

STATE AND LOCAL LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION

From the beginning of the preservation movement, State and local governments, along with private organizations and many individuals, have provided the support and the incentive for preserving significant aspects of this Nation's history. Local residents wish to have a strong hand in preserving their own history. Under the terms of the National Historic Preservation Act, States are responsible, through the State Historic Preservation Offices, for a wide variety of preservation activities, including landscape preservation. Although the technical guidance and support of the Federal Government can assist States' efforts to make more effective use of technology for landscape preservation, ultimately the impetus must come from within the States.

The States' approaches to landscape issues are very uneven. As noted earlier, only Ohio, Massachusetts, and New Mexico have made significant strides in the identification of landscapes. However, except for New Mexico, which maintains a registry of historic landscapes (box D),¹⁰⁵ their efforts are related to specific, discrete projects. If the States are to have a wider **role** in preserving prehistoric and historic landscapes, such landscape surveys should be institutionalized, and broadened to include all possible classes of prehistoric and historic cultural landscapes.

Part of the problem is that few of the SHPOS have staff with expertise in historic landscapes; as a result, the SHPOS are less apt to understand and appreciate historic landscape issues. State offices should be encouraged to maintain surveys on computer databases so they can be enlarged and corrected frequently and cost effectively.¹⁰⁶ For example, as mentioned earlier, the State of New Mexico plans to put its Registry of Historic Landscapes on a computer database.¹⁰⁷ A yearly

report to the State legislature detailing that year's efforts might assist in obtaining additional support for statewide work.

Landscape surveys designed to gather information through interviews with local residents would have the salutary effect of making them aware of the value of landscapes and landscape preservation. It would also involve them in the survey process.

The Olmsted Historic Landscape Preservation Program of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides one model for a statewide landscape preservation initiative. It authorizes \$15 million for historical research planning, and capital improvements for 12 municipally owned parks across Massachusetts. The program has developed innovative funding sources and has involved the local communities in the process of thinking about landscape preservation. Early inventory efforts by the Massachusetts Association for Olmsted Parks, a non-profit organization, served as a catalyst for this initiative.¹⁰⁸

Creating awareness of the importance of historic properties within local communities is an important part of public education about preservation. In addition to providing information to the news media, managers of historic properties may find it beneficial to provide public lectures and other events for the local population either at the historic site or in the community.¹⁰⁹ Such activities are most effective if the local community is involved in planning and setting goals for the management and interpretation of the properties. Obtaining support of the local community, and involving them in setting project goals, are important aspects of public education. The local community then develops a sense of contributing to preserving the resource.

¹⁰⁵State of New Mexico, *Op. cit.*

¹⁰⁶See OTA, *Technologies for Prehistoric and Historic Preservation*, *op. cit.*, "Ch. 5: Preservation Information," for a discussion of State preservation databases.

¹⁰⁷State of New Mexico, *Op. Cit.*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁸Shary page Berg, personal communication, 1987.

¹⁰⁹For example, Sunnyside, in New York State, sends its interpretive staff into the local community to make citizens aware of their local history.

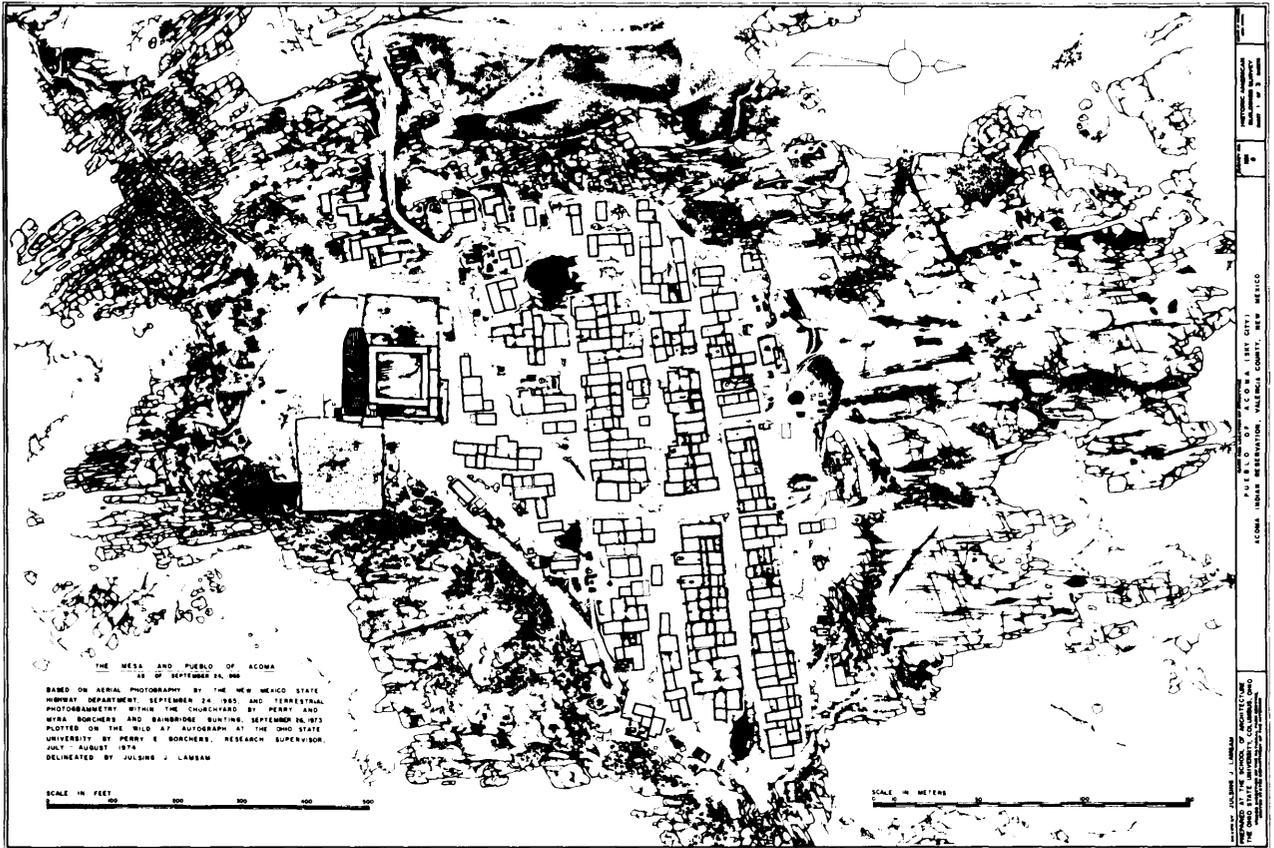


Photo credit: National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places

Acoma Pueblo, New Mexico. Aerial photograph and photogrammetric drawing prepared from stereo aerial photography for the Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service.

Box D.—New Mexico Registry of Historic Landscapes

Index to Categories:

- A. Courtyards/Patios
- B. Garden Houses
- C. Plazas
- D. Squares
- E. School Campuses
- F. Parterre Gardens
- G. Arcades (including stagestops)
- H. Parks
- I. Arbors
- J. Fountains/Spas
- K. Campgrounds
- L. Grounds of Public, Institutional, and Commercial Buildings
- M. Outdoor Restaurants
- N. Home Gardens
- O. Streetside Walkways and Plantings
- P. Cemeteries and Religious Institutions/Structures
- Q. Arboreta and Botanical Gardens
- R. Estates
- S. City of Community Planning; Greenbelts
- T. Playfields, Playgrounds, and Other Recreational Areas
- U. Miscellaneous (parade grounds, fortifications, orchards, sculptures, calendars)

Types of New Mexico Landscapes:

1. **The "Frontier Pastoral" Landscape:** Exterior grounds of the Big House at Philmont Ranch.
2. **The Territorial Landscape:** Kit Carson's House at Rayado.
3. **The Route 66 Landscape:** El Rancho Hotel and grounds, Gallup.
4. **The Courthouse Square:** Many still preserved and used in many counties—Luna, Lea, Santa Fe, and Grant, among others.
5. **The New Deal Landscape:** Roosevelt Park, Albuquerque; Carrie Tingley Hospital, Truth or Consequences.
6. **The Vignette Courtyard or Patio:** Hacienda de Baca, Bernalillo; Sena Plaza, Santa Fe.
7. **The Great Plaza:** Most Indian pueblos, Spanish Colonial, and Mexican period towns.
8. **The River Landscape:** Continuity of form and function in the historic landscapes built along New Mexico's streams and rivers.