



Casa Gardens by Carolyn Pelkey

Historic Preservation Element

Incorporated in 1928, the City of San Clemente was among the first master planned communities in the U.S. built from open grazing land. Before erecting a single structure on the rolling coastal hills, the City's founder, Ole Hanson, laid out a detailed plan, based on his vision of a Spanish Village by the Sea. His plan was to create a town which followed the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style and which promoted the area's natural gifts and recreational opportunities. It included restaurants, a clubhouse, residences, public parks, a public pool, a fishing pier, and even equestrian trails. This was truly a vision of a place which celebrated beauty, mild Mediterranean climate and its stunning coastal setting.

Over time, Hanson's carefully planned "Village" grew and changed, often in a manner that contrasted sharply with Hanson's Vision. By the 1980s, the City had already lost several Hanson-era buildings and citizens were beginning to recognize the value of its historic buildings. The City's 1982 General Plan first recognized the importance of maintaining San Clemente's historic image as the "Spanish Village by the Sea", and the 1993 General Plan established the framework for a new historic preservation program.

San Clemente strengthened its commitment to the restoration and preservation of historical resources in 1996 when it became a [Certified Local Government](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/clg/) pursuant to the [National Historic Preservation Act](http://www.achp.gov/nhpa.html). In 2006, San Clemente was federally recognized as a

[Preserve America City](http://www.preserveamerica.gov/) [http://www.preserveamerica.gov/]. The City's Cultural Heritage Subcommittee of the Planning Commission advises citizens, City advisory bodies and the City Council on historic and cultural preservation matters. The City maintains a [Designated Historic Resources List](#) [staff to provide link] and a [Landmark List](#) [staff to provide link] that identify historic buildings, features, sites and districts worthy of preservation. The City offers incentives for historic preservation, such as special zoning standards for historic buildings and the [Mills Act](http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21412) [http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21412] Program. Historic properties are protected through the review and issuance of [Cultural Heritage Permits](http://san-clemente.org/sc/Services/Planning/HistoricPreservation/CHP.pdf) [http://san-clemente.org/sc/Services/Planning/HistoricPreservation/CHP.pdf].

San Clemente citizens recognize the value of preserving their heritage through the Cultural Resource Preservation Element's goals, policies and related implementation measures. While there is value in preservation for preservation's sake, historic preservation benefits extend to the community's economic and physical well-being. San Clemente's historic and cultural resources are major components of the community's quality of life and critical to the City's ability to attract residents, businesses and visitors.

PRIMARY GOAL:

To preserve, rehabilitate, restore and adaptively reuse buildings, features, sites, and districts with archaeological, historical, architectural, or cultural significance to San Clemente.

SECONDARY GOALS:

1. Use Historic Preservation as a tool to foster tourism and local economic development.
2. Recognize Historic Preservation as a form of sustainable development by supporting adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
3. Recognize historic and cultural resources as essential aspects of the City's character and heritage.
4. Provide incentives to encourage historic preservation.

GOAL AND POLICY SECTIONS:

1. [Heritage Promotion](#)
2. [Historic Preservation Standards and Regulations](#)
3. [Preservation Incentives](#)
4. [Historic Preservation for Economic Development](#)
5. [Historic Preservation Implementation Measures](#)

ADDITIONAL LINKS

- [History of San Clemente](http://san-clemente.org/sc/standard.aspx?pageid=68) [http://san-clemente.org/sc/standard.aspx?pageid=68]
- [Historic Resources Survey](http://san-clemente.org/sc/Services/Planning/HistoricPreservation/HistoricSurvey.pdf) [http://san-clemente.org/sc/Services/Planning/HistoricPreservation/HistoricSurvey.pdf]
- [Historic Preservation and Sustainability Brochure](#)

- [\[http://san-clemente.org/sc/Services/Planning/HistoricPreservation/Sustainability.pdf\]](http://san-clemente.org/sc/Services/Planning/HistoricPreservation/Sustainability.pdf)
- Cultural Heritage Permits [\[http://san-clemente.org/sc/Services/Planning/HistoricPreservation/CHP.pdf\]](http://san-clemente.org/sc/Services/Planning/HistoricPreservation/CHP.pdf)
- National Historic Preservation Act [\[http://www.achp.gov/nhpa.html\]](http://www.achp.gov/nhpa.html)
- Mills Act [\[http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21412\]](http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21412)
- Certified Local Government Program [\[http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/clg/\]](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/clg/)
- State Office of Historic Preservation [\[http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/\]](http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/)
- Preserve America City [\[http://www.preserveamerica.gov/\]](http://www.preserveamerica.gov/)

Heritage Promotion

Historic preservation is more than preserving or reusing historic buildings. In San Clemente, it is also about creating a preservation ethic, communicating how preservation enriches our lives and sharing our legacy with future generations. Historic preservation is a lasting form of community development which allows citizens and visitors to appreciate our rich history.

The General Plan seeks to provide the foundation for partnering with private and non-profit organizations, individuals and other public agencies to promote and educate the public about San Clemente's heritage.

GOAL:

To preserve and enhance San Clemente's rich and celebrated heritage to serve as a focal point for civic pride and identity.

POLICIES:

- HP-1.01. **Historic Preservation Program.** We maintain and continue to implement a comprehensive, citywide, historic preservation program.
- HP-1.02. **Historic Resources Survey.** We maintain an up-to-date historic resources survey, seek designation of new historic resources and apply historic preservation policies to the resources identified on the Designated Historic Landmarks and Resources Lists to increase awareness and protection of historic sites.
- HP-1.03. **Preserve America and Certified Local Government.** We promote San Clemente as a [Preserve America City](http://www.preserveamerica.gov/) [\[http://www.preserveamerica.gov/\]](http://www.preserveamerica.gov/) and [Certified Local Government](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/clg/) [\[http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/clg/\]](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/clg/).
- HP-1.04. **Education.** We conduct City sponsored programs to educate property owners, land developers, construction personnel and City staff on the importance of historical resources and the legal framework for their protection. We also support the preparation of educational materials to be made publicly available.

- HP-1.05. **Schools.** In collaboration with our non-profit partners, we encourage local schools to integrate local and architectural history into their curricula and resources.

Historic Preservation Standards and Regulations

The City of San Clemente applies local, state and federal regulations to help achieve the community's historic preservation goals. The City sets a positive example by preserving, rehabilitating and adaptively reusing City-owned historic resources for the benefit of the entire community and helps owners understand historic property benefits and responsibilities.

GOAL:

Ensure the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and adaptive reuse of buildings, sites, places, and districts with archaeological, historical, architectural, or cultural significance to San Clemente.

POLICIES:

- HP-2.01. **Leadership.** We provide leadership in the field of historic preservation by preserving and adaptively reusing City-owned historic resources in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and other standards and guidelines as prescribed by the State Office of Historic Preservation.
- HP-2.02. **Property Maintenance.** Through the City of San Clemente Municipal Code, we require owners of historic resources to maintain their property in a manner which preserves the property's historic integrity.
- HP-2.03. **CEQA Requirement.** We require mitigation of significant, adverse impacts to onsite and nearby historic resources as part of applications for general plan amendments, zoning changes, or any projects requiring environmental review per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- HP-2.04. **Adaptive Reuse.** We encourage adaptive reuse of historic resources to preserve them and prevent architecturally inappropriate changes, disrepair and demolition.
- HP-2.05. **State and Federal Standards.** We ensure projects follow the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and standards and guidelines as prescribed by the State Office of Historic Preservation for any listed historic resources or properties eligible for historic listing.
- HP-2.06. **New Development.** We require that all new single-family and multi-family residential development abutting historic resources, and new commercial and multi-family development of three or more units within a 300-foot radius from a historic resource be compatible with the historic resource in terms of scale, massing, building materials and general architectural treatment.

- HP-2.07. ***Flexible Standards.*** We apply flexible development standards where appropriate and necessary to help preserve historic integrity and character of buildings and sites and to comply with zoning regulations. In the event of an earthquake, flood or other natural disaster, or in the event of arson, we take all reasonable steps to promote the preservation, repair and restoration of damaged historic structures, consistent with Zoning Ordinance requirements for the re-establishment of legal, non-conforming structures. If a historic building is damaged so that it is physically infeasible to restore, we require the replacement building to reflect the former building's architectural character.
- HP-2.08. ***Demolition of Historic Structures.*** Demolition of historic structures shall follow the City's demolition standards and procedures in the Zoning Ordinance.
- HP-2.09. ***Planning.*** We incorporate historic and cultural preservation as an integral part of planning, development and environmental review.
- HP-2.10. ***Consistency with Historic Preservation Guidelines.*** Additions to historic structures shall preserve the resources' historic and architectural significance and shall be consistent with the City's Historic Preservation Guidelines.

Preservation Incentives

To further the goals of historic preservation and to assist property owners who seek to take advantage of the value of historic preservation and rehabilitation, the City of San Clemente offers a number of local, state and federal preservation incentives. Incentive programs available in San Clemente include historic rehabilitation tax incentives, fee waivers, parking waivers and other programs.

GOAL:

Offer a comprehensive system of incentive programs and assistance for property owners that preserves historic resources, provides numerous individual and public benefits and contributes to our quality of life.

POLICIES:

- HP-3.01. ***Assistance.*** We provide assistance to residents who are restoring qualified historic properties by offering them technical assistance, development incentives and identifying federal and state preservation incentives.
- HP-3.02. ***Process.*** We maintain regulations, policies, and fees that support, encourage and ease the process for historic preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and adaptive reuse.
- HP-3.03. ***Incentives.*** We pursue and support the use of appropriate federal, state, local, and private grants, loans, fee waivers and tax credits and relief to promote historic preservation.

HP-3.04. **State Historic Building Code.** We use the State Historical Building code as a regulatory incentive, where appropriate.

HP-3.05. **Mills Act.** We maintain the Mills Act program as an incentive for historic preservation.

HP-3.06. **Public Investment.** We invest public funds to purchase, protect or preserve threatened properties listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

HP-3.07. **Flexible Development Standards.** We provide flexible development standards for historic resources, in the interests of maintaining the resources historic and architectural integrity.

Historic Preservation for Economic Development

San Clemente's rich variety of historic resources is one of its greatest assets. The City's historic charms can be a deciding factor for residents, businesses and visitors choosing to invest here, whether that investment means purchasing or renting homes, moving businesses and employees here, or spending vacations here. Because of the Community's rich legacy of Spanish Colonial Revival style buildings from the 1920s, no other coastal Orange County community rivals San Clemente's visible history.

Tourism, construction, housing, arts and culture, the surf and sports industry, and community development all create jobs, generate taxes, enhance property values, and add to household incomes. In San Clemente, historic preservation visually reinforces the importance and heritage of these industries, distinguishes San Clemente neighborhoods and commercial districts from other communities competing for investment, and in the construction industry, creates a need for specialized skills in historic building repair and renovation.

The preservation of San Clemente's historic resources is an important goal for all who seek a sustainable economy for the City. Historic preservation helps establish and maintain thriving districts like Downtown and North Beach -- interesting and attractive places in which to visit, shop, dine, work or live.

GOAL:

Enhance tourism and economic development strategies through historic preservation.

POLICIES:

HP-4.01. **Promotion.** We promote workshops, exhibits, programs and events that celebrate the City's heritage and recognize the value and importance of San Clemente's historic resources as an economic development tool.

HP-4.02. **Coordination.** We work with public agencies, private and nonprofit organizations, property owners, area businesses and other interested groups and

individuals to coordinate historic preservation activities, promote heritage tourism and provide public information on the value of historic preservation.

HP-4.03. **Tours.** We work with property owners, businesses and non-profit organizations to promote walking tours, house tours, commercial building tours, signs, public art, and visitor attractions that showcase the City's history.

HP-4.04. **Wayfinding Signs and Historic Plaques.** We encourage the placement of attractive and historically appropriate City "wayfinding" or directional signage, including electronic or web-based interpretive information, and the installation historic plaques that follow the Historic Preservation Guidelines.

ADDITIONAL LINKS:

- [Economic Development Element \[link to EDE Homepage\]](#)

Historic Preservation Implementation Measures

1. Update our Historic Building Survey to include architecturally significant buildings with styles different from Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, including "Post-Modern" and "Mid-Century Modern" architectural designs.
2. Consider a City program to nominate properties for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.
3. Pursue financial resources from state, federal and private sources that assist in the identification and designation of cultural resources.
4. Participate in the National Trust for Historic Preservation [Main Street Program \[http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/\]](#).
5. Consider adding historic trees, features and sites to the Landmarks and Historic Resources lists and expanding the City's inventory of historic resources to include historic districts.
6. Explore strategies for relocating threatened historic resources when other means of preservation are infeasible.
7. Continue to support and explore preservation incentives such as rehabilitation tax credits, façade easements, preservation grants, transfer of development rights, zoning incentives, state, federal, non-profit assistance and private donations.
8. Provide public information on preservation methods and promote the use of California's Historic Building Code for preservation of historic resources.
9. Continue to provide technical assistance to property owners for the preservation of historic resources.

10. Pursue a comprehensive strategy in partnership with other organizations to promote community awareness and appreciation of San Clemente's historic resources.
11. Pursue a public-private partnership with financial institutions to establish a financing program for preservation of historic resources.
12. Develop separate criteria and procedures for designating historic districts and thematic (noncontiguous) historic districts.
13. Develop new eligibility criteria for the designation of potential district-contributing properties. The City's Historic Structures List and designation criteria do not distinguish between landmarks and potential district-contributing properties.
14. Consider adopting procedures for establishing historic districts.
15. Develop and provide training for Cultural Heritage Board and City staff on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, the San Clemente preservation ordinance, the California Historical Building Code, and other preservation information.
16. Maintain Certified Local Government (CLG) status and apply for CLG grants to help update the historic inventory and accomplish other important preservation objectives.
17. Conduct workshops for homeowners, developers, real estate professionals and others describing the benefits and obligations of owning *historic property and the incentives available for rehabilitation*.
18. Establish and regularly update a list of qualified architectural historians to use for project consultation.
19. Develop Historic Preservation Guidelines for historic resources that include sustainability measures.
20. Establish a rehabilitation loan program, as funding is available, and explore building-permit-fee waivers, redevelopment assistance, local financing programs, and other local assistance for preservation of historic resources.
21. Utilize guidelines for discretionary design review to address exterior alterations proposed to historic buildings in accordance with the Historic Preservation Ordinance.
22. Amend the zoning ordinance to require an assessment of potential impacts to onsite and nearby historic resources as part of applications for changes in zoning.
23. Working with the property owner, citizens, San Clemente Historical Society, schools, performing arts, business and other community groups, adopt a CIP program to assist in the rehabilitation of the Miramar Theatre.

24. Help establish historic archives and/or library to protect, organize, preserve and make accessible the City's written and graphic archival records.
25. Develop historic preservation materials and media for homeowners, realtors, contactors and developers to educate the public on requirements, guidelines and processes.
26. Consider establishing a historic district in North Beach.
27. Implement a historic plaque program for all historic resources. Plaque designs shall be consistent with the adopted wayfinding sign program.
28. Develop a digital wayfinding program, including electronic or web-based interpretive information.