



# Des Moines, IA

80.9 mi<sup>2</sup> | Pop: 210,330 | 104<sup>th</sup> Most Populous US City | Est. 1851

**Blocks of older, smaller, mixed-age buildings** play a critical role in fostering robust local economies, inclusive neighborhoods, and sustainable cities. The Preservation Green Lab report, *Older, Smaller, Better*, leveraged the ideas of **Jane Jacobs** to show why preservation and building reuse matter for successful communities. The *Atlas of ReUrbanism* expands this research to 50 U.S. cities, demonstrating that **Character Counts**.

In **Des Moines**, compared to areas with large, new structures, character-rich **blocks of older, smaller, mixed-age buildings** contain...



**77% greater population density**



**37% more jobs in small businesses**



**90% more women and minority-owned businesses**

The building blocks for an inclusive, diverse, economically vibrant city, Des Moines's older, smaller buildings are irreplaceable assets. For more information about Des Moines's high-character areas, **please see reverse**.

## ■ **The Atlas of ReUrbanism** | *A Tool for Discovery*

Developed by the **Preservation Green Lab**, the Atlas of ReUrbanism is part of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's **ReUrbanism** initiative. Explore the buildings and blocks of Des Moines and other American cities further by visiting:

[www.atlasofreurbanism.com](http://www.atlasofreurbanism.com)

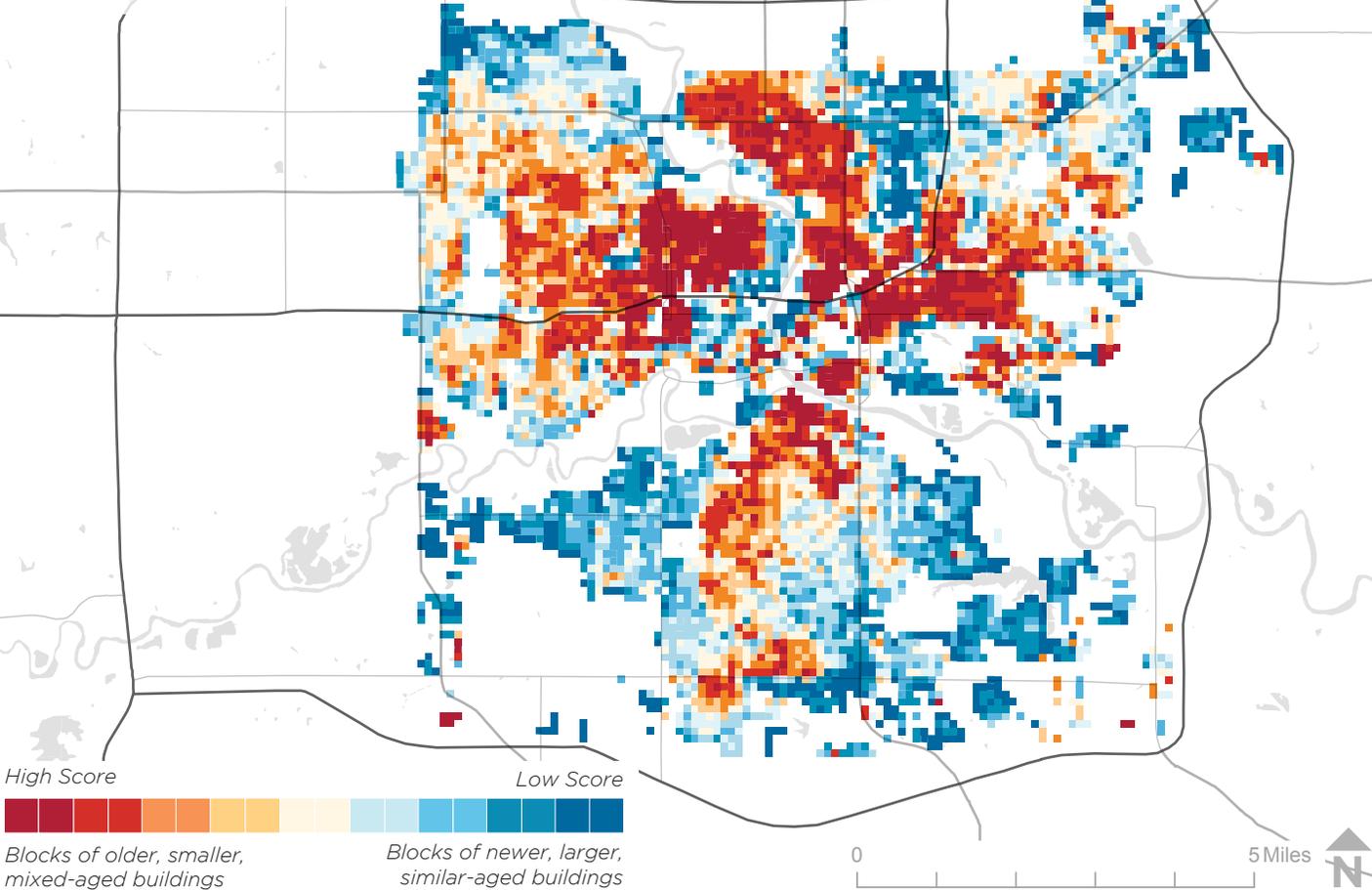


National Trust for Historic Preservation  
**Preservation Green Lab**

# Built Character in Des Moines

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The Atlas of ReUrbanism uses the Character Score to classify building stock by age and size. Higher scoring areas in **red** represent blocks of older, smaller, mixed-aged buildings. Lower scoring areas in **blue** represent newer, larger, similar-aged development.



## High v. Low Character Score

Use the table below to compare high- and low-character score areas in terms of their density and diversity, inclusiveness, and economic vitality.

High Character Score Areas

Low Character Score Areas



### Density & Diversity

	High Character Score Areas	Low Character Score Areas
Avg. Population/Grid Square <sup>†</sup>	40.6	22.9
Median Age (Years) <sup>†</sup>	35.8	38.0
Avg. Between Age 18-34 <sup>†</sup>	25.8%	23.6%
Avg. Foreign Born <sup>††</sup>	10.7%	10.8%
Avg. New to County <sup>††</sup>	5.9%	6.5%
Avg. People of Color <sup>†</sup>	28.5%	23.0%
Avg. Housing Units/Grid Square <sup>†</sup>	18.0	9.8
Avg. Vacant Homes <sup>†</sup>	8.6%	6.1%
Avg. Owned Homes <sup>†</sup>	70.3%	68.5%



### Inclusiveness

	High Character Score Areas	Low Character Score Areas
Total Women and Minority-Owned Businesses <sup>†††</sup>	441	233
Avg. Affordable Rental Housing Units <sup>†</sup>	90.9%	91.1%



### Economic Vitality

	High Character Score Areas	Low Character Score Areas
Total Jobs in Small Businesses <sup>††††</sup>	7,137	5,209
Total Jobs in New Businesses <sup>††††</sup>	786	731
Total Jobs in Creative Industries <sup>††††</sup>	4,849	5,471

<sup>†</sup>Data from the 2010 Census  
<sup>††</sup>Data from the 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates of the American Community Survey  
<sup>†††</sup>Data from Dun & Bradstreet, 2016.  
<sup>††††</sup>Data from LEHD LODES, 2014

## Building and Preservation Facts

Parcels/Buildings	Des Moines	50-City Average
Total	81,754	204,038
Per Square Mile	919	1,436
Median Year Built	1950	1952
On Nat'l Register of Historic Places	Data Unavailable	6.8%
Locally Designated	Data Unavailable	4.3%
Historic Tax Credit Projects	38	27.5

## Year Built By Period, Des Moines | 50-City Average

