

Historic Preservation

Historic sites and structures provide an educational link to San José's past and foster a sense of place and community identity for San José. The preservation of appropriate remnants of a city's past provides multiple benefits important to the health and progress of the city. Historical resources:

- Are instructive, telling the story of a community's past;
- Provide a sense of civic identity and unique character;
- Are typically an interesting and pleasing aesthetic in the urban environment;
- Can generate economic advantage for a property or neighborhood;
- Give a community a sense of permanency. A place with a clear past can expect to also have a definite future;
- Once lost, cannot be recovered.

For purposes of this section in the *Envision San José 2040 General Plan*, the following definitions are applicable:

- "Landmark" means City Landmark structure, Contributing Structure in a City Landmark Historic District, structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places and/or the California Register of Historical Resources, a Contributing Structure in a National Register Historic District, or a structure that qualifies for any of the above (candidate), based on the applicable City, State, or National qualification criteria.



- A “Historic District” is a City Landmark or National Register Historic District.
- A “candidate” historic landmark or district is an area in which formal proceedings have begun to designate a structure or area as such or an area which has been surveyed by a qualified consultant and determined to be eligible as a historic landmark or district.
- A “Conservation Area” is a geographically definable area of urban or rural character with identifiable attributes embodied by: (1) architecture, urban design, development patterns, setting, or geography; and (2) history. Conservation Areas are identified by the City Council based upon criteria in the City’s Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Goal LU-13 – Landmarks and Districts

Preserve and enhance historic landmarks and districts in order to promote a greater sense of historic awareness and community identity and contribute toward a sense of place.

Policies – Landmarks and Districts

- LU-13.1** Preserve the integrity and fabric of candidate or designated Historic Districts.
- LU-13.2** Preserve candidate or designated landmark buildings, structures and historic objects, with first priority given to preserving and rehabilitating them for their historic use, second to preserving and rehabilitating them for a new use, or third to rehabilitation and relocation on-site. If the City concurs that no other option is feasible, candidate or designated landmark structures should be rehabilitated and relocated to a new site in an appropriate setting.
- LU-13.3** For landmark structures located within new development areas, incorporate the landmark structures within the new development as a means to create a sense of place, contribute to a vibrant economy, provide a connection to the past, and make more attractive employment, shopping, and residential areas.
- LU-13.4** Require public and private development projects to conform to the adopted City Council Policy on the Preservation of Historic Landmarks.
- LU-13.5** Evaluate areas with a concentration of historically and/or architecturally significant buildings, structures, or sites and, if qualified, preserve them through the creation of Historic Districts.
- LU-13.6** Ensure modifications to candidate or designated landmark buildings or structures conform to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties and/or appropriate State of California requirements regarding historic buildings and/or structures, including the California Historical Building Code.
- LU-13.7** Design new development, alterations, and rehabilitation/remodels within a designated or candidate Historic District to be compatible with the character of the Historic District and conform to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, appropriate State of California

requirements regarding historic buildings and/or structures (including the California Historic Building Code) and to applicable historic design guidelines adopted by the City Council.

- LU-13.8** Require that new development, alterations, and rehabilitation/remodels adjacent to a designated or candidate landmark or Historic District be designed to be sensitive to its character.
- LU-13.9** Promote the preservation, conservation, rehabilitation, restoration, reuse, and/or reconstruction, as appropriate, of contextual elements (e.g., structures, landscapes, street lamps, street trees, sidewalk design, signs) related to candidate and/or landmark buildings, structures, districts, or areas.
- LU-13.10** Ensure City public works projects (street lights, street tree plantings, sidewalk design, etc.) promote, preserve, or enhance the historic character of Historic Districts.
- LU-13.11** Maintain and update an Historic Resources Inventory in order to promote awareness of these community resources and as a tool to further their preservation. Give priority to identifying and establishing Historic Districts.
- LU-13.12** Develop and encourage public/public and public/private partnerships as a means to support, expand, and promote historic preservation.
- LU-13.13** Foster the rehabilitation of buildings, structures, areas, places, and districts of historic significance. Utilize incentives permitting flexibility as to their uses; transfer of development rights; tax relief for designated landmarks and districts; easements; alternative building code provisions for the reuse of historic structures; and financial incentives.
- LU-13.14** Advocate for the continuation and appropriate expansion of Federal and State tax and/or other incentives for the rehabilitation and/or restoration of historically or architecturally significant buildings, structures, areas, and/or places.
- LU-13.15** Implement City, State, and Federal historic preservation laws, regulations, and codes to ensure the adequate protection of historic resources.
- LU-13.16** Alert property owners, land developers, and the building industry to historic preservation goals and policies and their implications early in the development process.

Actions – Landmarks and Districts

- LU-13.17** Amend the City’s Historic Preservation Ordinance to specify that a Contributing Structure to a City Historic District is eligible for consideration of a Mills Act contract and to require Historic Preservation Permits and/or Adjustments for modifications to buildings, structures, and/or sites in a National Register Historic District.



- LU-13.18** Explore establishing a grant program for historic preservation, potentially partnering with Preservation Action Council San José, History San José, or other organizations.
- LU-13.19** Continue to identify landmarks, landmark districts and Conservation Areas on the Land Use/Transportation Diagram as Areas of Historic Sensitivity.
- LU-13.20** Explore funding options and techniques to proactively conduct additional historic surveys and to maintain and update the City's Historic Resources Inventory. As funding allows, undertake comprehensive area-wide surveys of the City to identify potential Historic Districts, Cultural Landscapes at the City's edge, and significant buildings and/or structures, including Traditional Cultural Properties.
- LU-13.21** Implement strategic General Plan and zoning changes as indicated by federal, state or municipal "Historic" or "Conservation Area" designations, in order to maintain neighborhood vitality and character and to preserve the integrity of historic structures located within those neighborhoods. To preserve predominantly single-family historic neighborhoods, rezone residential structures located in these areas to a single-family zoning designation.
- LU-13.22** Require the submittal of historic reports and surveys prepared as part of the environmental review process. Materials shall be provided to the City in electronic form once they are considered complete and acceptable.
- LU-13.23** Maintain a file of historic survey reports by location by the City of San Jose to make the information retrievable for research purposes.
- LU-13.24** For vacant lands at the edge of the Urban Growth Boundary in the Almaden, Alviso, and Coyote Planning Areas, require investigation during the development review process to determine whether significant Cultural Landscapes or Traditional Cultural Properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places may be affected by the project and then require, if needed, that appropriate mitigation measures be incorporated into the project design.



Goal LU-14 – Historic Structures of Lesser Significance

Preserve and enhance historic structures of lesser significance (i.e., Structures of Merit, Identified Structures, and particularly Historic Conservation Areas) as appropriate, so that they remain as a representation of San José's past and contribute to a positive identity for the City's future.

Policies – Historic Structures of Lesser Significance

- LU-14.1** Preserve the integrity and enhance the fabric of areas or neighborhoods with a cohesive historic character as a means to maintain a connection between the various structures in the area.
- LU-14.2** Give high priority to the preservation of historic structures that contribute to an informal cluster or a Conservation Area; have a special value in the community;

are a good fit for preservation within a new project; have a compelling design and/or an important designer; etc.

- LU-14.3** Design new development, alterations, and rehabilitation/remodels in Conservation Areas to be compatible with the character of the Conservation Area. In particular, projects should respect character defining elements of the area that give the area its identity. These defining characteristics could vary from area to area and could include density, scale, architectural consistency, architectural variety, landscape, etc.
- LU-14.4** Discourage demolition of any building or structure listed on or eligible for the Historic Resources Inventory as a Structure of Merit by pursuing the alternatives of rehabilitation, re-use on the subject site, and/or relocation of the resource.
- LU-14.5** Continue and strengthen enforcement programs, such as those addressing vacant buildings, to promote the maintenance and survival of all classes of the city's historic and cultural resources.
- LU-14.6** Consider preservation of Structures of Merit and Contributing Structures in Conservation Areas as a key consideration in the development review process. As development proposals are submitted, evaluate the significance of structures, complete non-Historic American Building Survey level of documentation, list qualifying structures on the Historic Resources Inventory, and consider the feasibility of incorporating structures into the development proposal, particularly those structures that contribute to the fabric of Conservation Areas.
- LU-14.7** Ensure City public works projects (street lights, street tree planting, sidewalk design, etc.) promote, preserve, or enhance the historic character of Conservation Areas.
- LU-14.8** Perform modifications to the exterior of any building or structure located in a Conservation Area in a manner consistent with any and all design guidelines approved or accepted by the City Council for the preservation of historic buildings or structures.

Actions – Historic Structures of Lesser Significance

- LU-14.9** Amend applicable design guidelines and City policies to add flexibility in the development review process (for example, with regulations related to parking, independently accessible private open spaces, requirement for units to be attached, etc.) to encourage the preservation, conservation, rehabilitation, reuse, or relocation of historic resources consistent with the character and needs of the surrounding properties and uses.

Goal LU-15 – Public Awareness

Increase public awareness and understanding of the history of San José, historic preservation, and its importance to the economic and cultural vitality of the City.

Policies – Public Awareness

- LU-15.1** Encourage widespread public participation in the identification and designation of historically or culturally significant buildings, structures, sites, areas, and/or places to update and maintain the City’s Historic Resources Inventory.
- LU-15.2** Foster a community sense of stewardship and personal responsibility for all historic and cultural resources.
- LU-15.3** Encourage public accessibility and/or use of City Landmark, California Register, and National Register buildings, structures, areas, places, and sites, even if only for temporary or special events.
- LU-15.4** Educate/inform the public of the importance of San José’s strong historic connections to past industry. To serve as a link between San José’s present and past, preserve historical resources from agriculture to high-tech whenever possible, feasible, and appropriate.

Actions – Public Awareness

- LU-15.5** Work with neighborhood groups and historic preservation advocacy groups on events, materials, and efforts to educate the public on the positive benefits of historic preservation generally and in specific neighborhoods.
- LU-15.6** Expand resources such as historic maps, historic markers, or self-guided walking tours as a means to promote and celebrate historic preservation in San José.

Goal LU-16 – Sustainable Practices

Preserve, conserve, and/or rehabilitate historic structures as a means to achieve the City of San José’s environmental, economic, and fiscal sustainability goals.

Policies – Sustainable Practices

- LU-16.1** Integrate historic preservation practices into development decisions based upon fiscal, economic, and environmental sustainability.
- LU-16.2** Evaluate the materials and energy resource consumption implications of new construction to encourage preservation of historic resources.
- LU-16.3** Encourage sustainable energy, water, and material choices that are historically compatible as part of the preservation, conservation, rehabilitation, and/or reuse of historical resources.
- LU-16.4** Require development approvals that include demolition of a structure eligible for or listed on the Historic Resources Inventory to salvage the resource’s building materials and architectural elements to allow re-use of those elements and materials and avoid the energy costs of producing new and disposing of old building materials.
- LU-16.5** Utilize the aesthetic and cultural qualities of historic resources of all types as means of promoting San José as a place to live, work and visit consistent with the City’s economic development goals.

Actions – Sustainable Practices

- LU-16.6** Explore the revision of the Construction and Demolition Diversion Deposit (CDDD) program to eliminate the deposit requirement for projects proposing rehabilitation of a historic landmark, a property in a Historic District, or the conservation of more than 75% of a Structure of Merit or structure in a Conservation Area.
- LU-16.7** Work with agencies, organizations, property owners, and business interests to develop and promote heritage tourism opportunities as an economic development tool.

Rural Residential, Lower Hillside and Open Hillside Areas

The Rural Residential, Lower Hillside and Open Hillside designated areas are natural resources that provide a valuable scenic backdrop for much of the City and serve as habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals. The Goals & Policies in this section seek to preserve and protect these hillside and rural areas as positive contributors to San José while also protecting the public from the natural hazards, such as landslides or fires, which can occur in these areas. Because areas designated as Rural Residential, Lower Hillside or Open Hillside on the Land Use/Transportation Diagram are often located on slopes greater than seven percent, and in some cases greater than fifteen percent, their development typically requires significant grading activities which are addressed in these Policies. Areas with slopes greater than thirty percent are typically ridgelines that need special treatment to protect views from the valley and to prevent exposure to hazards. For purposes of this section, all areas designated as Hillside, Rural Residential, or Open Hillside on the Land Use / Transportation Diagram are referred to as hillside and/or rural residential areas. The policies in this section complement and must be considered in conjunction with other parts of this Plan, including but not limited to the Urban Growth Boundary Policies and the Land Use/Transportation Diagram designations for individual properties.