

NARRATIVE FORMAT

The narrative format is more appropriate for certain kinds of sites, such as landscapes, towns, or neighborhoods. Whether HABS written documentation will be in narrative or outline formats is the decision of your supervisor, who will also give you some parameters for your report. The outline and narrative formats may be combined, with the description in one form and the history in the other. If the narrative format is used, retain the initial identification section, the sources of information, and the project information. You might want to divide your narrative into historical and architectural sections. You will probably also want to include supplemental material; see Supplemental Material Section. Use the outline format as a checklist to insure the inclusion of all necessary items.

For groups of buildings, different questions must be asked than for an individual structure. Try to include the following information:

1. Physical context of the site (how it relates to the surrounding environment).
2. Historical context of the site (its relationship to the historical development of the surrounding area and to trends in local and American history).
3. Specific history of the site, including the dates of initial planning and development, the changes in plan and evolution of the site, individuals associated with the site (including architects, planners, etc.), and historical events or developments associated with the site.
4. Physical description of the site according to the original plan, as it has changed over time, and at present.

Because of the fluid nature of the narrative format, no examples are included here. Your supervisor will provide you with examples appropriate for your site.