

Urban Studies

Inner-City Reinvestment: Neighborhood Characteristics and Spatial Patterns Over Time

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Abstract

Renovation activity within 68 census tracts comprising old New Orleans, Louisiana, neighborhoods as measured by real estate transfer (sales) rates, were estimated from a series of social, demographic, housing and locational characteristics of the tracts. The physical remnants of the nineteenth-century city - as measured by architectural design, age of housing and to some extent location of earlier wealthy neighborhoods - were more predictive of the popularity of an area for renovation than were the current social characteristics of the tracts as reflected in their racial composition, lack of poverty and age structure characteristics. It is concluded that while gentrification supports the belief from ecological theory that the wealthy may find many 'niches' within the urban area to be optimal residential locations, especially if the structures are considered very architecturally desirable, the renovation movement has brought into question earlier assumptions about the importance to middle-income home buyers of the social characteristics of a neighborhood.

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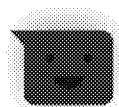
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