

The Impact of Historic District Designation on House Prices in Fort Myers, Florida

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Abstract: Growing historic district designation literature has yet to come to a consensus, as evidence suggests that historic designation can positively or negatively affect house prices. These findings are complicated by diverse designation rules across time and space. In this paper, we model the benefits and costs of historic designation and show how historic regulations can differentially affect house prices based on neighborhood characteristics. We empirically test our hypothesis using a sample of home sales in Fort Myers, Florida, a locality that historically designated homes in three different neighborhoods at approximately the same time. Results are consistent with our hypothesis and suggest that historic designations affect home prices differently, consistent with pre-policy neighborhood characteristics.

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