VERNACULAR (mixed dates) — Characterized by simplicity. Buildings reflect local traditions or general period qualities, and are relatively plain and functional.

NINETEENTH CENTURY STYLES

GREEK REVIVAL (1840-1860) — Inspired by ancient Greek temples. Rectangular plan often having a wing and gable roof with returning cornices on gable end. May have a portico with columns.

GOTHIC REVIVAL (1845-1890's) — Loosely based on the medieval Gothic church. Characterized by steeply pitched roofs, pointed arch windows and fancy “gingerbread” trim and ornaments. (See photo 8)

ITALIANATE (1850's-1870's) — Simple, rectangular plan with low pitched, hip roof. Characterized by overhanging eaves with single or double curved or scrolled brackets, tall windows and sometimes a cupola on top. (See photos 17 & 20)

ROMANESQUE

Early (1865-1870's) — Medieval-type rounded arches with added surface dimension resulting from built up brick or other material.

Richardsonian (1880's-1910) — Monumental in appearance with a sense of heaviness and ruggedness in brick and stone masonry, having massive, low rounded arches.

SECOND EMPIRE (1865-1890's) — Named for the Parisian building program initiated by Napoleon III. Often similar in plan to the Italianate style. Its distinguishing feature is the mansard roof.

STICK DETAIL (1870's-1890's) — Based on the “truthfulness” of wood construction. Like the Queen Anne, characterized by steep gable roofs, pointed dormers, porches and projecting eaves decorated with lacy triangulation but distinguished by insistent narrow vertical and horizontal siding interspersed with diagonal “bracing”.

QUEEN ANNE (1880-1905) — A varied and decoratively rich style with contrasts of material, shapes, textures and colors. Often embellished by towers with conical roofs, encircling porches, multiple steep, irregular roofs and irregular massing. (See photos 4 & 7)
SUMMARY AND IMPACTS

The Beloit Historic Survey has produced valuable information for use by the City and the citizens of Beloit, as well as a multiple resource nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

This brochure highlights the results of the survey. The properties illustrated in this summary are intended to serve as examples of the many historic structures and sites discovered by the survey. To get a full view of the survey and the history and architecture of Beloit, the Beloit Historic Survey report is available to the public at the Beloit Historical Society, the Beloit Community Development Department, the Public Library, the Rock County Historical Society (RCHS) and the State Historical Society. The RCHS and the State Historical Society also have the complete survey records, including photographs. It is hoped that this survey will stimulate an awareness and appreciation of historic resources in Beloit.

The National Register listing has a number of important implications for the City and for property owners. Contributing properties within the districts and the individually eligible properties can receive special benefits because of their historic value. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places makes property owners eligible to be considered for federal matching grants-in-aid for historic preservation administered by the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society. Listing also provides protection through comment by the national Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on the effect of federally financed, licensed, or assisted undertakings on historic properties. In addition, it makes available tax incentives to encourage the preservation of depreciable historic structures as specified in the Tax Reform Act of 1976. Because of periodic changes in tax laws and regulations, interested persons should contact the State Historical Society for the most current information.

The Beloit Historic Survey has been guided by two primary goals. One is public education and the other, historic preservation. The goal of public education is closely linked to historic preservation in that with greater public knowledge and sensitivity, the value of historic properties will be recognized and preservation will, in turn, be promoted. The City of Beloit has affirmed these goals recently by outlining them in an Historic Preservation Section of the 1981 Beloit Comprehensive Plan.

Public education activities can occur in many forms. Dissemination of information about historic preservation activities can be achieved through interaction with groups such as preservation and neighborhood organizations. The Beloit Historical Society, the Rock County Historical Society, the City of Beloit Community Development Department and the State Historical Society are available to provide information about historic preservation and to respond to questions. Part of the educational effort could be to acquaint people with Beloit architectural styles and their significance, thus promoting the preservation of the features that define these styles.

The need for increased public awareness in Beloit is urgent. There are historic buildings that are now being threatened and structures that face future demolition or insensitive "modernization." In recent years, Beloit has lost some fine historic buildings.
A few are facing immediate threats and are of some importance to the history of Beloit. These are the Old YMCA building on Public Avenue, the Moran Block on West Grand Avenue and the City's Municipal Center. There may also be unknown threats to important residential properties.

Another factor in the loss or deterioration of historic structures and districts is the trend of the movement of people, businesses, community facilities and industries out of central city locations. This tends to make central city locations less desirable places to live, work and shop. Lowered reinvestment and maintenance may result because those remaining may not have the resources for adequate reinvestment. Further damaging effects may come from attempts to rezone or plan higher density uses in areas originally, and more appropriately, developed as neighborhoods with one or two family homes.

In order to guard against the threats to historic sites and structures, a number of steps are recommended for the City of Beloit and its residents. It is important that the City create and implement a local historic preservation ordinance. Such an ordinance is also advocated in the 1981 Beloit Comprehensive Plan. This ordinance would establish a Landmarks Commission to officially deal with preservation issues and activities. This commission could establish criteria for designation of local historic landmarks in order to make local designations of historically significant sites and structures. The resources developed by the Beloit Historic Survey would be valuable in such an effort. Along with the ordinance, a preservation plan that specifically addresses the issue of how to preserve what remains in Beloit should be adopted. The City should also embark on a program of recognition of restoration projects around Beloit. This could be done in cooperation with neighborhood groups and the historical societies, thus strengthening the fiber of neighborhood pride and reinvestment.

Another area to address is adaptive reuse. Around the country, older buildings are being put to new uses in place of new construction. The public and private sectors are coming to realize the value and economy of the conservation and reuse of existing buildings. Through public education and encouragement by local authorities, Beloit could preserve and revitalize its built environment.

Beloit possesses a rich and interesting history which is exhibited in its historic buildings, parks and neighborhoods. Preservation of this history through conservation of Beloit's built environment will enhance the diversity and character of the City.
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