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COMMUNITY PLANNING

General Plan Historical /Cultural Element

INTRODUCTION

Historic and cultural preservation represents a responsibility of the present generation to maintain unique and significant structures and areas established in the past for the use, edification and enjoyment of future generations. Pasadena, because of its rich history and legacy of architecturally significant buildings has a particularly handsome endowment to protect and retain. The Historic and Cultural Preservation Element seeks to identify and protect areas, sites and structures having architectural, historical or cultural significance and to reaffirm their continuing value as a resource contributing to the vitality and diversity of the present. To insure that the concerns of this element not be isolated from the concerns of other elements to which it is so clearly related urban design, neighborhood enhancement, circulation, zoning, land use, conservation - and to eliminate the possibility of conflict and contradiction among the various elements, concerns of this element shall be cross-referenced to pertinent sections of the other elements.

BACKGROUND

Issues and Problems

1. Efforts to preserve and protect historic and cultural landmarks have been hindered by the following:
 - a. Their location in transitional areas
 - b. Development pressures on their sites
 - c. Lack of effective response to impending loss of landmarks
 - d. Disincentives built into existing codes and policies that discourage continued use of older buildings
 - e. Failure to develop programs to take advantage of funding sources

2. Maintenance of the character and integrity of existing historic and cultural buildings, streets and districts.
3. Determination of an equitable distribution of the costs and responsibilities for historic and cultural preservation.
4. Conflict, between economic development and historic preservation.
5. Historic preservation versus building and safety code requirements.
6. Failure of government to recognize historic and cultural assets and the assumption that age alone is a factor on the determination of blight.

Opportunities

1. The preservation of Pasadena's unique cultural and historically significant buildings, streets and districts can be aided by increased concern and changing attitudes which grasp the necessity of making use of these no longer expendable resources. These resources represent a key factor in relating Pasadena's future economic and social well-being to its roots in the past.
2. Pasadena is actively pursuing a historic preservation program through its Cultural Heritage Committee.
3. Reflecting a national mood, potential resources for historic preservation have become increasingly available.
4. Promising new legislation and innovative concepts, such as Transfer of Development Rights and Tax Incentive Programs provide precedent and guides which could be utilized to preserve historic and culturally significant buildings and districts.
5. Use of older buildings may not only offer cultural heritage advantages, but also economic benefits due to increasing new construction costs.
6. Cultural heritage can increase community appeal and stabilize property values.

Goals and Objectives

Goal:

Preservation and enhancement of the City's cultural and historic buildings, streets and districts, not merely as gentle reminders of a pleasant past but also as relevant and unique alternatives for the present and the future - a source of community identity, social, ecological and economic vitality.

Objectives:

1. Identification, maintenance and protection of buildings. streets or districts having historic and cultural significance.
 2. A program of public awareness and support for historic and cultural preservation as a key to Pasadena's uniqueness and future economic vitality.
 3. A positive philosophy of preservation as a valid and necessary component at every phase of governmental decision making.
 4. Relating new development to existing environment in scale, material and character so that Pasadena's inherent human scale, visual and functional diversity may be maintained and enhanced.
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IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

Strategy:

Establishment of an equitable process for maintaining and perpetuating historical and cultural landmarks through a combination of public and private efforts.

Policies:

1. Private preservation and restoration efforts shall be encouraged and facilitated. and incentive programs to further such efforts shall be studied and developed.
2. Cultural and historic preservation at the neighborhood level shall ensure the opportunity for the full range of citizen participation and relate the intent of preservation activities to local cultural diversity.
3. The City will act as a resource of last resort when all other options and opportunities for preservation have been exhausted. if the landmark in question is deemed to have sufficient historic or cultural significance to warrant City intervention.
4. Where restrictions on permitted uses make it unlikely that worthy structures can be preserved. such restrictions may be relaxed. particularly if the proposed use would not adversely affect surrounding properties.

Programs:

1. Adoption of a strong Cultural Heritage Ordinance.
2. Identification of significant buildings, streets and districts.

3. Development of an educational program in cultural heritage. drawing on and supplementing school programs. expanding contact with historical experience throughout the community and region.
 4. Establishment of an information exchange network coordinated by the Historic Preservation Officer.
 5. Development of historic preservation overlay zone.
 6. Utilization of the redevelopment agency as a vehicle for preservation activity. The agency is currently empowered to acquire, hold, restore, and resell buildings.
 7. Creation of a rehabilitation loan program.
 8. Develop programs in the areas of tax relief, transfer of development rights, and building code relaxation, as these apply to historic buildings and districts.
 9. Establishment of a program to relocate reusable older buildings from or into redevelopment projects as a means of historic preservation.
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