

Webquest: Building an Historic District

A Worksheet Prepared for Use with *North Carolina Maps*:
<http://www.lib.unc.edu/dc/ncmaps/>

Name:

Recreating “historic districts” is becoming a popular means of attracting tourists to areas of North Carolina. The mayor of Oxford has decided to capitalize on this trend and rebuild a two-block stretch of street to how it looked in the late 1800s. He has no idea how to go about doing this, however, so he has hired you to plan the district because of your extensive knowledge of North Carolina history.

In order to plan this district, you have decided to use an historic overlay map, as well as outside sources, to compare what Oxford looked like in 1882 to what it looks like now. Follow the directions below to design the district. Be sure to answer all of the questions thoroughly so you can give a good plan to the mayor!

1. Begin by looking at the historic overlay of Oxford in 1882 compared to Oxford now. Go to <http://www.lib.unc.edu/dc/ncmaps/interactive/overlay.html> and click on the map under “Granville County” to get to the map. Look at the overlay map, then uncheck the box marked “Turn Historic Map Off/On” to look at the town as it is today.
2. Now you have to choose the two block stretch of street you’re going to recreate as a historic district. You want your street to meet the following conditions:
 - a. The street has to be good for walking. Thus, you don’t want sections of four-lane roads (such as Williamsborough St.).
 - b. The street has to contain at least one historic or important building. You need to give the mayor a reason to spend so much money on rebuilding!
 - c. The street must not include any stores that could not be rebuilt elsewhere, or be in a housing area where people would need to move in order to build your district.

To find your two blocks, you may look on the map for important buildings or houses from 1882 (a courthouse or post office looks great in a historic district!). Also, look for historic buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places (<http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/nc/Granville/districts.html>) and on Documenting the American South (<http://docsouth.unc.edu>).

Choose your two blocks and write the coordinates here. For example, you may put “Goshen Street between Meadows and College.”

Now, go to the Sanborn Map for Oxford, NC (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/gtts/map/oxford?year=1897>), compare it to the historic overlay map you were using before, and find out as much information about your two blocks as possible. Answer the following questions:

1. What materials are the buildings of your street built from? Brick? Wood? A mix of both?
2. How tall are the buildings on your street? Are they all the same size, or a mix?
3. Give the purpose of each building on your block (drugstore, house, post office, etc.) so that you can rebuild the buildings that are used for a different purpose now.
4. Explain how the street has changed from 1882 to present day. Is the street larger now? Are the buildings different? What has changed, and what has stayed the same?
5. How has technology changed the area that you have picked out? Has the ability to drive cars made a difference? Telephones?

Finally, you have to make a sign to accompany your district. Historic Marker Signs typically have information about the town and look like this:



<http://www.ncmarkers.com/Home.aspx>

Using MS Publisher, PhotoShop, or another program suggested by your teacher, design a sign for your Historic District. The sign should have the following information on it:

1. The name of your District (look at the National Register again to see typical place names)
2. The date of your District (the date of the map from where you pulled your information)
3. The date Oxford was founded as a town
4. One important detail about Oxford as a town
5. Why your district is important (what historic buildings are located there, what the town looked like, etc.)
6. The sign should contain roughly 200-300 words.

You can go to the City of Oxford's Web site (<http://www.oxfordnc.org/>) to find information for #3-5. Print out your sign and turn it in with your Webquest answers.

North Carolina Maps is a comprehensive, online collection of historic maps from the North Carolina State Archives, North Carolina Collection at UNC-Chapel Hill, and Outer Banks History Center. North Carolina Maps is made possible by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the State Library of North Carolina. Visit North Carolina Maps online at <http://www.lib.unc.edu/dc/ncmaps>.