

# **Attachment B**

Final GPUSC/GPAC Draft Historical Resources Element

# Historical Resources Element



## HISTORICAL RESOURCES

### PURPOSE

This Historical Resources Element focuses on the identification, documentation, preservation, and celebration of historical resources.

### OVERVIEW

Historic preservation is essential for preserving the unique character, culture, and identity of Newport Beach. Efforts for historic preservation can strengthen resident ties to the community and enhance tourism for those who seek authentic cultural experiences and a deeper connection to Newport Beach's rich history. By having systems in place to identify, preserve, and protect historical resources, the City of Newport Beach (City) is able to balance growth and development with the preservation of cultural and historical heritage while providing tangible benefits to the economy, environment, and the City's residents and visitors.

### GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

#### Identification of Historical Resources

Documenting and protecting archaeological and paleontological resources are crucial for preserving the evidence of human history and life forms of the distant past. These resources inform our understanding of ancient ecosystems and cultures. This stewardship fosters a culture of respect and responsibility, ensuring that future generations can continue to learn from and appreciate this history.

#### *Goal HR-1: Recognize and protect historically significant landmarks, sites, and structures*

- **Policy HR-1.1: Historical Resources Inventory.** Maintain and update the Newport Beach Register of Historical Property for buildings, objects, structures, and monuments having importance to the history or architecture of Newport Beach. (Imp. 9.1, 10.1, 29.2)
- **Policy HR-1.2: New Historical Resources.** Encourage local residents to research and nominate properties for review by the City and/or Newport Beach Historical Society. (Imp. 29.1, 29.2)
- **Policy HR-1.3: Standards and Documentation.** Consider developing standards for the review of demolition, grading, and building permits prior to granting City approval based on potential effects on historical resources. If demolition is granted, require photo documentation (in conformance with the standards outlined by the National Park Service's Historic American Buildings Survey program) of inventoried historic structures prior to demolition. (Imp 2.1, 8.1, 8.2)
- **Policy HR-1.4: Preservation or Re-Use of Historical Structures.** Encourage the preservation of structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the list of California Historical Landmarks, and/or the Newport Beach Register of Historical Property. Provide reasonable incentives, such as waivers of application fees, permit fees, and/or any liens placed by the City, for properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or Newport Beach Register of Historical Property in exchange for preservation easements, designation applications, and other related preservation options. Partner with and reasonably support non-profit, private, and community organizations to apply for public

and private grants to help preserve and maintain historical resources throughout Newport Beach. (Imp. 8.2, 29.2)

- **Policy HR-1.5: Historic Context Statement.** Consider preparing a Historic Context Statement to provide a consistent framework for evaluations and surveys. (Imp. 10.1, 29.2)
- **Policy HR-1.6: Citywide Survey.** Every 10 years, or as needed, consider completing and updating a citywide historical resources survey to identify historical resources. Include community, neighborhood, cultural, and historic preservation groups; property owners; land developers; and the building industry in planning and implementing historical surveys. (Imp. 10.1, 29.2)
- **Policy HR-1.7: Streamlined Regulations.** Consider provisions and policies related to historical resources under one ordinance in the Municipal Code to facilitate consistent application of the regulations and easier staff review. This may include the following:
  - Establish the National Park Service Secretary of the Interior’s Standards as the baseline City standard for project reviews, providing opportunity for certain projects to qualify for a categorical exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (Class 31 Categorical Exemption).
  - Define categories of major and minor changes that would be subject to review, the review required, and the assigned decision-making body responsible for the associated determination.
  - Revise, consolidate, and better define the City’s classification system for historical resources to align with the Federal and State systems of classification. Streamline the process for how landmarks are considered for listing in the City’s classification system. One decision-making body (for example, the Planning Commission) should be given authority to review, conduct hearings, and make recommendations to City Council on the adoption of the historical resources designation. (Imp. 8.1, 8.2, 9.1)
- **Policy HR-1.8: Preservation Expertise.** Consider supporting the provision of staff resources to hire or train a preservation planner to advise staff on matters related to historical resources. (Imp. 30.1)
- **Policy HR-1.9: Certified Local Government.** Consider meeting the requirements for becoming a Certified Local Government, including adopting a historic preservation ordinance, establishing a qualified preservation review commission, providing adequate public participation in the historic preservation program, and completing other responsibilities identified by the State. (Imp. 29.2)

*Goal HR-2: Well-documented and protected archaeological and paleontological resources*

- **Policy HR-2.1: Historical Records.** Allow access to historical records among local preservation and cultural groups and among City departments and County of Orange agencies to the extent legally permissible. (Imp. 29.2)
- **Policy HR-2.2: Prehistoric and Ethnohistoric Context Statement.** Consider completing, and updating as needed, a Prehistoric and Ethnohistoric Context Statement to serve as a template for identifying, evaluating, and developing plans for the treatment of archaeological resources found within Newport Beach. (Imp. 10.1, 29.2)
- **Policy HR-2.3: New Development Activities.** Require that new development meet the applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act with respect to paleontological and archaeological resources. (Imp. 11.1)

## Preservation of Historical Resources

Preserving the City’s history is essential for maintaining its unique identity and cultural heritage. By celebrating and safeguarding historically significant landmarks, sites, structures, and legacy businesses, the City can honor the stories and achievements of past generations. Further, by recognizing and celebrating those who have contributed to Newport Beach’s past, present, and future, our storied history can be captured. The recognition and protection of history not only enriches a community’s sense of place and continuity, but fosters civic pride and can attract tourism.

### *Goal HR-3: Celebrate, preserve, and protect local history*

- **Policy HR-3.1: Adaptive Reuse.** Encourage alternatives to demolition of historical sites and structures by promoting architecturally compatible rehabilitation or adaptive reuse. Consider incentives for maintaining historical sites and structures, such as permit and application fee waivers, flexible building requirements, and free technical advice by person(s) qualified in historic preservation. (Imp. 8.2, 29.2)
- **Policy HR-3.2: Historical Components within New Projects.** Encourage proposed development located on a historic site or structure to incorporate a physical link to the past within the site or structural design if preservation or adaptive reuse is not a feasible option. For example, consider incorporating historical photographs or artifacts within the new project or preserve the location and structures of existing pathways, gathering places, seating areas, rail lines, roadways, or viewing vantage points within the new site design. (Imp. 1.1, 29.2)
- **Policy HR-3.3: Mills Act.** Consider development of a voluntary local Mills Act program to offset the ongoing stewardship and care of historic properties through property tax savings. (Imp. 8.2)
- **Policy HR-3.4: Legacy Businesses.** Consider developing a legacy business program that aims to recognize, honor, and support longstanding businesses within the community that have made significant contributions to Newport Beach’s history, culture, and identity. The program may include the promotion of legacy businesses and potential grants. (Imp. 8.2)

## Celebrating Historical Resources

Education is a key tool for enshrining the City’s history and ensuring that future generations appreciate and understand this heritage. Integrating local history into programs and events sponsored by the City, library, and others, and promoting it through various media can create a well-informed community that values its roots. This awareness not only enhances residents’ connection to Newport Beach, but also helps future generations value the past.

The foundational history of tribal nations in the region provides unique insight into the importance of cultural places. Native American groups and individuals hold special interest in the protection of cultural places. Tribal views toward protection and preservation of cultural resources in Newport Beach should be respected, and the history of tribal nations should be recognized and acknowledged.

### *Goal HR-4: Enshrine local history through education*

- **Policy HR-4.1: Historical Landmarks.** Encourage the placement of historical landmarks, photographs, markers, or plaques at areas of historical interest or value. Consider creating a Landmark Plan that will recognize and designate culturally important heritage sites that are eligible for the placement of historical landmarks or plaques. The Landmark Plan may also identify funding opportunities to support the program, such as development fees, corporate or civic sponsorships, or donations, or by using the City’s General Fund. (Imp. 8.2, 9.1, 10.1, 29.2)

- **Policy HR-4.2: Local Interest.** Consider expanding interest in and knowledge of local history through historic landmarks, photographs, markers, and plaques, and/or through self-guided walking tours as a means to promote and celebrate historic preservation. Such information may be published on the City's website and social media channels and be made available through local publications to encourage thoughtful conversation about the history of Newport Beach. (Imp. 1.1, 29.1, 29.2, 30.1)
- **Policy HR-4.3: Historic Preservation and Tourism.** Encourage collaboration with local preservation organizations, such as the Newport Beach Historical Society, to research, conduct outreach, and develop programs and activities to encourage and support historic preservation and tourism. (Imp. 14.16)
- **Policy HR-4.4: Educational Collaboration.** Encourage collaboration with local educational institutions on preservation programs, activities, and exhibits/collections. (Imp. 14.2, 29.2)
- **Policy HR-4.5: Information Sharing.** Consider encouragement of partnerships between local interested parties and historical societies to consolidate and share materials such as historical photographs, firsthand historical accounts and interviews, and any additional archival information. This may be done through the establishment of a City-recognized historical society or platform that welcomes representatives from various groups to share resources and collectively provide input to the City on historical resources. (Imp. 29.2)

*Goal HR-5: Celebrate tribal cultural resources*

- **Policy HR-5.1: Government-to-Government Relationships.** Encourage fostering government-to-government relationships with California Native American tribes in Newport Beach regarding issues of mutual concern. (Imp. 11.1)
- **Policy HR-5.2: Historic Themes.** Consider the use of foundational local history themes in public spaces that highlight California Native American tribes, in coordination with tribal representatives. (Imp. 29.2)
- **Policy HR-5.3: Environmental Analysis.** Require that new development meet the applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act with respect to tribal cultural resources. (Imp. 11.1)