

Case Study

Architectural Records Appraisal: Discussion of Problems and Strategies for the Documenting Michigan Architecture Project

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Editor's Note: In the year following the Working Conference on Establishing Principles for the Appraisal and Selection of Architectural Records, Tawny Ryan Nelb brought to completion an appraisal study for the Documenting Michigan Architecture Project. Her report, while not a part of the conference, reflects its conclusions so clearly that it has been included here.

Abstract: There are five fundamental problems with the appraisal of architectural records; they are dispersed, widely duplicated, voluminous, transitory, and vulnerable. There is no single solution to all of these problems so it is useful to look at appraisal guidelines that have been established by other repositories and by architectural firms. The potential for legal use is one of the key considerations architectural firms use when determining the retention or disposal of their records. New problems facing appraisal decisions are the rare preparation of as-built drawings and the increased use of computer-aided design. Ultimately, it is necessary to convince architects that they need to be responsible for their own records not just for practical purposes, but for cultural reasons as well. And all firms and repositories need to balance their appraisal decisions based on space, staff, preservation costs, and users.

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Introduction

THE DOCUMENTING MICHIGAN ARCHITECTURE PROJECT was initiated in 1994 by the Bureau of Michigan History, with funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission as a planning effort to help preserve Michigan's architectural heritage. By examining existing appraisal strategies, the project hopes to suggest options for archivists that will encourage them to retain records that are important to documenting the profession and practice of architecture, architectural design, and the built environment. The project also wishes to encourage design firms themselves to make conscientious appraisal decisions that will, along with appropriate preservation measures, help guarantee that records are saved for their own business requirements and as an aspect of Michigan's cultural heritage.

In 1995, the project issued a report on appraisal strategies for Michigan archival and manuscript repositories, based on a survey of existing models from published sources, and on the April 1994 Working Conference on Establishing Principles for the Appraisal and Selection of Architectural Records in Montreal. Those recommendations follow, abridged to omit summaries of models employed by Nancy Schrock in Massachusetts and Alan Lathrop of the Northwest Architectural Archives in Minneapolis, which were surveyed for the report but are discussed at length in the conference papers by these participants included in this issue.¹

Problems in Appraisal

Appraisal is an unresolved problem in the management of architectural records.² It is one of the greatest challenges in the discussion of this unique material. It is also the greatest impediment to the collection of architectural records by libraries, museums, and manuscript repositories. Architectural records have a much higher permanent record retention rate than the 2 percent that is worth retaining for most other types of records. This is not only because of their potential use as legal evidence, but also because they are important in protecting the future of the buildings, structures, and landscapes that are a result of the designer's work. Without an appraisal strategy, curatorial institutions are quickly overwhelmed by the volume of architectural records collections. Yet deciding what to destroy is extraordinarily difficult.

¹The Documenting Michigan Architecture Project report included summaries based on the following publications: Nancy Carlson Schrock, *Architectural Records Management* (Washington, D.C.: American Institute of Architects Foundation, 1985); idem, "Conservation Management of Architectural Records: Setting Priorities," *Care and Management of Architectural Records: Selected Papers from the Oneida Community Mansion House Seminar, October 27-28, 1992* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Library, 1995); Nancy Carlson Schrock and Mary Campbell Cooper, *Records in Architectural Offices: Suggestions for the Organization, Storage, and Conservation of Architectural Office Archives*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, June 1992); Alan Lathrop, "Appraisal and Accessioning of Architectural Records," *Proceedings of the Conference: Towards Standards for Architectural Records, February 12-13, 1981* (Washington, D.C.: American Institute of Architects Foundation, 1984), 33-40; idem, "The Provenance and Preservation of Architectural Records," *American Archivist* 43 (Summer 1980): 325-38.

²This text does not use the term *appraisal* in the sense of establishing a monetary value, but, instead, as a summarization of the process of selecting records for archival retention. For more information on monetary appraisal, consult *Proceedings of the Symposium on the Appraisal of Architectural Records Held April 26, 1985 Cambridge, Massachusetts* (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, 1987).

Architectural records encompass business records, artists' records, and research and development records.³ This range makes decisions about what to keep as varied as the objectives of the libraries, archives, museums, and architectural firms that make those decisions. Each institution or firm may ask, "What is it about architecture that should be documented? Is it the design process? Is it important to have a record of how the design was conceptualized and then developed? Is it the realized project, such as a building, a bridge, a landscape? Is it theory, such as research or the speaking and writing architects might do to educate students, other practitioners, or the general public? Is it the administrative operations that sustain an architect's business, like marketing or other support functions, or human resources management? Or should one document the services architects provide to the community in both the public and professional sectors, in the form of self-regulation or as consultants to their colleagues?" Some repositories that collect design materials may want to document all these functions, while others may want to document only a few. Architects may want to document only those functions that are important for their business survival.

Five fundamental problems are associated with architectural and other design records:⁴

1. The records are *dispersed* among many agencies and departments. It is estimated that records documenting regulation, standards, design, and construction for a new single family house in the United States can be found in as many as 170 locations.⁵
2. Records are widely *duplicated* in architects' offices.
3. Architectural records are *voluminous*. The record of the built environment in the United States has grown since the eighteenth century from a few drawings signed by the client and architect/master carpenter to the explosion of records we see today. Regulation, litigation protection, changes in technology, and complexity of the project mean that the job files for large projects are measured in tens or even hundreds of feet.
4. The records are sometimes *transient* or temporary. Sketches on tracing paper or computer-aided design (CAD) images often do not survive beyond the project's completion. Marketing literature quickly becomes outdated and is replaced.
5. Even if kept, the records, especially of the design process, are extraordinarily *vulnerable*. Conceptual drawings and design development drawings are done on inexpensive and usually highly acidic tracing paper which, by its nature, will deteriorate at a much higher rate than most other papers. Drawings are distributed to contractors and vendors using very unstable blueline (diaz) prints. Digitized records such as word processing, financial, or CAD records can be lost in the short term.

All these problems suggest that there is no single recommendation for the appraisal of architectural records. There are, however, some starting points from which to examine the appraisal issue and some strategies that have helped various institutions with design collections.

³Waverly Lowell, "Architectural Records: Identification, Preservation and Access Workshop," unpublished notes, 1991.

⁴Helen Samuels, "Architectural Records Appraisal Conference," Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, April 1994, unpublished notes of introductory remarks.

⁵Nicholas Olsberg, "Architectural Records Appraisal Conference," Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, April 1994, unpublished notes of introductory remarks.

Existing Models: Repository-Oriented Appraisal

Chicago Historical Society. In 1979, the Chicago Historical Society, with the aid of an advisory board, conducted an intellectual appraisal, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, of the records of Harry Weese, a nationally known Chicago architect. Ninety-five percent of the records were job files and the remaining 5 percent were general administrative office files, promotional literature, AIA files, and civic papers. The firm retained a central file of design, working, and as-built drawings; legal files; a master file of specifications; and most of Weese's personal papers. The advisory board had made the following recommendations, which reflect the difficulty it had in reaching agreement:

<u>Record Type</u>	<u>Recommended Action</u>
Shop drawings	Retain only those drawings documenting structure, interior finishes, and exterior envelope. Offer remaining back to clients.
Client, engineering consultant correspondence	Retain, but weed duplicates.
Construction correspondence	Sample.
Sketches and drawings	Retain.
Reduced-size copies of working drawings	Retain.
Progress reports	Sample daily and weekly reports; retain monthly reports.
Specifications	Retain.
Miscellaneous correspondence and papers	Retain.
Planning and programming materials	Retain.
Financial and legal	Discard material available in open court.
Correspondence	Retain contracts, final payment, and samples of change orders.
Engineering and consultant reports	Could not agree on whether to sample or retain.
Job logs	Discard after search for original material.
Supplier brochures	Retain if product used.
Photographs	Retain.
Interiors correspondence	Retain.
Bidding correspondence	Retain.
Promotional correspondence	Retain.
Meeting minutes	Retain.
Samples	Retain if used.
Personal papers	Retain.
General office files	Weed and retain personnel files. ⁶

As can be seen, this strategy does not weed out much and points out the difficulty

⁶Kathleen Mallon, "The Chicago Historical Society and the Records of Harry Weese and Associates: Appraisal of Current Architectural Records," *Proceedings of the Conference: Towards Standards for Architectural Archives, February 12-13, 1981*, 47-50.

of pleasing a varied constituency. In fact, the appraisal advisory committee at the Chicago Historical Society decided that, although it was possible to reduce the volume of an architectural collection, it was impossible to set general criteria for appraisal of architectural records. Architectural historian Carl Condit said, "You can establish general criteria, but they're like everything else. They're the kind of thing students write down ABCD and memorize and give back to you and they don't have any idea what they mean, so that when they try to apply them, their interpretations are wide open."⁷

National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) gives suggestions for appraisal of architectural records that can be applied to any collecting institution. NARA recommends saving records of buildings used for or constructed by an agency or institution and records of long-lasting or important structures such as those that are critical to the mission of the agency. For example, the records of construction of the Michigan Library and Historical Center would be crucial to the history of the institutions that occupy that building. A standard or typical "cookie-cutter" design, for instance, for a fast-food chain, should be saved, but duplicates need not be kept.

Records of "buildings that illustrate the characteristics of either a given period or a regional architectural style" should be saved; buildings that are innovative or experimental; and buildings associated with events or persons of national, state, or regional significance. For Michigan, this might mean saving records for the work of noted architects, engineers, or landscape architects such as Albert Kahn, Alden Dow, and Eliel and Eero Saarinen. Preserving records of controversial buildings such as the brightly colored city parking garage in East Lansing designed by Don Koster (at that time with the WBDC architectural firm in Grand Rapids), is also important.

NARA judges as meriting permanent retention:

- preliminary design drawings (sketches and conceptual design development drawings);
- presentation drawings (perspective renderings and sets of plans, sections, and elevations used to sell the idea to the client);
- final working drawings and as-built drawings (drawings showing construction details and changes to the design made on site during construction);
- contract negotiation or bid drawings (drawings on which the contract is based) in cases where the building is historically, architecturally, or technologically significant and the drawings show the physical structure of the building and are not superseded by final working drawings or as-builts;
- detail drawings showing structure or appearance;
- artistic drawings (drawings that show decorative features such as sculpture, terracotta, ironwork, furniture, etc.);
- shop drawings (detail drawings prepared by contractors or subcontractors, usually for mechanical elements, cabinetry, or some other product that is built into the structure); and
- specifications (written requirements for carpenters, masons, and other trades that have worked on the structure) if they relate to structure or appearance.

Records that NARA judges as not meriting permanent retention are:

⁷Frank Jewell and Kathleen A. Mallon, "Appraisal of Contemporary Architectural Records," Chicago Historical Society, internal report, c. 1980, 5.

- pre-final working drawings if they are superseded by final or as-built drawings;
- shop drawings for electrical, plumbing, heating, or air-conditioning systems when they are no longer needed to maintain the building;
- detail drawings for electrical, plumbing, heating, or air-conditioning systems when they are no longer needed to maintain the building; and
- specifications for electrical, plumbing, heating, or air-conditioning systems when they are no longer needed to maintain the building.⁸

National Archives of Canada. The National Archives of Canada advises:

- Seek documents that illustrate the development of architecture in your area or that document the work of local architects elsewhere.
- Keep documents that show accomplishments in the field of design, use of space, choice of materials, and treatment of the environment.
- Document works that contribute to the architectural heritage of the region.
- Collect theoretical studies or design problems.

In addition:

- Competition entries can be valuable even though they may be the work of an unknown architect or a winning design that was not built because of financial or political constraints.
- Student drawings can illustrate the curriculum of a degree program, the creative process, and the process of learning drafting skills.
- It is important to acquire the records of a successful but unremarkable firm. Although the firm may have designed no important buildings, “the archival record reflects the needs, tastes, and trends prevailing in our society.”⁹

Existing Models: Architectural Firm-Oriented Appraisal

Australian Architectural Firms. M. G. Leigh of Leigh Records Management Pty. Ltd. worked with over 170 architectural firms across Australia to develop an extensive record retention manual. Although certain practices may be specific to Australia, the manual recommends the following records be kept for long-term preservation (fifty years plus):

Contract/client records
 Selected project drawings
 Selected project specifications
 Selected case histories involving unique circumstances such as industrial injuries, etc.
 Selected drawings and specifications demonstrating design styles, changes, etc.
 Award-winning achievements—records and examples. (In the case of a noted architect, selection should represent a wider range of designs.)
 Annual reports
 Selected internal reports

⁸National Archives and Records Administration, *Managing Cartographic and Architectural Records* (Washington, D.C., 1989), 16–18.

⁹Nadia Kazymyra-Dzioba, “Canadian Architecture: The Architectural Program at the Archives,” *The Archivist* 17 (September–October 1990): 15.

Policy records and updates
Selected forms and labels samples
Directors'/partners' diaries
Selected records which demonstrate the firm's role in external bodies, associations, committees, task forces, etc.
Organizational charts
Certificates of incorporation
Qualifications to do business
Corporate registers, annual financial statements, copies of annual statutory returns, etc.
Conformed copies of agreements pertaining to partnerships, royalties, know-how, agency, patent, trademark, etc.
Other types of agreements (samplings)
Minutes of meetings of directors and shareholders
Selected records of mergers, reorganizations, acquisitions, dissolution, joint ventures, etc.
Licenses, permits, and registrations
Insurance registers
Selected payroll copies (samplings)
Selected litigation files
Sample advertisements, leaflets, brochures, catalogs, press releases, speeches of note, internal newsletters, etc.
Selected photographs
Selected correspondence created at the management level

In addition, Leigh recommends that the following records, though not of general historical or long-term value, may be selected for fairly long-term retention depending on the repository or firm needs:

All contracts and related documents, including drawings and photographs
Minutes and selected correspondence
Procedural records (internal and updates)
Insurance policies, particularly professional indemnity and details of worker compensation coverage
General ledgers, journals, and cash books
Extinguished loans and borrowing agreements
Agreements pertaining to employment matters
Payroll records
Personnel records, including leave records
Personnel benefit records
Signature authorizations
Powers of attorney
Lease documents
Title deed copies
Trade practices (or similar) investigation records

Records of litigation
Safety or injury records
Photographs¹⁰

French Architectural Firms. In 1987, the Records and Archives Management Program of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) prepared a case study of processing architects' records in France. The main goal of French appraisal is to document the building and the design approach of the architect. Although it is impossible to lay down hard and fast rules for appraisal, one approach within each series would be to save documents corresponding to the design phase, including sketches and contracts, then start from the end of the process, the approved design, and work back in time. More recent documents would be given priority since they more accurately reflect the building as actually constructed. Obviously, as-built drawings are critical.

The UNESCO study recommended:

- The contents of a project file should be appraised when the file is closed out by the firm.
- Duplication of content among files can be eliminated. Usually only signed contracts should be retained.
- After the final settlement of accounts, records of payments on account should be destroyed and only the final record of total payments for a job retained.
- At a later date (after about five years), invitations to bid and replies from contractors whose bids were not accepted can be destroyed.
- Priority should be given to documents relating to the building's structure, and to heating, plumbing, and electrical systems.
- Keep records of disputes and records which sum up specific aspects of the project (for example, accounting). Eliminate records on maintenance.
- If a firm is specialized, for instance, in the design of a particular building type, keep records that pertain to its area of specialization.
- Decide if all of a firm's project files are to be preserved. If not, which should be selected? Criteria could give priority to innovative projects, those with social implications, or projects of certain square footage, for example.¹¹

Legal Aspects

Ed Francis, a member of the Documenting Michigan Architecture advisory board and an architect at William Kessler Associates of Detroit, reminds us that "architects think they are only as good as their last project." This observation is helpful in understanding why so few architects view their records as important. For most architects, recordkeeping isn't even on the priority list, much less near the top; thus it is more effective to appeal to bottom-line than to preservation concerns in convincing them to save their records. Archivists will have more success using the argument of saving records for litigation

¹⁰M. G. Leigh, *Record Retention Manual for Architects* (Kew East, Victoria, Australia: Leigh Records Management Pty. Ltd., Professional Archives Division, 1981), section 1.7.

¹¹Françoise Hildesheimer, *The Processing of Architects' Records: A Case Study: France* (Paris: UNESCO, 1987), 23–26.

protection, as base design records in case of alteration, and as vital business records than appealing to the architect's sense of history and preserving cultural resources.¹²

The legal aspect of records disposal is an area which architects tend to be unaware of, yet it is critical for their businesses. From the standpoint of professional liability, project records should be kept at least as long as required by the statute of repose in the state where the project is located, the statute of repose being "the legal time limitation on the right to bring an action after which no suit can be maintained."¹³ The statute of limitations for liability for injury in the state of Michigan is six years from completion of the project.¹⁴ Suits for breach of contract or malpractice are also a consideration in record retention.

According to Schinnerer Management Services, one of the largest insurers for the architectural and engineering professions,

over ninety percent of all claims against design professionals are brought within six years of substantial completion of a project. An additional five to eight percent of claims are brought between the sixth and the tenth year. Generally, claims brought more than six years after substantial completion of the project are brought by users of the project. In those jurisdictions with no special statute of repose for improvements to real property, design professionals may be at risk forever. And in some jurisdictions, they can be held accountable to the general public or governmental agencies throughout the life of the structures they designed.¹⁵

This is certainly the case for survey records, which may be created by staff in the architectural firm or by consultants. "Not only are surveyors liable to third parties, but the time limit laid out by the statutes of limitations in most states does not begin until the error is discovered. For professional surveyors, this means 'the discovery' of an error may occur years or decades after their service has been rendered, and liability is virtually 'cradle-to-grave.'"¹⁶

Schinnerer recommends that its clients make sure the final project file indicates "the design path, the decisions made by the client including the final plans and specifications, and the factual records and design refinements projected during the construction process."¹⁷ For them, the contract and all record documents, as well as the chronological file of progress reports and correspondence, should be maintained. These records should include:

- copies of all contracts entered into by the design professional and the client;
- memoranda of informal conferences and telephone conversations;
- documentation of the owner's authorization to enter into the contract with the design professional;

¹²Tawny Ryan Nelb, "Will Your Drawings Be There When You Need Them?" *Plan and Print* 64 (December 1991).

¹³Schinnerer Management Services, Inc., "Preserving Project Records," *Guidelines for Improving Practice* 24 (1994): 3.

¹⁴American Institute of Architects, *Compendium: State Statutes of Limitation and Repose* (Washington, D.C., 1994), 57.

¹⁵Schinnerer Management Services, Inc., "Preserving Project Records," 3.

¹⁶Tawny Ryan Nelb, "Protecting Your Investment," *POB (Point of Beginning) Surveyor's Magazine* 17 (August/September 1992): 78.

¹⁷Schinnerer Management Services, "Preserving Project Records," 4.

- copies of the owner-furnished data, such as the program (client requirements for a structure), surveys and reports, legal material, and so forth;
- documentation of key design recommendations and the owner's decisions in response thereto;
- documentation of the owner's written approval to proceed from one phase of professional service to the next and the owner's written acceptance of the work as substantially completed;
- minutes of construction site meetings and reports of site observations if construction-phase services are authorized by the professional service contract;
- representative guarantees, and warranties of any manufacturer of untried materials or dealer of innovative methods; and
- notification to the owner of increases in cost estimates and the reasons therefor, and documentation of acceptance or acquiescence.¹⁸

Insurers would like to see these documents kept forever, and even when a firm goes out of business, they recommend retaining records for a reasonable period.

New Problems in Appraisal

As-Builts. The problem of lack of as-built drawings in architectural records collections is rampant and continues to worsen. As-builts are drawings showing on-the-work-site changes to a design, which are always made during the construction process. Although these can be one of the most valuable types of documents to preserve for the firm, the client, and the historian, these drawings are rarely even produced today. It is standard in most contracts to hold 10 percent of the final payment to the contractor in abeyance until the as-builts are received. In some instances, the contractor actually writes off the final payment at the outset and adds the 10 percent onto the rest of the project costs, in order not to be bothered with producing as-builts. In other cases, cost overruns and last-minute cost cutting may result in changes to the building, the architect can't afford to absorb the costs of the as-builts, and the client doesn't want to pay additional charges. Or the client's accountants may want to clear the books even if the as-builts have not been delivered. For any of these reasons, as-builts are not produced.

This problem needs to be addressed by the American Institute of Architects and other design-related professional groups. The increase of computer-aided design usage in firms may help ameliorate this problem in the future since it makes changing drawings much easier, but there is still a cost factor.

Computer-Aided Design (CAD). Since the mid-1980s, computer-aided design, or electronic drafting, has become a workhorse for the design profession. Even smaller firms are using CAD today. Some firms use it exclusively and no longer draft anything by hand. This presents some additional appraisal problems which are similar to those for any electronic medium. The first question to address is which records the firm is saving. This must be evaluated firm by firm. Some firms save every image that is generated; others save only the drawings that document key points, such as the end of a design phase. Few firms have a definite policy, and the decision is left to the individual project manager.

The second question is how it will be possible to read CAD drawings in the future. If a drawing has been plotted, then it is the hard-copy plot the appraisal archivist should

¹⁸Schinnerer Management Services, "Preserving Project Records," 2-3.

save. But since the software is changing every few months, and the hardware will have to be replaced in five years or less, firms must make a commitment to convert their CAD-generated records to the latest format as it emerges. If the drawings have not been plotted as hard copy and are not converted, the design record will be lost.

Conclusions

Architects' Responsibility. Architects have to take responsibility for saving their own records. There are not enough repositories to acquire all the records, nor are there enough archivists to appraise and care for every record. As noted, design professionals may ultimately respond better to pragmatic arguments; but archivists in each region of Michigan should take every opportunity to assert to architects, landscape architects, engineers, and other design professionals the importance of design records for our cultural heritage. Taking an interest in the records that document their work will stimulate their awareness and will perhaps encourage them to be better caretakers of their own records. This has been one of the goals of the Documenting Michigan Architecture Project, and that effort will continue under the auspices of the new Michigan Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records (COPAR).

Direction of Architectural Records Appraisal in the Future. At the April 1994 working conference in Montreal, conferees agreed that appraisal should take a "top down" approach, that is, instead of trying to decide what to keep and what to throw away, archivists should determine what the functions of architecture are, which of those should be documented for the long term, and what records document those functions. This functional approach has not yet been developed. Since the term "architecture" encompasses a huge body of material, including the built and unbuilt work of architects and landscape architects, vernacular design, institutional and cultural works, design theory, and the profession of architecture itself, it will take a multi-year effort, with input from various constituencies, to develop this analysis.

Final Thoughts. In the end, the most critical consideration in appraisal is that each repository or firm archives must serve, as far as possible, its recordkeeping requirements and its specific user constituency, and yet live within the boundaries set by its staffing and resources.

Many repositories have mandated recordkeeping requirements which may fulfill statutory requirements or the requirements of a governing body. A university archives, for example, may be required to keep all the records of that institution for a certain number of years. A firm or business plan room may have set records retention and disposition schedules that require records be destroyed after one or more years or kept permanently. These requirements will have an impact on the kinds of records that are destroyed or saved for the short and the long term.

It is important for repositories or firms to examine their users carefully to determine exactly whom they serve. For some repositories, 90 percent of the users of design collections may be students. Students are usually quite satisfied with published material and a few original drawings because they have a limited amount of time to do their work. For other repositories or plan rooms, a large portion of users are contractors for building and landscape renovation. These users may need to see only the working drawings and specifications, and usually want immediate access to the material since they have a contractual deadline to finish the work. Manuscript repositories or museums may primarily serve architectural historians who need to see the whole range of documentation created during

the design and construction process. As a result, these repositories may even purchase individual items, such as drawings or models of famous architects, to add to their collections.

The users of a firm's archives may include students, renovators, or historians, but very few firms save records because they have anticipated their place in architectural history. Their primary users are their own staff members, who need the records for marketing, for litigation protection, as vital records of the business, or as base documents for changes to built works.

In addition to complying with different recordkeeping requirements and serving different constituencies, repositories have different resources available to collect, store, describe and catalog, and service architectural records. The appraisal decisions of a large, well-endowed museum that can not only care for its holdings properly but can organize exhibitions and purchase research documents will be quite different than those of an archives with inadequate storage space, no money for proper housing, and barely enough staff to answer reference questions, much less process and arrange a huge group of architectural records. Another institution may have the funds to care for everything properly but little space to take in anything new. Every repository must weigh the factors of space, staff, preservation costs, and users as part of its appraisal decisions, and decide on appropriate response to the questions, "What can I collect and keep?" and "How can I balance the needs of our researchers with the realities of our existing physical and financial resources?"

Although some of the appraisal strategies and models summarized here may appear indeterminate, they offer some guidance (but not rigid criteria) on how appraisal can be used to save important material. It is up to the individual repository to weigh resources, mandates, and research needs in deciding how design records will be saved in the future for our cultural heritage.