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## National Park Service News Release

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### **National Park Service Completes Savannah National Historic Landmark District Condition Assessment**

ATLANTA – The National Park Service (NPS) recently completed a condition assessment of the Savannah National Historic Landmark (NHL) District. Following a comprehensive study, site visits, public meetings, and a public comment period, the NPS has determined that the overall condition of the district falls into the “threatened” condition category. This assessment does not change the designation status of the district as a national historic landmark.

The District remains the cultural and economic center of the City of Savannah and an irreplaceable part of American History. Through the condition assessment process, the NPS found that the Savannah NHL District continues to retain the qualities for which it was originally designated and is not a candidate for losing its designation. However, the study also reveals that the Savannah NHL District has lost some historic integrity and faces preservation challenges.

The principal historic feature of the District is the Savannah Town Plan designed by James Oglethorpe in the 1730s. The District’s “threatened” category status is based on several identified challenges including the impact of new construction on the Savannah Town Plan; the vulnerability of archeological resources, historic pavement, and cultural landscapes; threats from natural disasters; and a series of intangible threats like noise and traffic. The study also highlighted a number of preservation successes including planning policies adopted by the City of Savannah to restore the Savannah Town Plan to its original design.

These efforts provide an opportunity to reestablish “lost wards” into the larger mosaic of the District, as recently demonstrated with the restorations of Franklin and Ellis Squares.

“The Savannah National Historic Landmark District remains a national treasure and we look forward to assisting the community in continued preservation efforts,” said Cynthia Walton, Southeast Regional Office National Historic Landmark Program Manager. “By having this information, the community can better understand and protect the unique character of the Historic District that makes it such a special place to live in and visit.”

The NPS will continue to monitor proposed projects that may diminish the integrity of the Savannah Town Plan and has recommended several steps to improve the overall health of the district including updating the NHL nomination and developing a cultural landscape report. The NPS will continue to work with the community in their preservation efforts and will remove the District from the “threatened” condition category when the proposed actions and conditions that may diminish the District’s historic character have been addressed.

The public can learn more about the Savannah NHL District condition assessment by visiting <https://go.nps.gov/savannah>.

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*About the National Historic Landmarks Program:*

*The National Historic Landmarks Program, established in 1935, is administered by the National Park Service on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior. The National Historic Landmarks Program is one of more than a dozen programs administered by the National Park Service that provide states and local communities technical assistance, recognition, and funding to help preserve our nation's shared history and create close-to-home recreation opportunities. For more information, please visit <https://www.nps.gov/nhl>.*