends throughout the United States following World War II have drained the urban cores of many older cities. The middle class population has moved from the core into the surrounding suburbs. With them went the money and personnel that had sustained the older congregations and their buildings. Coupled with the movement of resources out of the cities, there have been dynamic changes in the religious atmosphere of the United States as well. Attendance and identification with the historic mainstream denominations has declined in many instances, and preference has moved toward newer faiths that put less stock in the physical manifestation of the religion in the form of houses of worship. New denominations tend to focus primarily on the congregation and its mission, not the building as a part of the faith. With this drain of resources and the high costs of maintenance and rehabilitation, many older places of worship are deteriorating, even while the congregation remains, or are left to crumble over time or be demolished as they are abandoned. What can be done to mitigate this threat and proactively prevent and combat it? Essentially, the issue facing most aging places of worship is one of lacking money and support. Increasing financial support and community awareness and involvement is essential to preserving them. The following chapter will seek to understand current strategies for the preservation of historic places of worship through an analysis of funding resources from government and private initiatives, awareness and advocacy initiatives, adaptive reuse options, and the issues associated with these strategies as well. The final chapter will then make basic recommendations for how these neighborhood treasures could be better accounted for and preserved in the City of Cincinnati, OH.
5.1 Programs and Resources for Active Historic Places of Worship

Access to and availability of funding for the preservation of historic places of worship is closely tied to the status of the building. If the building is for sale or has been abandoned as an active place of worship, the options are greater. However, if the building is still in active use by a congregation for religious purposes (to be referred to as “active” for the purposes of this study), then it is more complicated in the context of government funding and involvement. A church that receives funding from a private lender or benefactor has no constitutional limitations to contend with. However, if a church were to receive funding from a government entity, the constitutionality of such an act would be strictly questioned.

5.1.1 Constitutionality Issues

Government involvement in the preservation of historic places of worship has an established record, although it is a very volatile one which continues to evolve. The regulation of historically designated places of worship by local governments was argued by the U.S. Court of Appeals in the case of St. Bartholomew’s Church v. City of New York, 728 F. Supp. 958 (S.D.N.Y. 1989), aff’d, 914 F.2d 348 (2d Cir.1990). In this 1989-1990 case, the U.S. Court of Appeals rejected the argument that the New York City Landmark Preservation Commission’s refusal to allow the demolition of one of the churches buildings in order to build an office tower was a taking and a violation of the free exercise clause. This case was a major victory for use of preservation law over religious properties. The church, St. Bartholomew’s, was built in 1919 and was considered an architecturally and historically significant landmark of New York City. It was situated in the heart of Manhattan and, being surrounded by massive skyscrapers, it represented a
spiritual and architectural contrast to its surroundings. In 1967, New York City’s Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the church a city landmark based on its architectural and historical significance, without the approval of the rector and vestry. By the 1980’s, the church had given thought to replacing an adjacent community house with a tall office tower, feeling the revenue from the tower would support maintenance costs and funding for their community outreach programs. After several hearings, the Commission denied their plans and applications for a certificate of appropriateness to tear down the community house. According to the church, the denial represented a taking of the religious property and its transfer into the hands of a secular entity and that the Commission had gone back on an earlier promise that the church could make changes after the designation. The Commission responded that the agreement had allowed alterations to the property, but that the placement of a skyscraper on the property was inappropriate and violates the intentions of the Landmark Law which gave them their authority. The church also argued that the denial significantly harmed their ability to perform as a religious institution (Tyler 2000). The courts ultimately rejected the church’s arguments, saying the church could still perform its religious duty using its substantial funds and the potential of selling its air rights, meaning that it could sell its right to develop the air over the property to another entity, and that the Landmark Law was founded in a legitimate government interest. As a result, historic ordinances and their regulations could be applied to religious properties as well. Although this is not an example of government funding for religious properties, it does set the foundation for government backed historic preservation involving places of worship.

Generally speaking, the constitutionality of government involvement in religious properties, whether through regulation or funding, comes down to issues regarding the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment of the U.S.
Constitution. They state that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof…” These clauses establish the separation of church and state and a level of government neutrality towards religion in the U.S. The government cannot favor any one religion over another, cannot establish an official state religion, and cannot substantially burden the free exercise of any religion unless it can establish that the burden reflects the least restrictive means of furthering a compelling governmental interest (Miller 2004). On the other hand, religious institutions may not be politically involved and are not often eligible for certain government services, such as public funding and aid, on the basis of their religious mission. This religious neutrality is among the most important restrictions of government in citizen rights. Although the government should, and does, try to stay out of religious issues as much as possible, it is inevitable that the law and religion will intersect in order to protect the rights and wellbeing of one side or the other. The Supreme Court decision from *Employment Division v. Smith*, 494 U.S. 872 (1990) represents a major control on the way free exercise issues are handled (Miller 2004). The Court reaffirmed that the government shall not substantially burden the free exercise of religion without the use of the least restrictive means to further compelling governmental interests. It also stated that “neutral laws of general applicability” do not need to be justified with compelling state interest. Four important questions were raised in this case which influence free exercise consideration: What is the religious basis for asserting free exercise violations? Is the law a neutral law of general applicability? Does the law substantially burden the free exercise of religion? Does the law or action further a compelling governmental interest and is it the least restrictive means of doing so?

Any institution or individual seeking protection under the Free Exercise Clause must prove that their action is grounded in religious belief (Miller 2004). If the owner of a religious
property wishes to be exempted from a law regarding their property or practice then they must have a legitimate religious reason. Say, for example, in a historic preservation context, that a church property owner wishes to cover their brick church with vinyl siding. This change would not further the free exercise of their religious beliefs and requires no more protection than a similar change to a secular property. Also, maximizing the value of the real estate of the religious property has not been found to be an exercise of religion. Religious uses are not primarily focused on making a financial profit as is the case regarding a commercial use. Of course, determining whether a proposed change to a historic religious building is grounded in religious belief is not always clear cut. Subjectivity often comes into play. If the property owner can establish sincere religious belief justification regarding the change or exemption, then the government must accept that justification even if it seems that it is illogical or incomprehensible.

In order for the government to go forward with enforcing the contested law, it must be proven that the law is essentially neutral (Miller 2004). The law must not specifically hinder the free exercise of the religion, nor can it give that religion special treatment over others. If the law is considered a neutral law of general applicability then it does not specifically seek out any one individual or group. Historic preservation laws are usually found to be neutral laws of general applicability, making historic preservation law facially (or generally) valid. Their purpose is not to suppress the practice of any religion, but rather to preserve historic properties regardless of their being secular or religious. The next issue to be analyzed, if a law is not found to be neutral, is whether it places a substantial burden on the religion. Similarly to the discussion of the neutrality and general applicability of a law, the burden of historic preservation laws on religious structures tend not to be found “substantial.” The laws are no more burdensome to a religious structure than they are to a secular structure, again making them facially valid (Mandelker,
Preservation of historic properties and character, even for purely aesthetic reasons, is often recognized as a legitimate governmental interest, therefore making it facially valid. Because the preservation of a historic religious structure is facially valid, and because most preservation laws are not specifically meant for religious structures, the level of burden, and whether that burden represents a taking, on a religious property owner will depend on the particular case. If a preservation law is to be determined a taking, it will most likely have to be argued not from a facial standpoint but rather from an individual case by case instance. However, unless the law can be shown to significantly hinder the practice of the religion, it will not likely be found to be a substantial burden.

The final issue to analyze, if a law is found to be non-neutral and a substantial burden on the free exercise of religion, is whether or not the law represents a compelling governmental interest. If there is no compelling state interest, then the law will very likely represent a taking and require just compensation or be nullified. In the broader land use and zoning law environment, a compelling governmental interest is usually justified by the police power of the government. Under the concept of the police power, the government has the authority to protect the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of its citizens (Miller 2004). If the legislation does not have a rational basis in this power then it is not likely to be upheld. As mentioned above, historic preservation is generally recognized as a compelling governmental interest based on improving welfare. It has been established that preservation of historic character has a rational basis in furthering and protecting the general welfare of a community. It can help stabilize an area, encourage economic development and investment, preserve social heritage and identity, and establish a certain desirable aesthetic in a community. If a historic
place of worship is designated as historic, then there is a basis for subjecting it to the rules and regulations that may apply under the designation.

Understanding the basic principles behind the relationship between religious institutions and government in the United States is essential to understanding the limitations on government funding for the preservation of historic places of worship. Because of the constant balancing act regarding the separation of church and state and maintaining a position of neutrality, it is often difficult to rationalize the use of public funds to preserve a historic place of worship with an active congregation. Added to this balancing act is the fact that many, if not most, active historic places of worship are tax exempt. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) provides tax exempt status to 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit organizations. If a religious institution meets the requirements of the IRS for a charitable organization then they are automatically considered tax exempt (IRS Publication 1828). Generally speaking, the requirements include that the organization be operated exclusively for “religious, educational, scientific, or other charitable purposes,” that it does not make a substantial profit for the benefit of a private individual or shareholder, and that it may not intervene in political campaigns. Although not every religious institution actually operates substantial charitable activities, they are usually considered tax exempt. Certain activities are subject to taxation, but overall the religious institutions in the United States are receiving a significant subsidy by being tax exempt. Although beyond the scope of this research, this tax exempt status is the subject of debate regarding its constitutionality. The tax exemption essentially requires the rest of the tax payers to compensate for the lack of taxes collected from religious institutions, which benefit from the secular taxes that pay for public services and goods that they use.
5.1.2 Public Programs and Funding for Active Places of Worship

Because the separation and neutrality between church and state is so fundamental in American society and because religious institutions are not paying taxes into the government system, they are essentially not eligible for public funding or tax incentives. The constitutionality issues discussed above have allowed virtually all religious institutions tax exemption, and therefore exemption from using possible historic tax credits. Unless religious institutions are required to pay taxes, they will not be eligible for the benefits of tax credits. Historic designation can help to rationalize limited public funding in the form of preservation grants, but even in that context it is still difficult to come by and is primarily available at the federal level. Some states allow more leniency than others concerning allowing public funding for historic places of worship. There seems to be no true example of local government funding for the preservation of historic places of worship. However, the few federal historic preservation programs which allow for some public funding for historic places of worship through grants may provide a model for how to allow for government funding for the preservation of active places of worship. In 2004, President George W. Bush signed the California Missions Preservation Act into law. This act authorized federal grants for preserving California’s historic Catholic Spanish Missions throughout the state (Mahaney 2006). Although the Missions Act was highly controversial, it is one of the few examples of federal funding being made available specifically for the preservation of historic places of worship. Also during the presidency of George W. Bush was the first federal grant to preserve a historic place of worship through the Save America’s Treasures program. This preservation grant program was operated by the National Park Service in an effort to provide funding for the preservation of nationally significant historic sites and resources in the U.S. In 2003, a grant was awarded to aid the preservation of Boston’s Old North Church. Again,
this resulted in much controversy regarding the constitutionality of this type of government interaction, but it is another example of public funding of the preservation of historic places of worship (Sproule 2004).

5.1.2.1 The California Missions Preservation Act

The California Missions Preservation Act authorized the Secretary of the Interior to make grants to the California Missions Foundation for the purpose of restoration and repair of historic missions in California, and for the restoration and repair of artwork and artifacts associated with the missions. The Foundation would receive these grants with a dollar for dollar matching amount that they provided. There were several key requirements and checks and balances that were built into this law. First of all, the California Missions Foundation is a private, secular, and charitable (501(c)(3) tax exempt) corporation. The Foundation received the money as a secular organization which then did the preservation work, instead of the Catholic Church receiving the money directly. Secondly, the requirements for a mission to be eligible were fairly strict. The eligible missions had to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This ensures that they are recognized by the federal government as historically and/or architecturally significant. To be eligible, the Foundation was required to submit an application and allow for annual reporting and review of the preservation work being done, as well as of the financial state of the project. The application submitted to the Secretary of the Interior was sent for review and approval by the Attorney General of the United States to ensure that the project would not violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. In this way the Foundation was held accountable and transparent to the federal government and therefore the citizens. The project also needed to be consistent with section 101 (e)(4) of the National Historic Preservation Act
(California Missions Act 2004). This section of the Preservation Act requires that the purpose of any federal preservation grant to an active religious property followed three key criteria: 1) it must pursue a purpose that is secular in nature 2) does not promote religion 3) seeks to protect qualities that are historically significant (National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 470a(e)(4)). The grants were authorized under a $10,000,000 appropriation for the years 2004 to 2009.

The constitutionality of the Missions Act was challenged soon after it was passed, but analysis of this issue determined that if the challenge were followed through it would not be upheld for a number of reasons. An analysis of the constitutionality of the California Missions Act was carried out in a 2006 article in the American University Law Review by Stacey L. Mahaney. According to Mahaney, a challenge to the Missions Act would focus on several key issues. First it would need to be determined if the Missions Act is based on a non-secular purpose. Given that the sole purpose of the funding authorization granted by the Act was for historic preservation of the missions, it is clear that it had a secular purpose. Historic preservation programs have been recognized as secular in nature. The funding went to help preserve a building based on its historic character, not what its purpose was at the time of the preservation effort. The California missions were determined to be significant because they were irreplaceable historic and educational resources that happened to be religious buildings, not because they were religious buildings. The preservation of these buildings would have been a priority regardless of whether or not they were still actively used religiously. The historic character, educational value, and tourism (i.e. economic development) gained from preserving the missions were determined to be secular and legitimate reasons for government funding, in this specific case and in the case of most preservation programs. The secular purpose had been
further ensured by requiring that the funds go to a secular, charitable historic preservation organization. This helped to avoid excessive governmental entanglement with the Catholic Church and ensured that the funded organization had a secular mission, in this case, historic preservation. (Mahaney 2006)

The second issue to be determined would be whether or not the Missions Act has the effect of advancing religion. Again, the requirement that the funding and work be done through the California Missions Foundation minimized government entanglement with the Catholic Church and ensured that the purpose and activities would be secular in nature. The requirements of the Preservation Act, mentioned above, provide that any use of federal money for the preservation of actively religious properties is for the preservation of historic significance, not for religious significance or the advancement of religion. The goal of the funding was to aid in repairing and preserving architectural and historic elements, not to enhance the comfort of any religious practice. The Missions Act also required that the missions be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This designation requires that any use of federal preservation money for restoration or repair work on the building must be to established and neutral standards laid down by the Secretary of the Interior. (Mahaney 2006)

The third issue is whether or not the Missions Act defines eligible recipients on the basis of religion. The Act clearly defined the missions to be included based on their location, date of construction, and landmark status (California Missions Act 2004). Nowhere in the Act was there any mention of religion as a criterion for eligibility. Furthermore, two of the 21 missions were not even owned by the Catholic Church but rather by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. This reflects the fact that the Missions Act made no distinction between missions owned by the State of California and those owned by the Catholic Church. Both were equally
eligible for the grant funding. Federal preservation funding for specific types of buildings as well as for a specific organization has precedent in other programs. Funding for buildings based on their historic use, period, and specific architectural features or style is not new. Similarly, the National Trust for Historic Preservation is a private nonprofit corporation that has been specifically funded by Congress. Therefore, the Missions Act is not unable to specify funding for historic missions through one specific preservation organization such as the Missions Foundation. (Mahaney 2006)

The fourth and final issue that would need to be dealt with is whether or not the Missions Act leads to excessive entanglement of government and religion. This again builds on the focus and purpose of the funding. The aid directly benefited the secular California Missions Foundation, not the Catholic Church, and it indirectly benefited California residents, visitors to the missions for tourism purposes, and students using the missions for historic and educational purposes. All of these beneficiaries were secular in nature. Again, the purpose of the funding was for historic preservation purposes which were secular, not for enhancing the worship experience in any way. And, just as was mentioned in analyzing the other constitutionality criteria, the standards and criteria for eligibility had no regard for the purpose of the building being preserved. The focus was on the secular historic aspects, not the current use for any religious purposes. (Mahaney 2006)

5.1.2.2 The Save America’s Treasures Program

The Save America’s Treasures program was originally established in an executive order by President Bill Clinton in 1998. The purpose was to encourage a national effort to protect American cultural treasures that were under threat or endangerment (Sproule 2004). Save
America’s Treasures provides grants for the preservation of nationally significant historic and cultural resources. This includes historic structures, collections, works of art, maps, and journals which document the history and culture of the U.S. The grants are open to government entities at the federal, state, and local levels, tax exempt nonprofits, Indian Tribes, and historic properties and collections associated with active religious organizations. In order to be eligible for a Save America’s Treasures grant, a site or resource must be nationally significant. In the case of religious buildings, they must be listed on the National Register as a National Historic Landmark. Just as with the California Missions Act grants, the Save America’s Treasures grants require a dollar-for-dollar match from non-federal sources (National Park Service 2010). Although religious organizations have been eligible since the program’s beginning, no grants to active religious institutions were made until 2003, under President Bush, as noted above. This seems to be due to the reluctance of the government to get involved in the controversial issue of providing public funding for the preservation of historic active religious buildings (Sproule 2004).

An analysis of the constitutionality of the Save America’s Treasures program was also conducted soon after the first grant was made to an active religious property in 2003. This analysis was undertaken by Christen Sproule in a 2005 article in The Georgetown Journal of Law and Public Policy. The arguments in this analysis are similar to those concerning the California Missions Preservation Act discussed above. Essentially, the issues come down to two main questions: 1) is the purpose of the government funding secular in nature and 2) does the aid have the effect of advancing or inhibiting religion? Just as with the Missions Act, the purpose of the Save America’s Treasures program is for the historic preservation of significant American cultural and heritage resources. The rationale of historic preservation as a secular and legitimate
government action has already been discussed, but it is important to reiterate that the purpose of such a program is to preserve historic character regardless of the religious nature of the site. This is reflected by the fact that religious buildings are only one of a wide range of eligible recipients of the funding. They must compete for the same funding along with nationally significant commercial, government, and residential buildings on equal terms. (Spoule 2005)

The answer to the second question regarding the effect of the Save America’s Treasures program on religion is again based on similar issues as those covered in the discussion of the Missions Act. The Save America’s Treasures program does not have the effect or aim of advancing religion. The criteria for eligibility do not take religion into account and are, therefore, secular and neutral. These criteria include that the prospective projects must be nationally significant (i.e. eligible or listed as a National Historic Landmark), as mentioned previously, that they be threatened or endangered, that the proposed solution or plan must substantially mitigate the threat and have a clear public benefit, and finally that the plan for the project be feasible and have adequate documentation of the required non-federal grant match. None of these criteria is based on religious status, nor are any of the implied criteria for being designated as nationally significant, such as the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. All are focused on the historic or cultural significance or feasibility of the project, regardless of what the building’s current purpose or use is. The grants are also limited to funding of secular architectural features and work as required by the National Historic Preservation Act and the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. In order to ensure that there is some level of public benefit, the grants require the encumbrance of a fifty year covenant to keep the funded site open to the public at least twelve days a year and maintain the site according to the Secretary
of the Interior’s standards for that period. These criteria and requirements ensure that the project is in line with the secular goals of historic preservation. (Sproule 2005)

5.1.3 Private Programs and Funding for Active Places of Worship

Although funding for the preservation of historic places of worship is technically available from public sources, the preceding discussion has shown that it is extremely limited and rife with legal complexities and restrictions. Financing from private sources, whether from for-profit or nonprofit organizations, is potentially much less restricted and more readily available. The funding can be as restrictive as the providing entity wishes, but there are no constitutional issues that prevent a private organization from providing funding or support specifically to religiously active historic places of worship. Funding and support from private sources come in a few general forms: grants, loans, technical assistance and training, and informational publications and resources. There are numerous financial lending institutions that specialize or focus on providing financial assistance to religious institutions. Private grants for active historic places of worship are generally provided by nonprofit preservation organizations or private trusts and foundations. Some preservation organizations also provide low-interest loans as well.

5.1.3.1 Private Financial Lending Corporations

Financial lending institutions for religious institutions are similar to lending institutions for any other purpose, such as capital investment or home mortgages, except that they specialize in providing financial services for active religious organizations. Some focus on particular religions while others take a broader approach and provide financing for many denominations.
Although they do not seem to focus on historic places of worship specifically, there is no reason
why the financing and expertise they provide could not be used for historic preservation
purposes. In order to understand the potential role of these institutions, it is only necessary to
look at a few examples. Because the principles behind the services and resources they offer are
no different from other lending institutions apart from their focus on religious institutions, the
analysis will be fairly basic.

One such institution that provides financial services to religious institutions is The
Genesis Group, Inc. The Genesis Group describe themselves as “a full service organization
which specializes in church financing and securing loans for other nonprofit organizations”
(Genesis Group 2011). They provide church loans, church refinancing services, church
mortgages, and church construction loans. They offer long term loans with low fixed interest
rates and secure loans for new construction, major renovation, and purchasing land or new
facilities. A second example is Ziegler, a specialty investment bank that lends to several specific
sectors, including healthcare, senior living, education, and religion. Similar to The Genesis
Group, Ziegler has a program designed specifically for religious organizations. They provide
mortgages and loans for renovation, expansion, new construction, and land acquisition. They
also provide refinancing options, tax-exempt financing, and investment in church bonds. They
have experience with financing projects ranging from the mega-churches springing up around the
United States to small churches in the countryside (Ziegler 2011). In the case of active
congregations seeking funds in order to renovate or repair a historic place of worship, the
availability of low interest loans from a lender who specializes in religious financing could be an
essential resource.
What is important to note about private religious institution lending corporations is that there are professional financing sources backed by economic and financial expertise which are available to active religious institutions. However, as with any use of lending institutions, utilizing funding from such sources should be done with an understanding of the size and necessity of the project and should generally be saved for larger renovation or repair projects, or by congregations that have the financial know how and ability to pay back the loans and provide the collateral. Private lenders are a great source of potential funding for preservation efforts concerning active places of worship. Again, these private lenders come in many sizes and with varying scopes. The two examples mentioned in this analysis provide financing across the U.S. and to multiple denominations, but there are many which have more specific focuses (Church Lenders Directory 2011).

**5.1.3.2 Organizations with Programs for Active Places of Worship**

It should come as no surprise that nonprofit historic preservation organizations would recognize the unique significance of historic places of worship. As has been discussed at length, historic places of worship are significant as historic and architectural landmarks and as active community members and social service providers. These are aspects that many nonprofit, and even some for-profit, organizations find worthy of their support. Many have established specific programs designated for advocating and providing resources for the preservation of these historic and architectural treasures. These programs may provide a range of services and resources, ranging from simple advocacy campaigns to successful grant and loan systems. A key element of these programs is that they are focused not on abandoned places of worship but rather on the preservation of actively used buildings. Several programs will be analyzed in order to illustrate
the scope of services that can be offered by private nonprofit agencies and foundations to active historic places of worship. These include the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Partners for Sacred Places, The New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation advocates and provides support for all aspects of historic preservation, religious properties included. The National Trust offers limited grant and loan support directly and through subsidiaries, but its primary role is as an advocate and source of information and expertise. Though active places of worship are eligible for any funding aid from the National Trust, there is no specific funding for religious properties alone. This is the scope of its religious properties focus. It provides several informational packets and has produced several publications in its Information Series that focus on preserving historic religious properties. One of the main points stressed in the Information Series publications is that when dealing with active congregations in historic places of worship it is important to be sensitive to the sacredness of the building. It is an actively used place of worship and what is valuable to a preservationist may not be valuable to a congregation whose mission is one of ministry and service, not necessarily the upkeep of a building (National Trust Information Series 1990). The National Trust emphasizes helping congregations recognize the importance of their buildings and to help them plan and take action to maintain their facilities. Within the publications are strategies and basic information regarding preservation issues, funding and community resources, and examples of successful preservation/community/congregation partnerships and fundraising and preservation projects (National Trust Information Series 1990; 1996). Among the other resources provided by the National Trust are case studies of adaptive reuse, informational toolkits and guides for active congregations attempting to raise funds and
plan preservation projects, and information about the legality issues regarding historic preservation and religious properties. (National Trust 2011)

A close partner of the National Trust is the aforementioned nonprofit organization, Partners for Sacred Places. They are a preservation organization specifically focused on providing information and expertise to active congregations who wish to preserve their historic buildings. Partners for Sacred Places has provided technical assistance, consultation, conducted studies to determine the relationships between historic places of worship and communities, and established programs to help congregations gain momentum in their fundraising and preservation efforts (Partners 2011). The essential mission of Partners is to provide information and support to congregations so that they may be able to be better stewards of their historic buildings and contributing members of the communities in which they interact. They have developed a revolutionary training program for community serving congregations with older and historic places of worship. This program, called New Dollars/New Partners for Your Sacred Place, is focused on training congregations to successfully plan and implement a capital campaign to fund repair and rehabilitation efforts while increasing their partnership with the larger community.

The structure of the training program is fairly basic. Partners organizes and provides four training sessions or modules, each a full day long, through sponsoring agencies within each participating locality. Each module focuses on a different step or aspect of a successful capital campaign (Partners 2011). The first module centers on making the case for a congregation’s place of worship. Essentially it trains congregations how to show that their presence and the presence of their buildings are important for the community based on their heritage, social services, and the significance of the building itself. This module also helps congregations develop leadership and involve the congregation members in the planning and fundraising
efforts. The second module focuses on building and strengthening community partnerships. Congregations learn how to assess community needs, strengths and assets, and how to construct meaningful and productive partnerships with community members and organizations. The goal of these partnerships is to increase financial and volunteer support and to strengthen the symbiotic relationship between the congregation and its community. The third module provides congregations with training and understanding on actually building and running the foundation for a capital campaign. Congregations learn how to determine whether or not they are ready to conduct a capital campaign, how that campaign should be structured for their specific needs, the fundamentals of a campaign, and the potential for using professional fundraisers to help them. The fourth module focuses on conducting a capital campaign based on the cultural significance of the building, the community outreach efforts of the congregation, and the services provided. It also provides training on how to research and cultivate potential foundations, individuals, and corporations that may be funding sources; how to produce strong grant applications; and how partnering with other congregations can be an asset.

This training program has had success in helping congregations improve their understanding of how to make the best use of their places of worship, improve their leadership and motivation, increase their community relationships, and construct and initiate capital campaigns. Some of the main challenges facing congregations housed in older and historic places of worship is the lack of understanding and capacity to recognize issues that are arising, to prevent or deal with those issues, and to generate the resources necessary to provide a solution (National Trust Information Series 1990). Although neither the National Trust nor Partners for Sacred Places provides much, if any, direct financial aid, they provide something equally as important in the form of education and information. Without an understanding of the problems
and solutions available, many congregations with historic places of worship to maintain would use the available resources inefficiently or waste them altogether.

Some local and regional preservation organizations offer substantial funding, along with informational and advocacy support, to congregations with historic places of worship. The New York Landmarks Conservancy operates one of the largest and most successful of such programs in the United States. The Conservancy is a statewide nonprofit preservation organization operating in New York State. Their Sacred Sites program has provided loans, grants, and technical assistance throughout New York. It has provided aid to more than 660 religious institutions, with a total of $6.7 million in assistance to leverage a total of $497 million in preservation projects since its beginning in 1986 (NY Landmarks Conservancy 2011). A large portion of its aid and services are provided to congregations in New York City, but its impact has been felt across the state. The financial aid provided by the Conservancy to congregations takes the form of four matching grant programs. It also provides two loan funds for general preservation of historic places, including historic religious properties. Two of the grants are specified for use on large scale repair and restoration projects. These are to be used for hard costs, such as roof or masonry wall repair, and not for so called soft costs or smaller projects, such as consulting fees or interior decorative features. These grants include the Robert W. Wilson Sacred Sites Challenge and the Historic Synagogue Fund Grant, both of which are available statewide. The remaining two grants are for use on smaller scale projects and soft costs. These grants are the Sacred Sites Grant and the Consulting Grant. All four grants are matching grants, requiring a dollar for dollar match from the congregation (NY Landmarks Conservancy 2011).
The Wilson Sacred Sites Challenge grant and the Historic Synagogue grant both give priority to larger scale comprehensive projects that deal with major structural or architectural repair and restoration work. This would include repair to the roof or drainage systems which would mitigate or prevent highly destructive water damage, a major cause of costly and serious deterioration in many historic places of worship (National Trust Information Series 1990). Both of these larger scale grants require the congregation to raise matching funds within one year of being awarded the funds, and that the funding be used for new projects, not for completed or continuing projects. The amount of the Wilson grant ranges from $25,000 to $100,000, and the Historic Synagogue grant ranges from $25,000 to $50,000. The two remaining grants are for smaller scale costs and can include soft costs, such as fees and documentation. The Sacred Sites Grant provides up to $10,000 in matching grant aid for exterior restoration work. Again, priority is given to projects for roof or wall repair work, but smaller projects and professional service fees and documentation are also eligible for Sacred Sites aid. The Consulting Grant is specifically for professional fees, assessments, plans, studies, management services, and other soft costs associated with planning the restoration or repair work. This grant also has geographic limitations, as it is only applicable to projects within New York City and not statewide. Although the larger scale grants cannot be used for soft costs and smaller scale projects, they can be used in conjunction with the Sacred Sites and Consulting grants to create a more comprehensive funding source. None of the grants are for interior work or mechanical upgrades, and all of the projects must be new. (NY Landmarks Conservancy 2011)

As was mentioned earlier, the Conservancy also provides two low-interest loan funds. These loans are not specifically for religious buildings, but historic religious properties are included in the eligible property types. As with the grants, the loan monies are for exterior and
structural repair and restoration work. They are also only available within New York City. The larger of the two loan funds is the Historic Property Fund. This provides loans ranging from $20,000 to $300,000 at below market interest rates for terms of five to ten years. Applicants must show financial ability to make payments. The smaller loan fund is the Queens Historic Property Fund. This has all of the same requirements and limitations as the Historic Property Fund, but it is confined to properties within the Queens borough in New York City, and the loans range from $10,000 to $50,000. All of the grants and loans provided by the Conservancy generally require that the property be nationally or locally designated as historic, or at least eligible for listing, which in turn means that any work performed must meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The New York Landmarks Conservancy also provides general preservation related technical assistance, survey services, advocacy efforts, information, and maps, and it will administer façade easements. (NY Landmarks Conservancy 2011)

A second example of a local preservation program specifically for historic places of worship is the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation’s Historic Religious Properties Program. Like the New York Landmarks Conservancy’s larger program, the Pittsburgh program provides grants and technical assistance to active historic places of worship in the Pittsburgh/Allegheny County area in Pennsylvania. A limited number of matching grants and technical assistance consultations are awarded through a competitive application process. The grants have a maximum amount of up to $10,000 and are for restoration work on architecturally significant historic religious properties and congregations that provide social services to the surrounding community. The money is specified for use on preservation of the basic structure of the building, such as parts of the building that provide support and prevent leakage (support columns, walls, roofs, and windows, among others). The technical assistance consultations help
the congregation assess the condition of the property and then develop maintenance and restoration plans, conduct architectural and engineering studies or energy audits, and give advice for working with an architect or contractor. Again, the property must be designated as historic or eligible for designation. (Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation 2009)

5.2 Programs and Resources for Inactive Historic Places of Worship

When a congregation decides, or is forced, to sell their place of worship and, therefore, leave the building to potentially no longer be used for religious purposes (hereafter described as “inactive”), then the future of that building can go only in a few directions. One possibility is that the building will be left vacant and unused. If this becomes the case it is probable that it will experience significant deterioration and ultimately destruction by condemnation and demolition. A second possibility is that the property will be purchased by a new owner and that the building will be demolished in order to make room for new development of some sort. However, new development does not always occur and the property then risks becoming a vacant lot. A third possibility is that the property will be purchased and that the building will either be preserved as is for reuse as an active place of worship by a new congregation, or that it will be adaptively reused for something other than a place of worship. It is this third possibility, with emphasis on adaptive reuse for inactive places of worship, and the tools available to facilitate and encourage it, that is the concern of this section of the study. Whether the building is reused for a religious purpose or reused for a new secular purpose, it is beneficial because both possibilities maintain an architectural treasure and ensure that the building will continue to be utilized, ideally in a way that is productive to the larger community. Among the programs and incentives available for the preservation of historic places of worship through adaptive reuse are historic designation,
preservation grants, tax credits, and historic preservation easements. These resources can be a great source of funds and expertise to any party interested in preserving historic places of worship. However, many of them are also open to other types of historic buildings and not specifically for historic religious structures. The options facing an inactive historic place of worship are often greater than those facing active historic places of worship, especially in regard to government aid.

5.2.1 Adaptive Reuse

Adaptive reuse has already been touched on briefly in the literature review discussing the definition of historic preservation. Essentially, adaptive reuse, which is also called rehabilitation or adaptive use, is recycling an already existing building by using it for a purpose other than that for which it was originally built. Once the original function is obsolete, the building can be abandoned, demolished, or reused. Reuse can be done with minimal change to the building’s original form, or it can be done with drastic alteration, depending on the personal values of the new owner, the desired new use, and the state of the building prior to rehabilitation (Tyler 2000).

Although there are many reasons why a property owner or developer might be motivated to pursue adaptive reuse, a few general reasons might include enhanced public image for an organization or company by preserving a historic community landmark, possible economic savings from using existing space rather than creating new space with new construction, avoiding the need for costly and time consuming demolition, capitalizing on an established physical presence and sense of history and character, and the personal interests of a historically or architecturally minded owner or developer (Warner, Groff, & Warner 1978). As has been discussed, historic buildings, and particularly historic places of worship, are often perceived to
have an added value and to contribute to the physical and social character of a neighborhood. Even when a historic place of worship is no longer active, it is still a community landmark and monument to its heritage. Reusing such a building has the potential to imbue some of that added value and identity onto whatever entity relocates there, not to mention preserving the building for the continued enjoyment of the larger community. Adaptive reuse allows generation after generation to benefit from a continuity and increased stability of the physical surroundings, rather than continuously tearing down and rebuilding the neighborhood when such action is not necessary or beneficial (Cantacuzino 1975). Although there is need for new development and progression within a community, it must be balanced with preserving the heritage and physical stock which minimizes unnecessary waste of money, resources, time, and energy.

Determining viable reuse options for any historic building, especially historic places of worship, can be a complicated process which is influenced by countless factors, most of which are dependent on each particular circumstance. There are, however, some basic steps that all adaptive reuse projects should consider. The first is information gathering and analysis. It is essential that any potential developer understand what they have to work with and what limitations and opportunities might come into play. Having a solid foundation of information to work with is important for virtually any preservation and development project. Some general factors and characteristics to consider include physical aspects of the building such as its size, height, depth, and type of structure; architectural elements such as walls and detailing, windows, interior space, layout, and access points; the condition and capacity of technical elements such as heating and air conditioning systems, electrical systems, and plumbing; and safety and code compliance considerations. It is also essential to have an understanding of what may or may not have to be changed, what possible issues or opportunities might arise, and the overall stability.
and feasibility of the project. After taking stock of what is available and what might be required, it is then possible to identify what are non-viable options for reuse are and what options are possibly viable (Kincaid 2002). Again, there are many different variables that factor into what might constitute a viable use, and even the desired use will have an effect on what is needed, such as funding and expertise.

5.2.2 Historic Designation

Historic designation is the key to receiving much of the public funding available to historically and architecturally significant properties across the U.S. Indeed, as was seen in the previous discussion of private grants for active historic places of worship in section 5.1.3.2, many private organizations require historic designation or eligibility for designation as a criterion for access to their funds. This is how many government preservation controls are enforced, although the controls have different authority and scope at different levels of government. If government funds are used, then government requirements must be followed. As has been discussed in the literature review, most direct preservation control happens at the local municipal level. Although there are some checks and balances at the federal level in the form of the Section 106 review, the only real restrictions at this level occur when federal money is used for preservation efforts. This is generally true for the state level as well, though each state may offer differing levels of aid and controls. Local governments, however, have much more direct control over buildings that are designated as historic. Once a local government creates a historic zoning ordinance or specific provisions within their municipal code regarding historically designated buildings, they have the authority to require review of significant changes or repairs to those buildings (Tyler 2000). Although at the local level designation often carries restrictions, at any
Generally speaking, designation acts like any kind of marketing tool. Before a building or district is designated as historic, it is the same, theoretically, as all of the other buildings or neighborhoods in town. Of course, there are multiple factors that may influence the actual property values within an area, but in the context of the value of historic designation it can be assumed that before one building or area is designated the buildings within that area are the same as the buildings in another area of similar age and makeup. Once that distinction is made, however, the supply of historic properties becomes defined and limited. In essence, the creation of a boundary between historically designated and not designated creates a scarce resource of a certain type of property. Historic buildings and character reside on one side of the boundary, while everything else resides on the other. By creating a scarce resource, the demand for that resource will likely go up because of its scarcity as well as its actual and perceived uniqueness. It is something that is finite, and only a limited number of entities will be able to own it (Wolf 1981). Anyone interested in, or attune to, the value of the now limited and distinct property will find increased value and benefit to rationalize preserving it. The act of designation does not change the physical attributes of the property in itself. The key is that the designation creates an environment characterized by history, heritage, identity and uniqueness which is now guaranteed by law (Wolf 1981). Whether the interested party is an individual or firm who personally values the historic environment, or an individual or firm who is speculating on the potential for increased value of the historic environment, the effect is the same on the market. The environment created by the designation creates an added value for the building. Essentially, it is a form of brand recognition and advertising for a building. The designation of a property as
historic is an attempt to differentiate it from other buildings. It helps to call attention to the building and to make it more appealing.

This same principle applies to a historic place of worship, whether it is still active or has become inactive. Although there are limitations as to what benefits are available to active places of worship, discussed at length previously, they are still able to be designated and are still subject to the same regulations at the local level as any other secular designated building. The intangible benefits of designation can accrue to an active place of worship just as they can to an inactive place of worship. In fact, it might be argued that historic places of worship could benefit even more than many other buildings because they are already often highly distinguished and stand out architecturally even before any kind of designation or recognition. The designation can only add to the already high level of uniqueness and admiration that often makes historic places of worship landmarks within a neighborhood and community. For inactive places of worship, the designation adds to the increased landmark status and sense of place, as well as opening the door to government provided grants and tax credits.

**5.2.3 Preservation Grants**

Historic preservation grants can be provided from public and private sources, as illustrated in the discussion of resources available to active places of worship. If the historic place of worship is no longer active, then the options for public grant funding are wider, and although preservation grants often have certain requirements or restrictions, they are easier to attain. Essentially, a grant acts to increase or subsidize the budget of the party interested in developing the historic place of worship. The effectiveness of a preservation grant lies in its requirements and restrictions. Many preservation grants, whether provided by public or private
institutions, require that the property be historically designated, or eligible for designation, as was mentioned in the previous section. Although state and local governments may have their own designation programs, the industry standard for this requirement is for the property to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This type of requirement ensures that the potential funding is being used for a property that has been deemed significant and worthwhile according to standards defined by the public sector. A similar and closely related requirement is that any repair or rehabilitation work done using the preservation grant funds must be compliant with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Again, this requirement ensures that the preservation work being funded is done to historic and architectural standards that further the historic preservation agenda of the public sector. These two requirements are essential to ensuring that the buildings are being preserved and that the limited funds available are being used for acceptable preservation activities. Other requirements may be added, such as geographic limitations, building type, historic periods, or specific levels of significance depending on the interest and intent of the grantor, whether public or private. These grants are available at multiple levels of government and from a wide range of national and local private institutions.

At the federal level, there are several funds provided by the National Park Service (National Park Service 2011). The primary general historic preservation fund is the Historic Preservation Fund which provides matching grants to State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO) in order to assist in expanding and accelerating their preservation activities. The SHPOs can use the funds to help leverage and subsidize their own fund sources to provide for expenses such as preservation staff salaries, historical and archaeological surveys, comprehensive preservation studies, preparing and processing National Register nominations, providing
educational materials, architectural plans, reports on historic structures, and engineering studies. These funds allow states to provide necessary services to governments and individuals throughout their jurisdiction. The Save America’s Treasures grant program is another federal funding source. This program provides resources to assist in preserving nationally significant properties and collections. It has already been established that active historic places of worship are eligible for this funding. Inactive historic places of worship would also likely be eligible if they were sufficiently significant and being used for a nonprofit or educational purpose. A third major federal preservation grant program is the Preserve America program. Preserve America provides matching grants to communities to assist in preservation efforts that utilize heritage tourism, education, and historic preservation planning. In order to be eligible for the grants, the community must be designated as a Preserve America Community. Although this grant program is not oriented towards construction type preservation work, tourism, educational programs, and planning efforts are important alternative and contributing elements of a wider historic preservation agenda.

State and local governments often have their own versions of direct grant funding for historic preservation. Many states, such as Virginia, have established preservation departments that provide grants that can be used for historic preservation projects. Virginia provides matching grants to local governments, nonprofit museums, historically oriented organizations, and historic sites that need extra funding (Virginia Dept of Historic Resources 2010). The funds can be used for operations, completing rehabilitation projects, or to maintain historic collections. However, other states provide only periodic funding depending on available resources, or no direct funding at all. Often states act as the middle man between federal funding and resources and local governments and individuals, dispensing the federal funds rather than actually providing their
own state funds. Grant funding from local municipalities is even less common. Even New York City’s Landmarks Commission does not have a city preservation grant program. All public grant funding for historic preservation is subject to changing revenue and political priorities and agendas, but state and local governments are substantially more transient. Historic preservation, although increasingly recognized as a worthy government interest, is still not always seen as being worthy of much direct government funding. This is especially true in times of significant budget shortages.

Private historic preservation grants are primarily provided by nonprofit organizations at the national, state, and local levels. Again, several examples of private preservation organization grants were discussed in section 5.1 regarding active historic places of worship. For an inactive historic place of worship, there are numerous general preservation grant programs. The National Trust for Historic Preservation provides small preservation grants and technical assistance to nonprofits and governments on a national level. The National Trust also has subsidiary financing corporations that provide loans and other financing for private preservation projects. State level preservation organizations can also be significant sources of preservation grant funds (National Trust 2011). The New York Landmarks Conservancy, discussed above, provides general preservation grants and financing (loans) for organizations and individuals. Local level preservation organizations may also provide their own grants (NY Landmarks Conservancy 2011). Just as with public sector grants, the availability of private grants for historic preservation depends on the size of the organization, the scope of their work and services, and the availability of resources. It is likely that smaller local or regional preservation organizations may not be able to provide as much financial aid as organizations in larger cities or at state and national levels which might have access to more resources and have a more direct aid orientation. Grant funding
availability beyond the national level, from both a public and private source, is something that must be determined for each locality.

5.2.4 Preservation Tax Credits and Easements

Among the most effective and available forms of public aid for historic preservation in the United States are historic preservation tax credits. Tax credits are similar to receiving a rebate for a product purchased at a store. When it comes time to pay taxes owed, a historic tax credit will reduce the amount owed by a certain amount, usually dollar for dollar. For example, if a state offers a historic tax credit of fifteen percent of the cost of the preservation project that cost $10,000, then the owner or developer will keep $1,500 that otherwise would have had to have been paid without the credit. Tax credits and grants both serve the same basic purpose by subsidizing, or lowering, the cost of undertaking a preservation project that would have been much more expensive, or possibly even impossible, without the subsidy. Again, this sort of aid helps to make historic preservation more appealing and feasible for the developer or owner. Historic preservation tax credits are offered by the federal government through the National Park Service and by many state governments, as well as by some local municipalities. The use of historic tax credits comes with requirements and regulations just as grants do. Again, the requirements are generally that the property being repaired or rehabilitated is designated as historic, usually listed on the National Register or a local register based on similar criteria, and that the work being undertaken is completed according to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards. An added requirement of many tax credits is that the resulting development will be income producing and not just a primary residence, although this requirement may differ
depending on the government body providing the credit. These basic requirements are modeled off of the federal historic preservation tax credit.

The federal government provides tax incentives in the form of the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit, also known as the Historic Tax Credit. This is a 20% tax credit applied to the amount spent on approved rehabilitation of historically certified historic structures being used for an income producing function. This includes buildings being used for residential rental units as well as retail or office space. In order to be eligible for the tax credit, the building must be certified historic according to the standards of the National Register of Historic Places or equivalent and approved standards at the state or local level, similar to the requirements of most preservation grants as mentioned above. The basic standards for a building to be designated historic include being at least fifty years old, architecturally or historically significant on its own, or a contributing element of a larger district that has been designated historic. The work being done to the building must also be significant enough to warrant use of the tax credit. Rehab projects must exceed $5,000 or the adjusted base of the building and its structural components, whichever turns out to be greater. The adjusted base is equivalent to the purchase price of the property minus the cost of the land, plus the improvements already made to the property minus depreciation already taken (National Park Service 2009). The tax credit acts to essentially lower the price of the rehabilitation by literally lowering the amount of taxes owed by 20% of the rehab costs. This can add up to a significant payback on a large development project.

According to the National Trust, 31 states now offer their own version of a historic tax credit, including Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana (Schwartz 2010). State tax credits are similar to the federal tax credit, requiring historic designation, Secretary of the Interior’s Standards compliance, and often an income producing development, although it should be noted again that
some states and local governments allow tax credits to be used for primary residences. An example of a local municipality providing a historic tax credit is the City of Baltimore, Maryland. Baltimore’s historic tax credit program, called the Property Tax Credit for Historic Restorations and Rehabilitations, grants a ten year tax credit for all interior and exterior renovations on buildings listed individually or as parts of historic districts at local and national levels. This credit is available to both homeowners and businesses, and it is fully transferrable to a new owner for the remainder of the ten years. This means that the tax credit becomes a long term added benefit and value of the property. This is an extremely comprehensive tax credit program, in contrast to the federal tax credit which is limited to a onetime project on income producing developments. The goal of the Baltimore historic tax credit is to “help preserve Baltimore’s neighborhoods by encouraging restoration and rehabilitation” (City of Baltimore 2010). This is generally what all tax credits seek to accomplish, to encourage preservation of and investment in historic buildings across the U.S., including inactive historic places of worship.

Another type of government historic preservation tool is the historic preservation easement. Preservation easements grant partial interest, or partial “ownership,” of a historic building or property to a qualified entity (National Trust 2011). Essentially, the owner of a historic building will voluntarily give up their rights over certain historic elements and characteristics of their property, both interior and exterior, to a separate entity, usually a nonprofit preservation organization or a governmental entity. A similar type of easement, a façade easement, focuses more specifically on the historic elements on the exterior of the building. Both can be used for preservation purposes. The easement is effective for a specified number of years, often for perpetuity, and applies to any change of ownership during that period. This means that even if the building is sold to a new individual or organization, the authority of
the preservation easement is maintained. Once the easement is established, the nonprofit or
government to which it was granted has control over any potential work or damage done to the
building.

According to the National Trust, preservation easements address five main issues
(National Trust 2011). The first deals with what physical features of the property are affected by
the easement. The second addresses what activities by the property owner that might damage or
destroy the buildings historic or architectural significance are prohibited. The third deals with
what activities are allowed but subject to approval by the easement-holding organization. The
fourth issue deals with what activities by the property owner are permitted as a matter of right.
The fifth and final issue covered is what maintenance obligations are required to be undertaken
by the property owner. Just as with the grants and tax credits, preservation easements require that
any work affecting the historic significance comply with the Secretary of the Interior’s
Standards. In return for this donation of property rights, a property owner who qualifies may be
eligible for a charitable contribution deduction from their federal, or possibly state, income taxes
for the value of the preservation easement. It must be emphasized that an easement results in a
property owner handing over a portion of their property rights voluntarily and becoming legally
responsible for maintenance to historic standards, and that the easement-holder is now legally
responsible to monitor and enforce the easement. For a property owner to voluntarily give up
their rights, they must feel that the potential tax write off is worth the sacrifice, or they must have
a personal interest in ensuring that the property is preserved in the long term, perhaps because of
their own investment in its preservation or because of some personal attachment. Easements are
available at the federal level, and many states also authorize easements as well. The exact terms
and qualifications may vary depending on the state, but overall they follow the same essential framework and orientations (National Trust 2011).

5.3 Summary

It is clear from the literature review and the analysis of available preservation resources for historic places of worship that the main issues facing these neighborhood treasures are a lack of resources (in terms of money, personnel, and expertise) and a lack of support and awareness. For both active and inactive historic places of worship, the struggles essentially come down to maintaining and rehabilitating a large, costly, and aging structure. Active places of worship are at a particular disadvantage as a result of not being eligible for much of the limited funding and other forms of aid that are available. Because of the fundamental separation and neutrality stances taken by the governments of the United States, active religious institutions are, for the most part, unable to utilize preservation grants and tax incentives that are designed to aid in maintaining and adapting historic buildings. This forces the congregations in many of the historic places of worship to come up with their own funding through capital campaigns and appeals to their members or sympathetic outside sources. A number of private preservation organizations have developed programs specifically for aiding active historic places of worship, such as the New York Landmarks Conservancy’s Sacred Sites program. Although the situation of many of these struggling congregations can be improved through private aid, increasing education on how to work with aging religious structures, and increasing public awareness, the risk to their historic buildings is still high as national trends continue to put stress on older places of worship.

Inactive historic places of worship have access to a much wider range of aid sources than do active. As long as requirements are met and regulations are followed, any private owner or
developer can have access to public grant and tax incentive programs, such as the Historic Tax Credit and national and state preservation grants. Inactive historic places of worship are able to use both public and private resources which can give them an edge in redevelopment projects. A key issue for both active and inactive historic places of worship is ensuring that the public is aware not only of the current state of the building but also of the ramifications of losing what is often a community landmark. The community should be seen as a potential asset rather than just as an outside entity that has no connection with the building.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusions

6.1 Recommendations for Preserving Historic Places of Worship

Based on the preceding analysis of programs and resources that are currently available, it is possible to provide some basic recommendations through which the City of Cincinnati might be able to further preserve and adaptively reuse its remaining historic places of worship. The key to effectively preserving them is to proactively seek support and resources before these community jewels reach a significant level of deterioration or are too far gone to be feasibly stabilized and preserved. Based on the analysis of available resources in the United States, there are three main categories in which the recommendations can be grouped. The first category is to make sufficient public funding available in order to help make the preservation of historic places of worship feasible. The second is to increase and encourage awareness and stewardship of historic places of worship. The third is to actively pursue viable adaptive reuse alternatives for historic places of worship that have been abandoned or are on the market. These recommendations are based on a broad overview of available programs and resources. They are not meant to be quick fixes for every historic place of worship and its owners. Instead they are
meant to act as a baseline from which preservation and reuse strategies may be built upon. Each historic place of worship is found in its own unique circumstances, with varying weaknesses and assets. There is also a need to understand the larger planning context of historic places of worship. Many of the reasons that cause these buildings to deteriorate and disappear are deeper than a lack of money. As was discussed, there are essential social trends that contribute to the stresses laid on historic places of worship and many of these buildings will not be saved unless the underlying social issues are changed. Indeed, some of these patterns may be irreversible.

As has been discussed above, government funding for historic places of worship can become an extremely complex process, particularly when the buildings are still actively used for religious purposes. Currently it is very difficult for an active place of worship to receive any public grant monies at all. Although it would be difficult to provide, it would be a great benefit to struggling congregations with historic places of worship to maintain if they could attain funds from the city. If Cincinnati were to provide government grants for the preservation of active places of worship, they would need to be open to both secular and religious properties in order to maintain government neutrality in religion. By providing the funds to both, using fair and secular criteria to establish eligibility, then the city could avoid showing favor or discrimination toward any religious institution. In addition, any such grant programs would need to be carefully regulated and accounted for. Limiting the types of expenses the funds could be used for to secular architectural and general historic preservation based work would help to maintain a non-religious rationale for the government aid. Tax incentives for the preservation of active historic places of worship are even more troublesome. The reality is that as long as religious institutions are tax exempt they will not be eligible for any kind of tax incentive, even if they are using it for a secular preservation project. Tax exempt institutions can sometimes utilize tax incentives by
basically selling the incentives to a private institution acting as an investor and partner; however, it is unlikely that this could be a viable strategy for religious organizations that may or may not have a significant charitable mission to justify their tax exempt status in the first place. As long as religious institutions are tax exempt, they are, and legally should be, ineligible for significant government aid. The main point to reiterate at this juncture is that any program providing public funding for active religious institutions will need to take significant measures to ensure that the funding is distributed through a fair and secularly based set of criteria and operations. Anything less than complete neutrality on the part of the government, in this case the City of Cincinnati, would result in the nullification of any rational governmental interest in the regulation and fair treatment of religion, which, as has been seen, is a central element of American society.

Providing government funding for inactive historic places of worship, on the other hand, is not only realistic and viable, but is already a reality in some instances. Once the property is no longer affiliated with a religious institution, it is considered on equal footing with any other privately owned property. Both grants and tax incentives can be provided, though they often come with key regulatory strings attached. These regulations and requirements are essential to ensuring that the public funds are used in a way that benefits the public good. All that is required to provide aid through a public grant or tax incentive program is available funds. The money could be provided from a specific budgetary fund, a special revenue fund from a specific fee or tax, or from general funds. In any case, as long as there are sufficient funds and sufficient political support for such programs, such a public source of aid would be a significant tool for preserving and recycling historic places of worship. Although such programs are legally and financially feasible in favorable conditions, many state and local governments, including Cincinnati, are usually not in a position to provide funding for such a specific issue. It is often
difficult enough for them to provide general preservation aid, let alone aid for historic places of worship in particular. This general lack of resources and support is further compounded given the current economic crisis facing the majority of cities across the United States as of 2011. Cincinnati is currently struggling to balance its budget and maintain many basic services. The chances of developing and funding a preservation grant program for historic places of worship in this climate are highly unlikely.

Apart from government funding programs for historic places of worship, it is necessary to increase and encourage awareness and stewardship of these important elements of the community. Although a resident of a neighborhood may walk or drive by a historic church or synagogue daily, it is likely that they would not be aware of its strife or of its significance unless they are personally involved or are made aware in some way. Increasing this awareness is a first step in building support from private individuals, institutions, and the community as a whole. There are several elements to successfully encourage awareness and stewardship that Cincinnati could benefit from in an effort to preserve its historic places of worship. A basic element is to provide a foundation of good information from which interested parties could build off. Understanding the state of the city’s historic places of worship is essential. Creating an inventory of current and past historic places of worship can provide a database from which development patterns and developing stressors can be cross referenced with the city’s historic churches and synagogues. This information could be mapped and quantified and then made available to the public so that potential stewards and developers could easily access and utilize it. Coupled with this would be a proactive marketing system to showcase historic places of worship as they become available on the real estate market.
Along with comprehensive surveying and marketing of Cincinnati’s stock of historic places of worship, there could, and should, be a toolkit made available that would discuss the value of historic places of worship in the community, the issues that these buildings face, and the available resources and strategies for their preservation and adaptive reuse. In essence it would be a toolkit modeled after this study and would be a valuable resource for a struggling congregation or an enterprising developer who would like to extend the useful life of such a building. Reaching out to potential investors, foundations, and community institutions that might be willing and able to act as stewards of the city’s historic places of worship is another way to ensure that these neighborhood treasures are preserved. Being aware of and in communication with such organizations and individuals is an effective way to build and strengthen support networks. It also contributes to a general knowledge and awareness of developing issues and available resources. By increasing community awareness of the issues, Cincinnati could help to shore up a wider support base. It is also essential to be aware of and encourage the development of any local, regional, and national private sector funding and support programs that might be available for preserving Cincinnati’s historic places of worship. A final element of a successful strategy of increasing awareness and stewardship might be the development of a heritage tour program that is themed after the historic places of worship in Cincinnati. Such a tour would help to draw local and possibly national attention to the historic and architectural significance of the areas historic churches and synagogues. Such a themed heritage tour has already been developed in a neighboring city of Cincinnati, Covington, KY which lies across the Ohio River. A series of heritage tours was developed, including one based on Covington’s historic places of worship, using funding from the National Park Service’s Preserve America program.
Because many historic places of worship in Cincinnati house struggling or declining congregations, or are already abandoned or no longer used for religious purposes, it is essential that effective adaptive reuse strategies, or ways to increase shared or more intensive use of the building while it is still active, are developed to allow the building’s useful life to be extended. In order to develop an effective adaptive reuse project using a historic place of worship, it is necessary to understand what state the building is in, what stabilization work, if any, needs to be undertaken, what the building could best be reused as, what repairs and alterations will be necessary, and what resources are available to make the project feasible. Ensuring that there are up to date records of the building and its condition is something that Cincinnati could do to provide relevant information to potential developers. Such records also could be tied into the overall inventory process discussed above. Making this information easily available to the public would contribute to the increase of awareness. In addition, building condition records would allow developers and owners to make a preliminary judgment on whether or not there is potential for their proposed use.

Understanding what the best uses are for the now secular places of worship is an issue that will depend on each building’s particular context and the amount of resources available. Former places of worship have been adapted for a wide variety of uses, ranging from residential developments, to community and performance centers, to office and commercial spaces. Because of their unique properties, historic places of worship offer a significant amount of potential to house creative and one-of-a-kind developments. However, their unique properties can also be a limitation to the kinds and feasibility of uses to which they can be adapted. They are built to be used as large gathering and performance spaces, and that is what they will always be best suited for. The problems faced by congregations who own historic places of worship, such as the large
volume of their interiors, the high ceilings and walls, the intricate decorative and architectural features, and the cost of heating, cooling, and general maintenance, do not disappear as soon as the deed is handed over to a private developer. These are realities that have to be taken into account and budgeted for if the resulting reuse project is to be a success. If certain funding sources are utilized in the project, there may be additional requirements and limitations that could also add to the cost. In general, some of the most successful and cost effective reuse options for historic places of worship are those that do not necessitate significant alteration of the space and that actually use the building’s unique features as an advantage. Such uses might be community gathering spaces, performance and entertainment venues, art galleries, event centers. Of course, the most logical use of a historic place of worship is as a place of worship for a new congregation.

Uses that require significant alteration, such as the addition of floors and interior walls or updated systems, are likely to be much more expensive and time consuming, though they can be, and certainly have been, done successfully. Deciding what kind of use to adapt a historic place of worship to will depend on the physical strengths and weaknesses of the building itself, the environment and market in which it is situated, and the resources available to the developer. An understanding of what uses will, and maybe even more importantly will not, work is something that will require a certain amount of experience and intuition, as well as good information. Additionally, it is important to make sure that any potential developer is aware of the resources that might be available to them, including both the public and private grants and tax incentives that where discussed above.

In essence, the City of Cincinnati, and in effect any interested community, organization, or individual, should be focused on providing clear and relevant information as well as increasing
awareness of their historic places of worship. As a result of building of awareness and information, a network of supporters could be formed from potential investors, partners, advocates and resources that could be used to help preserve and reuse the historic places of worship that are irreplaceable neighborhood assets. Whether or not Cincinnati is able to provide direct funding or other forms of direct aid, even the simple act of proactively recognizing and marketing its historic places of worship could be a great asset in an effort to maintain and save those that are struggling. By providing good information and increasing public awareness and support, it becomes easier to tackle the issues that face many historic places of worship as a community.

No matter how much money and marketing is pumped into preserving historic places of worship, the success of any preservation or adaptive reuse effort will only be as good as the neighborhood and local market will support. Many of the struggling congregations are located in neighborhoods that are facing declining population or populations that lack the financial resources and know how to maintain their buildings. This is no coincidence, as has been illustrated in the literature review. The decline of many historic places of worship is directly related to the decline of the social and economic structure of their surrounding communities. Although providing a source of funding to an active congregation to make necessary repairs or to help a developer reuse the building for a new venture will save the physical structure in the immediate, these actions will only be temporary fixes unless the fundamental issues that led to the deterioration in the first place are dealt with. Although it is desirable to try to preserve every historic place of worship, there is a certain reality that must be acknowledged, which is to say that not every church, temple, mosque, or synagogue that is in need and deserves to be preserved will be. Some neighborhoods cannot support the preservation effort in their current state. Some
markets will not support a new concert venue or housing development that reuses an old place of worship. The same rules and issues that stunt redevelopment in a community regarding any new or old building will apply to a historic place of worship. In fact, they may be even more compounded when dealing with a place of worship because of their limited flexibility. It is essential that any preservation effort regarding a historic place of worship take the whole community context into account. These are not just solitary buildings. They are part of a larger environment that may or may not be willing or able to support them.

Planners, preservationists, community members, developers, and property owners must look for ways to tie the preservation of historic places of worship into larger plans for the community as a whole. These landmarks are a part of the economic and social systems, not just the built form or the religious landscape. They can be great resources, but there are limits to what they can be used for in many situations. It is also possible that they could be contributing to recurring issues in a community. These are aspects that need to be considered and addressed. However, there is still a need to preserve these neighborhood treasures whenever possible and practical. They are irreplaceable and should be tied into any comprehensive planning effort as possibilities for community and economic development resources. Efforts should be made to attract new and existing populations into supporting and living in struggling communities, and historic places of worship have the potential to be driving forces, either as homes for new vibrant congregations or as blank canvases for adaptive reuse developments. Again, historic places of worship are not solitary structures with only one function. They are pieces of a larger mosaic and should be looked at in such a comprehensive fashion.
6.2 Conclusions

This thesis has looked at the issue of preserving historic places of worship from many different angles. It has illustrated that these buildings are more than just aging piles of brick, stone, and wood. They are architectural, historical, cultural, and social treasures. They help to define countless neighborhoods across the U.S., using their spires and bell towers to tower over much of the surrounding landscape and make their presence known. In this way they are contributors to the identity and character of a community. Even those who do not actively engage with the buildings are able to enjoy their art and presence as elements of the built environment. As historic artifacts they represent the spiritual and moral values of past and present populations. They act as signposts of the development of much of American culture and aspiration. They have been the setting for numerous turning points in the history of the United States. The social value alone of America’s historic places of worship is enough to argue for their preservation. In addition, the congregations that are housed in many historic places of worship, which are predominantly located in struggling urban neighborhoods, provide many essential social services. They often administer food pantries, support groups, homeless services, youth and elderly care programs, cultural diversity activities, artistic programs, and community festivals. These are just a sampling of the types of services that the congregations in historic places of worship provide to the wider community, not just to their members. It is essential that historic places of worship are considered in the larger context of the neighborhood and even the region. They are elements in the development of American society just as much as a large corporation or a single family.

Despite the many facets of value that historic places of worship can provide to a community, they continue to be threatened by several trends that have an effect at local, regional,
and national levels. Beginning in the post-World War II decades, American society was shifting from a dense urban culture to a sprawling suburban culture. Cheap oil, cheap home mortgages, an extensive new highway system, and the proliferation of automobiles and automobile oriented development contributed to the massive growth of suburban communities and shopping centers far outside the historic urban cores. As large populations of wealthy, white, middle class residents migrated out of the urban centers, influxes of lower income, usually minority populations voluntarily or, as a result of ill planned urban renewal projects that forcibly displaced them, involuntarily filled in the emptying neighborhoods. Despite these new populations, the drain of residents and resources left many cities, and the institutions based in them, in tough situations. The historic urban places of worship were not immune, and many were forced to follow their members to the suburbs or combine with other congregations. The result was the abandonment, neglect, and demolition of many beautiful places of worship which were replaced with a new development or, sadly, a parking lot. These shifts were clearly seen in the Walnut Hills case. Coupled with this demographic shift was a social shift. Americans have become increasingly secular, or at least less active, in their religious beliefs. Along with this distancing from religion in general is a movement toward new, nondenominational faiths that emphasize individual spirituality and de-emphasize the structure and traditions of the older religions, which are often closely tied to their places of worship. On top of all these shifts is the high cost of maintaining historic places of worship. In this sense, the uniqueness and beauty of the buildings can become a burden as the large size, antiquated features, and high level of craftsmanship can make it difficult to keep up with repairs and easily update for new or continued uses.
Although there are immense pressures and inevitable struggles facing many of the nation’s historic places of worship, there are programs and resources available to help preserve them and extend their useful life as participants in the community. For active places of worship, this must rely on private initiatives, such as fundraising, donations, and volunteering by sympathetic members and outside entities. Although constitutional barriers strive to maintain a safe distance between religion and government, there is still a necessity for the public sector, including citizens, to acknowledge and aid in the preservation of the country’s historic places of worship. The use of government resources for the preservation of historic places of worship becomes easier once the building is no longer actively used for worship, through the provision of grants and tax incentives. Private foundations, individuals, and preservation organizations can be assets to both active and inactive historic places of worship, providing financial and professional aid and expertise. Apart from providing aid in the form of money or manpower, it is equally important to provide awareness and support to the plight of many historic places of worship. Actively marketing and recording these structures is essential to increasing awareness in the wider community. For a city like Cincinnati, it may not be possible to create an effective grant or tax incentive program focused solely on historic places of worship, but the development of a clearing house of information and resources available, as well as proactively seeking adaptive reuse strategies for inactive places of worship, would greatly aid in the preservation of its vanishing neighborhood treasures. While making resources available for immediate stabilization, repair, and rehabilitation is an essential step in preservation efforts, it will only be a temporary solution if the underlying social and economic issues that led to the decline of historic places of worship and their communities are addressed. It must be remembered that they are part of a larger community context and that their success is directly tied to the success of their
surroundings. Utilizing historic places of worship as elements in a larger comprehensive planning effort is a necessity for the long term development of both the building and the community.

6.2.1 Recommendations for Future Research

This thesis has created a foundation for any interested party that is concerned with the preservation of a historic place of worship. Although it is a starting point, there is still much more that could be added and even more questions that arise from such a study. This study was able to only scratch the surface of how historic places of worship are perceived in the community and how they affect particular populations or social groups. Future research would benefit from in depth surveys and interviews with community members and leaders, developers, preservationists, congregations, and city officials in an effort to gain a better understanding of how these actors are personally affected by the presence, development, or loss of a historic place of worship. Another area of further development and research could be to extend the scope and detail of the historic places of worship inventory. A more comprehensive look at the entire city of Cincinnati would no doubt provide greater insight into the development and current state of its historic places of worship. It would also be advantageous to include a basic existing conditions report for the city’s historic places of worship so that not only the spatial distribution can be analyzed but also the current condition of the building. From this information it would be possible to analyze the threat of deterioration on Cincinnati’s neighborhood treasures. Third, further research and development could surely provide a more sophisticated and in depth set of recommendations for preserving historic places of worship in a proactive manner. This proactive
approach is an important element of any preservation project and can easily be the deciding factor concerning whether or not a building is saved in time. A final area to investigate further is the difficulty of preserving historic places of worship in the larger community planning and development environment. They are elements of a larger context and it is necessary to understand and address why and why not some efforts will work or why they should or should not be pursued.
Bibliography


Folkers, Winston E. Walnut Hills Urban Design Plan. City of Cincinnati Department of Urban Development.


“2011. Save America’s Treasures Grant Program. 
http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/treasures/ (accessed March 8, 2011)


# Appendix:
## Walnut Hills Historic Places of Worship Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>1891 Sanborn</th>
<th>1930 Sanborn</th>
<th>1950 Sanborn</th>
<th>Present (2011)</th>
<th>Est. Const. Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ME Church/Walnut Hills ME Church/Walnut Hills-Avondale ME Church/Walnut Hills-Avondale United Methodist Church</td>
<td>1303 McMillan ST. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>1301-1305 McMillan, SE corner of Ashland and McMillan</td>
<td>y, v4, 177.2</td>
<td>y, v4, 326</td>
<td>y, v4, 326</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Colored Church&quot; (storefront?)</td>
<td>2340 Gilbert AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>SE corner of Gilbert and Curtis (Cross)</td>
<td>y, v4, 178.1</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Baptist Church</td>
<td>2390 Kemper LN. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>SE corner of Kemper and McMillan</td>
<td>y, v4, 178.2</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of the Advent</td>
<td>2360 Kemper LN. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2360 Kemper, near SE corner of Kemper and Cross</td>
<td>y, v4, 178.2</td>
<td>y, v4, 325</td>
<td>y, v4, 325</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>1860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Universalist Church/Our Lady of Mt. Carmel RC Church/Christ Emmanuel Baptist Church</td>
<td>2332 May ST. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2332-2334 May, SE corner of May and Burbank</td>
<td>y, v4, 179.2</td>
<td>y, v2, 196</td>
<td>y, v2, 188</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran Church/Walnut Hills Evangelical Lutheran Church/Calvary Baptist Church</td>
<td>2540 Stanton AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2540 Stanton, SE corner of Taft and Stanton</td>
<td>y, v4, 182.2</td>
<td>y, v4, 317</td>
<td>y, v4, 317</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of the Epiphany/Stanton Ave Church of the Nazarene/New Sardis Primitive Baptist Church</td>
<td>2603 Stanton AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2603 Stanton, NW corner of Taft and Stanton</td>
<td>y, v4, 182.2</td>
<td>y, v4, 316</td>
<td>y, v4, 316</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Presbyterian Church/Walnut Hills Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>2607 Gilbert AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2607 Gilbert, NW corner of Taft and Gilbert</td>
<td>y, v4, 183.1</td>
<td>y, v4, 317</td>
<td>y, v4, 317</td>
<td>n, tower only</td>
<td>1885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Name</td>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Location Note</td>
<td>Volume Page</td>
<td>Year Built</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Universalist Church</td>
<td>2517 Gilbert AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>Near NW corner of McMillan and Gilbert</td>
<td>y, v4, 183.1</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregational Church/Walnut Hills Congregational Church/First Orthodox Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>2608 Kemper LN. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2608 Kemper, NE corner of Kemper and Taft</td>
<td>y, v4, 184.1</td>
<td>y, v4, 318</td>
<td>y, v4, 318</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>1727 Madison RD. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>1727 Madison, SE corner of Madison and Cleinview</td>
<td>y, v4, 188.2</td>
<td>y, v4, 345</td>
<td>y, v4, 345</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>1886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Francis De Sales RC Church</td>
<td>1604 Madison RD. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>1604 MLK(Madison), NE corner of Woodburn and MLK(Madison)</td>
<td>y, v4, 188.2</td>
<td>y, v4, 364</td>
<td>y, v4, 364</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>1879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AME Church</td>
<td>1152 Foraker AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>Intersection (N side) of Foraker and Park</td>
<td>y, v4, 199.2</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Baptist Church (&quot;Colored&quot;) (original)</td>
<td>1040 Foraker AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>Intersection (N side) of Foraker and Alms</td>
<td>y, v4, 199.2</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown AME Church (original)</td>
<td>2904 Park AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2904 Park, NE corner of Park and Chapel</td>
<td>y, v4, 199.2</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>c. 1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First United Presbyterian Church/Church of Christ/Second Trinity Baptist Church</td>
<td>2159 Sinton AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2159 Sinton, SW corner of Sinton and Nassau</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v2, 178</td>
<td>y, v2, 177</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritualist Temple/Spiritualist Light and Truth Temple</td>
<td>2300 Boone ST. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2300 Boone, NE corner of Boone and McGregor</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v2, 186</td>
<td>y, v2, 180</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of God</td>
<td>738 Wayne ST. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>738 Wayne, NE corner of Wayne and Concord</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v2, 197</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Universalist Church/Inspirational Baptist or Church-God and Saints-Christ</td>
<td>2529 Essex PL. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2529 Essex, SW corner of Essex and Minnesota</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 314</td>
<td>y, v4, 314</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place Name</td>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Postal Code</td>
<td>Location Information</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Photos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh Presbyterian Church/May Street Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>2521 May ST. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>2521-2523 May, SW corner of May and Crown</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>v4, 315, 318</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh Presbyterian Church/Body of Christ Christian or Revival Healing Temple</td>
<td>2521 May ST. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>2521-2523 May, SW corner of May and Crown</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>v4, 315, 318</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut Hills Catholic Church/RC Church of the Assumption</td>
<td>2632 Gilbert AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>2632 Gilbert, b/w Yale and Taft (near Yale)</td>
<td>y, v4, 183.2</td>
<td>y, v4, 318</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut Hills Christian Church/Seventh Day Adventist Church</td>
<td>1018 William Howard Taft RD. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>1016-1026 (1018) Taft, b/w Kemper and Park (near Park)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 318</td>
<td>y, v4, 318, n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiferes Synagogue/St. Anthony of Padua Maronite Catholic Church</td>
<td>2524 Victory PKWY Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>2524 Victory, b/w Taft and McMillan</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 319</td>
<td>y, v4, 319, y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut Hills Christian Church/Echo Church and Walnut Hills Christian Church</td>
<td>1444 McMillan ST. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>1438-1450 (1444) McMillan, NW corner of McMillan and Ingelside</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 321</td>
<td>y, v4, 321, y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut Hills Baptist Church</td>
<td>2388 Kemper LN. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>2388 Kemper, b/w McMillan and Cross (near McMillan)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 325</td>
<td>y, v4, 325, y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The First Church of Christ, Scientist/St. Stephen's Baptist Church</td>
<td>2317 Park AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>2317 Park, intersection (W side) of Park and Cypress (and Francis)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 325</td>
<td>y, v4, 325, y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Baptist Church (&quot;Negro&quot;) (replacement)</td>
<td>2924 Park AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>2924-2928 Park, SE corner of Park and Lincoln</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 341</td>
<td>y, v4, 341, y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Zion ME Church (&quot;Negro&quot;) (original)/Church of God in Christ (&quot;Colored&quot;)/James Temple Church of God</td>
<td>1119 Lincoln AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td></td>
<td>1119 Lincoln, b/w Park and Alms</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 341</td>
<td>y, v4, 341, y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

98
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Location Details</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bethel Baptist Church (&quot;Colored&quot;)</td>
<td>2706 Alms PL. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2706 Alms, S of SE corner of Myrtle and Alms (b/w Myrtle and Yale)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 341</td>
<td>y, v4, 341</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown’s Chapel AME Church (replacement)</td>
<td>2804 Alms PL. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>2804 Alms, near NE corner of Alms and Myrtle</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 341</td>
<td>y, v4, 341</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>1929-1951</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Thought Temple/New Thought Unity Temple</td>
<td>1403 McMillan ST. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>1403 McMillan, SW corner of McMillan and Grandview</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 327</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wehrman Ave Christian Church (&quot;Colored&quot;)</td>
<td>871 Wehrman AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>871 Wehrman, near intersection of Wehrman and Kerper</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>y, v4, 358</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoples Missionary Baptist Church (&quot;Colored&quot;)</td>
<td>3031 Kerper AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>3031 Kerper, b/w Buena Vista and Melbourne (N of Altoona)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>y, v4, 373</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Zion Methodist Church (&quot;Negro&quot;)/Mt. Zion United Methodist Church</td>
<td>3019 Walter AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>3019-3021 Walter, SW corner of Walter and Altoona</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>y, v4, 374</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother of God RC Church/House of God Assemble Yaheveh (Pentacostal)</td>
<td>3015 Gilbert AV. Cincinnati, OH 45206</td>
<td>3015 Gilbert, NE of intersection of Buena Vista, Walter and Gilbert</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>y, v4, 374</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>