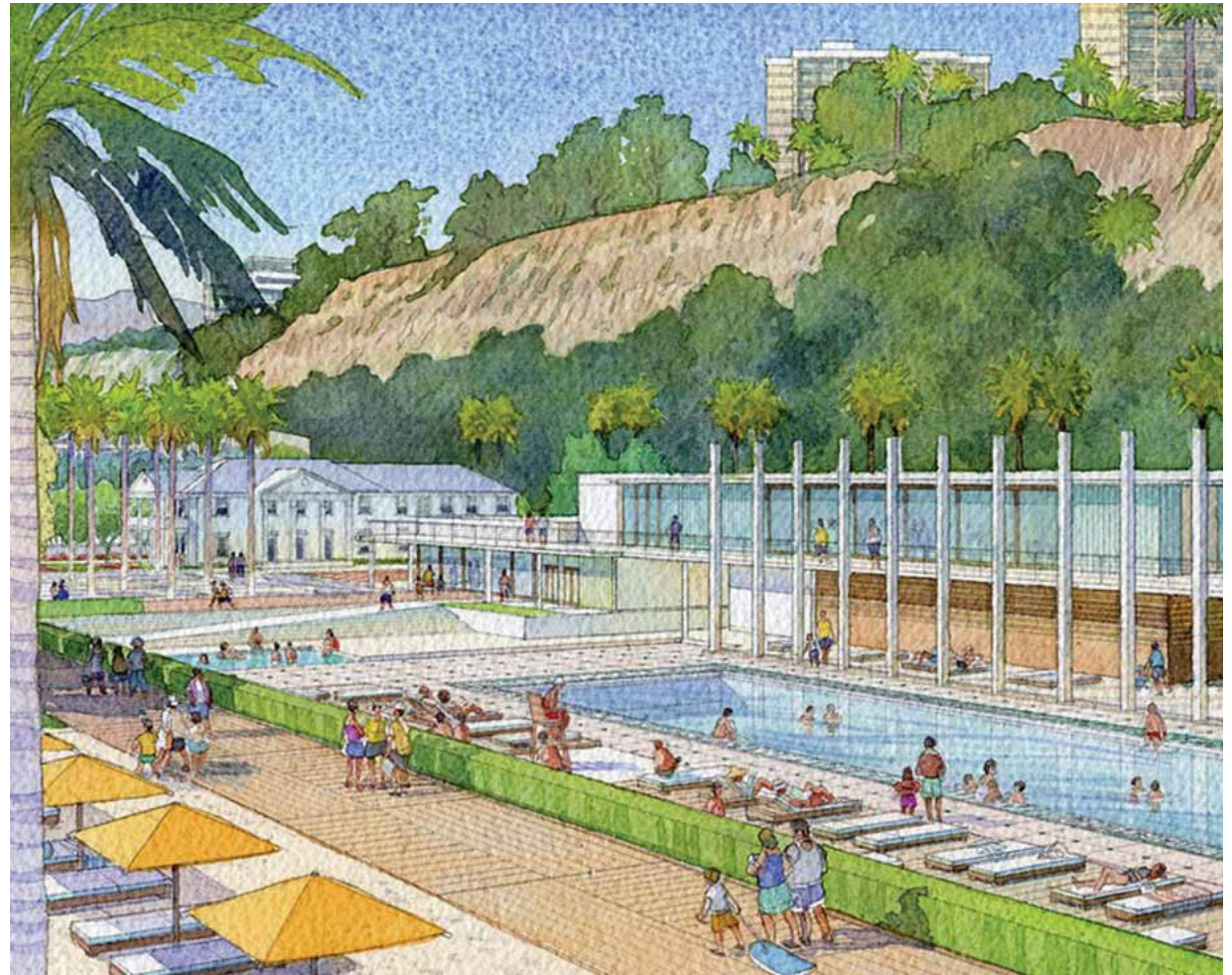


historic preservation

From the first sale of lots along Santa Monica's golden coast in 1875 until today, Santa Monicans have been engaged in constructing a city of beauty, harmony and great variety. These features are reflected in a mix of architectural styles from different periods of the community's growth as the City evolved along the coastline, the beach and rail lines. The City's founders created a famed resort with national visitor attractions including beaches, piers, the Palisades Bluffs, the Loeff Hippodrome and a City of vision with lively and elegant architecture.

From these auspicious beginnings, Santa Monica has evolved to be one of California's most architecturally, culturally and historically significant communities. In order to protect what is unique and valued within the City, the LUCE land use policies ensure that Historic Preservation is a fundamental community value incorporated throughout the Plan. The recommendations in this chapter, in the Neighborhood Conservation chapter and in the policies for retaining Santa Monica's



Adaptive reuse of historic structures, like the Annenberg Community Beach House, preserves and enhances Santa Monica's character.



The Third Street Neighborhood Historic District was designated in 1990 and consists of 43 contributing buildings constructed between 1875 and 1930.



The Historic Preservation Element integrates existing programs and policies and creates new avenues for the preservation of Landmarks like the Parkhurst Building at 185 Pier Avenue.

established urban form on its boulevards and in its districts, are all designed to work in concert to ensure that the City's past inspires its future, and gives it meaning. In this way, the LUCE provides a comprehensive range of preservation and conservation measures designed to protect the defining features that make the City unique. These goals and policies are consistent with the City's Historic Preservation Element and will assist in achieving its vision.

Over the years, the community began to note that the bright vision of its early founders was beginning to dim. In the early 1970s, residents concerned about the potential demolition of the Santa Monica Pier focused their attention on preserving the structure that has been one of the major contributors to Santa Monica's unique character and heritage. Their actions were successful, and it was from these beginnings, led by a handful of dedicated citizens, that a strong historic preservation program evolved. In 1975, the City Council created a Historical Site Committee which began to develop standards and procedures for landmark designation. A year later, on March 24, 1976, the Committee's work culminated with the Council's adoption of the Landmarks and Historic District Ordinance.

In 1990, Santa Monica designated its first historic district—a small neighborhood

in Ocean Park called the Third Street Neighborhood Historic District consisting of 43 contributing buildings constructed between 1875 and 1930. A second, much smaller district, the Bay Street Craftsman Cluster (also in Ocean Park) was later designated. Through the beginning of 2009, the Landmarks Commission designated 89 individual City Landmarks, four Structures of Merit and two historic districts.

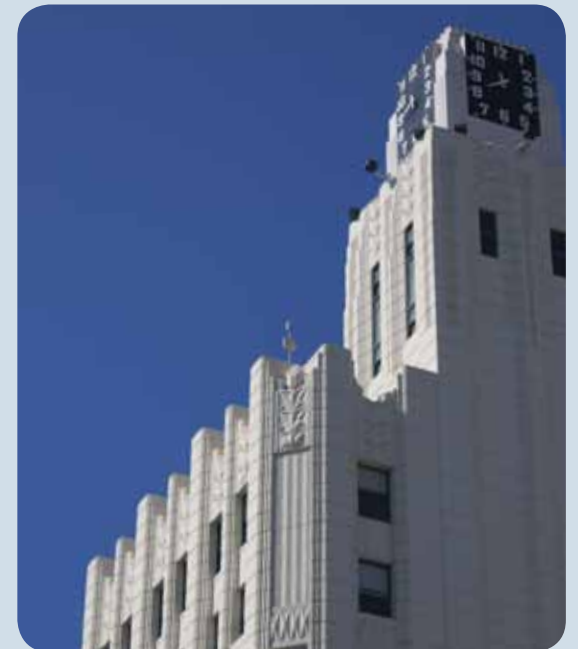
Since 1992, the City of Santa Monica has maintained its status as a Certified Local Government under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act. The City's preservation program was greatly enriched with the adoption of the Historic Preservation Element of the General Plan in September 2002. The Element now serves as a blueprint to guide the work of the City's Landmarks Commission and to promote historic preservation through integration with the City's planning processes.

In addition, the periodic updates to the City's Historic Resources Inventory are a valuable tool for understanding the location and status of key historic structures and resources. The updates will inform the development of policies and programs in the Land Use Element such as neighborhood conservation, specific planning and consideration for the future activity centers and Expo Light Rail stations.

KEY PRESERVATION ISSUES

City residents and public officials have identified the following historic preservation issues:

- Great strides have been made in the preservation program. However, interpreting the historic designation criteria continues to challenge those who care about Santa Monica's important resources.
- There is a need for other preservation mechanisms that deter demolition or allow recognition of resources that embody an aspect of the City's historical fabric, but may not meet the Landmark designation threshold.
- There is a need for mechanisms to ensure compatibility between the City's design objectives for new buildings in the character-defining areas that comprise Santa Monica's sense of place (e.g., Downtown, "The Gold Coast," and Ocean Park) that will prevent further loss of the historic fabric.
- There is a need to offer more tangible economic incentives for property owners to help retain structures that embody the City's diverse architectural and cultural history.
- There is a desire for the development of staff review guidelines for changes to resources such as an alteration, renovation and/or window replacement to safeguard against degradation of historic resources due to lack of maintenance or inappropriate maintenance.
- There is a need to modify demolition regulations to provide for a process of enhanced public noticing requirements and administrative review of written documentation.
- There is a need to acknowledge the importance of courtyard housing and its ground floor open space to the fabric of the City's neighborhoods.
- A conservation approach which provides both protections to character-defining neighborhood attributes and allows evolution over time is needed.
- There is a desire to acknowledge the importance of maintaining and nurturing mature trees and landscaping on the adjacent public streetscape and the sensitive maintenance and replacement of historic lights and sidewalks.



Historic buildings are located throughout most areas of the City and speak to Santa Monica's colorful past. A study of the homes, buildings and landmarks reveals much about the City and its former inhabitants.

historic preservation

The LUCE supplements the City's Historic Preservation Element by actively integrating the preservation of historic resources into planning efforts throughout the City. The Plan includes policies to ensure that the City continues to protect what is unique and valued on a citywide and neighborhood level, including Palisades Park and the bluffs; Santa Monica Pier; and neighborhood streetscapes, architecture, and building scale.

VISION

Santa Monica continues to celebrate its past by preserving attributes that characterize and represent the City's rich history. The City is aware that its historic resources are irreplaceable and help to form the core of its being. Through the LUCE, preservation and conservation efforts are integrated into the planning process and the City employs an expanded range of tools and incentives to ensure that preservation of historic properties is economically feasible.

Some owners of historic properties need economic incentives to be able to afford the repairs required to adequately maintain their properties. Without these incentives, historic properties could be lost by neglect or sale and redevelopment. Accordingly, the City examines incentives such as the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), whereby the property owner of a historic structure receives cash for selling its unused development rights to owners of



Sustainable adaptive reuse benefits the entire region. Transforming the aged Marion Davies Estate into the award-winning Annenberg Community Beach House provides an excellent example of this practice.

properties in growth areas. Other options available offer tax deductions under a conservation easement program and property tax reductions under the Mills Act.

There is also a need to regulate the demolition or redevelopment of historic or character-defining structures, especially those within a designated Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District. Regulation changes may also be needed to preserve the orientation and site planning characteristics of the ground level open space typical of courtyard housing.

Sustainable Benefits from Historic Preservation

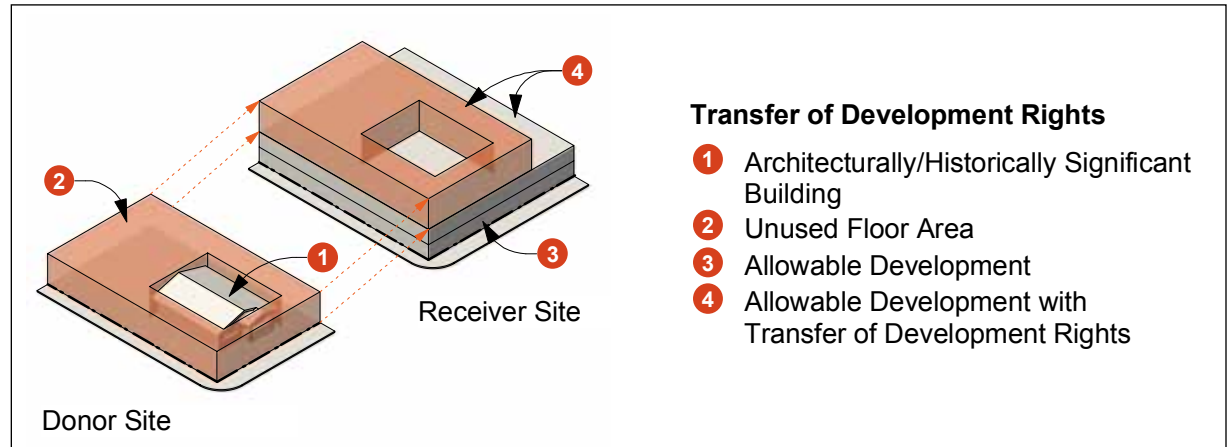
The benefits of historic preservation are widely accepted in terms of aesthetic, cultural and



social results, but the inherent sustainability aspects of this conservation approach have often not been fully appreciated. Today, however, it is widely recognized that the most sustainable building is the one already built and that the adaptive reuse or rehabilitation of existing buildings and the preservation of historic structures reduces consumption of raw materials, material production and the resulting carbon impact. The LUCE embraces historic preservation not only for its important role in preserving the character-defining features which make Santa Monica unique, but also for the critical contribution it makes in helping the community achieve its sustainability goals.

Transfer of Development Rights

A program that can provide additional financial incentives for the preservation of historic or character-defining neighborhood resources. The excess development rights from a site containing an historic resource are sold to another site located on the transit corridors or in activity center overlays.



Transfer of Development Rights Program:

In order to provide additional financial incentives for the preservation of historic resources, the LUCE identifies historic preservation as a core value of the community and a key community benefit. To ensure that future development contributes to the City and the community, the LUCE lowers the by right base height of new development and requires any building that wishes to go above the base height to contribute a variety of significant, tangible community benefits. As an identified community benefit, a historic structure could participate in a program of TDR along selected transit corridors and districts (receiving areas) identified within the LUCE. Frequently, the lack of capacity in a receiving area inhibits the implementation of such a program. However, the LUCE has identified a

select number of suitable sites with proximity to transit, particularly along the Expo Light Rail line, for new development. It is important to understand that the goal of the TDR program is to assist in implementing community goals.

In essence, the TDR program allows developers to purchase development rights (e.g. additional floor area, or other development rights) from one property (the sending area/site) to allow additional development on a new site (receiving area). The sale of unused development rights from properties with historic resources can provide important financial compensation for retaining older and smaller-scale historic structures. The sale is officially recorded and typically accompanied by a permanent maintenance agreement which also restricts future development. This accomplishes two things: (1) it provides an economic incentive for the resources needed

for preserving and maintaining a historic resource, and (2) it ensures the permanent maintenance of the resource.

The Downtown core contains the highest concentration of commercial buildings in the City with historic and cultural value. This area may be suitable for priority designation as a sending area. However, jurisdictions are not only limited to designating areas but may also designate a category of structure, such as a Landmark structure or character-defining courtyard structure as a sending site. Sending area owners do not have to participate in the program, but should they participate, they must record a covenant which requires the resource to be maintained and restrict future development. They then are allowed to sell their unused development rights. There are many variations in the operations of a TDR program, but a central challenge is



The Neighborhood Conservation program includes tools to preserve character-defining architectural, landscape and contextual features in residential neighborhoods.

the establishment or assignment of correct valuation to the “right” being sold.

Conservation Easement Programs

A second form of economic incentive available for the preservation and maintenance of historic resources is the establishment of a conservation easement program. Whereas the TDR program entails the sale of development rights, a conservation easement involves a “donation” of development rights, providing the donating owner with consideration by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for a tax deduction of this “gift.”

A historic preservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement made between a property owner (donor) and a qualified easement holding organization (donee) to protect a

significant historic property by restricting future changes to and/or development of the property. The donor may gift an entire site or a portion thereof, such as the façade or significant interior rooms. Each easement is tailored to the individual needs and requirements set forth by the property owner and agreed upon by the accepting organization. Under the IRS Qualified Conservation Contribution, the owner of a qualified real property can receive income tax deductions equivalent to the value of the rights given away to a qualified charitable or governmental organization. Depending on the jurisdiction, additional financial benefits may be available in the form of reduced estate, gift and local property taxes.

Easements are granted in perpetuity. Once recorded in the property records, an easement becomes part of the property’s chain of title and “runs with the land.” The easement transfers upon sale to the new owners.

A qualified organization is recognized by the IRS as one that is committed to protecting the historic preservation purposes of the donation. It is generally a governmental agency or a charitable organization (501(c)(3)), such as a historic preservation organization. A preservation easement gives the organization that holds it the legal authority to enforce the restrictions written in the easement

document. The grantee organization monitors the property at least once a year, maintaining written records of the visit, and ensuring that the terms of the easement are being followed. For example, the San Francisco Architectural Heritage organization plays such a role in San Francisco.

Neighborhood Conservation Programs


In addition to the Historic Preservation goals and policies in this chapter, the LUCE also provides a Neighborhood Conservation Program for protection of character-defining structures that embody an aspect of the City’s historical or cultural fabric, but may not meet the landmark designation threshold. The Plan also proposes that a new definition of “demolition” be developed along with a process for implementation which is designed to achieve community goals. This process could require findings for demolition applications that require consideration of the full range of issues that define neighborhood character, including aesthetic, social and cultural attributes. It also requires administrative review of written documentation provided in support of the demolition application.

(See chapter 2.2 Neighborhood Conservation for further information.)

CITYWIDE GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL HP1: Preserve and protect historic resources in Santa Monica through the land use decision-making process.


POLICIES:


HP1.1  Follow policies for historic preservation contained in the Historic Preservation Element when making land use decisions.

HP1.2 Maintain and regularly update the Historic Resources Inventory.


HP1.3 Ensure that new development, alterations or remodeling on, or adjacent to, historic properties are sensitive to historic resources and are compatible with the surrounding historic context.

HP1.4 Continue to support Landmarks Commission review and public input for all structures proposed for demolition that are more than 40 years old.


HP1.5  Support rehabilitation and restoration of historic resources through flexible zoning policies such as the in-kind replacement of nonconforming features and reduced parking requirements.

HP1.6  Promote awareness of adopted historic preservation policies, and the greenhouse gas reduction value of historic preservation and adaptive reuse.

HP1.7  Develop tools to address the conservation of unique and valued character-defining features in residential neighborhoods to preserve and enhance the existing architecture, scale, landscape and context.

HP1.8  Encourage the preservation and regular maintenance of mature trees and landscaping that contribute to the unique character of a neighborhood.

HP1.9 Promote the availability of financial incentives for historic preservation such as tax abatement, economic development, the Transfer of Development Rights, and conservation easements.


HP1.10  Review proposed developments for potential impacts on unique archaeological resources, paleontological resources, and human remains or associated funerary objects, and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to protect or document the resource.



The new Neighborhood Conservation Program promises to employ a variety of tools to preserve, protect and enhance the quality and character of the City's residential neighborhoods.



Updating the Historic Resources Inventory is an important ongoing task that provides additional protections against demolition of significant buildings.

 denotes sustainable policy

GOAL HP2: Preserve and protect historic resources through the development of economic incentives and neighborhood conservation approaches.

POLICIES:

HP2.1 🌿 Establish a program for the Transfer of Development Rights for significant historic resources and character-defining structures in Neighborhood Conservation Districts or the Downtown area. Define such districts or individual resources as a community benefit and eligible as a sending area and/or sending site. Identify receiving areas such as boulevards, transit corridors, activity centers and Mixed-Use Creative Districts.

HP2.2 🌿 Pursue and support a conservation easement program to allow owners of historic properties to earn a one-time income tax deduction through the donation of a property easement to a qualified preservation organization.

HP2.3 🌿 Establish Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts where appropriate but particularly in areas that contribute to Santa Monica's sense of place, and develop criteria for protection of neighborhood historic resources and character-defining structures and features such as streetscape, architecture, and scale in such a district.



Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts and other programs like Transfer of Development Rights and conservation easements combine to form a menu of solutions to preserve and protect valued historic or cultural resources.

HP2.4 🌿 Continue to encourage the preservation of homes with historic and architectural significance.

GOAL HP3: Integrate historic preservation practices into sustainable development decisions.

POLICIES:

HP3.1 🌿 Develop incentives to encourage preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings as a means of reducing the use of raw materials and realizing sustainable development goals.

HP3.2 🌿 Ensure that the promotion of sustainability technologies, such as solar panel installations and sustainable retrofitting are incorporated in such a way as to not adversely impact historic resources.

HP3.3 Incorporate conservation of historic resources located within the boundaries of specific plans into the Plan's overall design.

HP3.4 🌿 Support inclusion of historic preservation as a community benefit in development above the base.



The LUCE recommends providing incentives that encourage preservation and adaptive reuse. This former church in the Ocean Park neighborhood was converted into a house—a sustainable approach to repurposing older buildings.

ACTIONS

- Revise the Historic Preservation Element to include goals and indicators as appropriate to reflect LUCE policies.
- Update the Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) on an ongoing basis.
- Develop a Transfer of Development Rights program to promote preservation and maintenance of the City's historic resources, including those listed on the HRI and designated Landmarks and Historic Districts.

- Pursue a conservation easement program to promote preservation and maintenance of the City's historic resources.
- Coordinate Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts with the HRI.
- Incorporate the HRI into the City's permits system and update appropriately.

- Develop administrative procedures and staff review guidelines to ensure that alterations to properties listed on the HRI are reviewed for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of historic properties.
- Develop measures in the Santa Monica Zoning Ordinance to address appropriate additions to, and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
- Continue to require that all demolition permit applications for structures that are more than 40 years old are reviewed by the Landmarks Commission and ensure consistency with requirements of the revised demolition definition and administrative review procedures.
- Incorporate indicators to measure achievement of historic preservation goals into the *Sustainable City Plan*.

The City will continue to oversee preservation of designated historic properties through the planning and zoning process. Community awareness of Landmark and historic preservation programs will be expanded and promoted.

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