

CITY OF TACOMA

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ELEMENT



April 12, 2011

Conducted by the Tacoma Planning Commission  
and Landmarks Preservation Commission

Consistent with Washington State  
Growth Management Requirements



(Adopted on 6/14/11, Amended Ordinance No. 27996)



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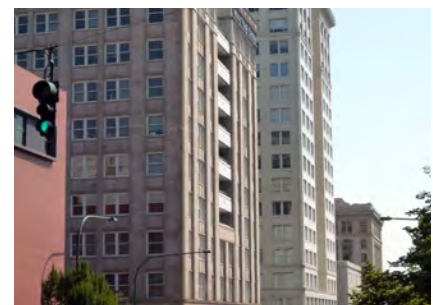
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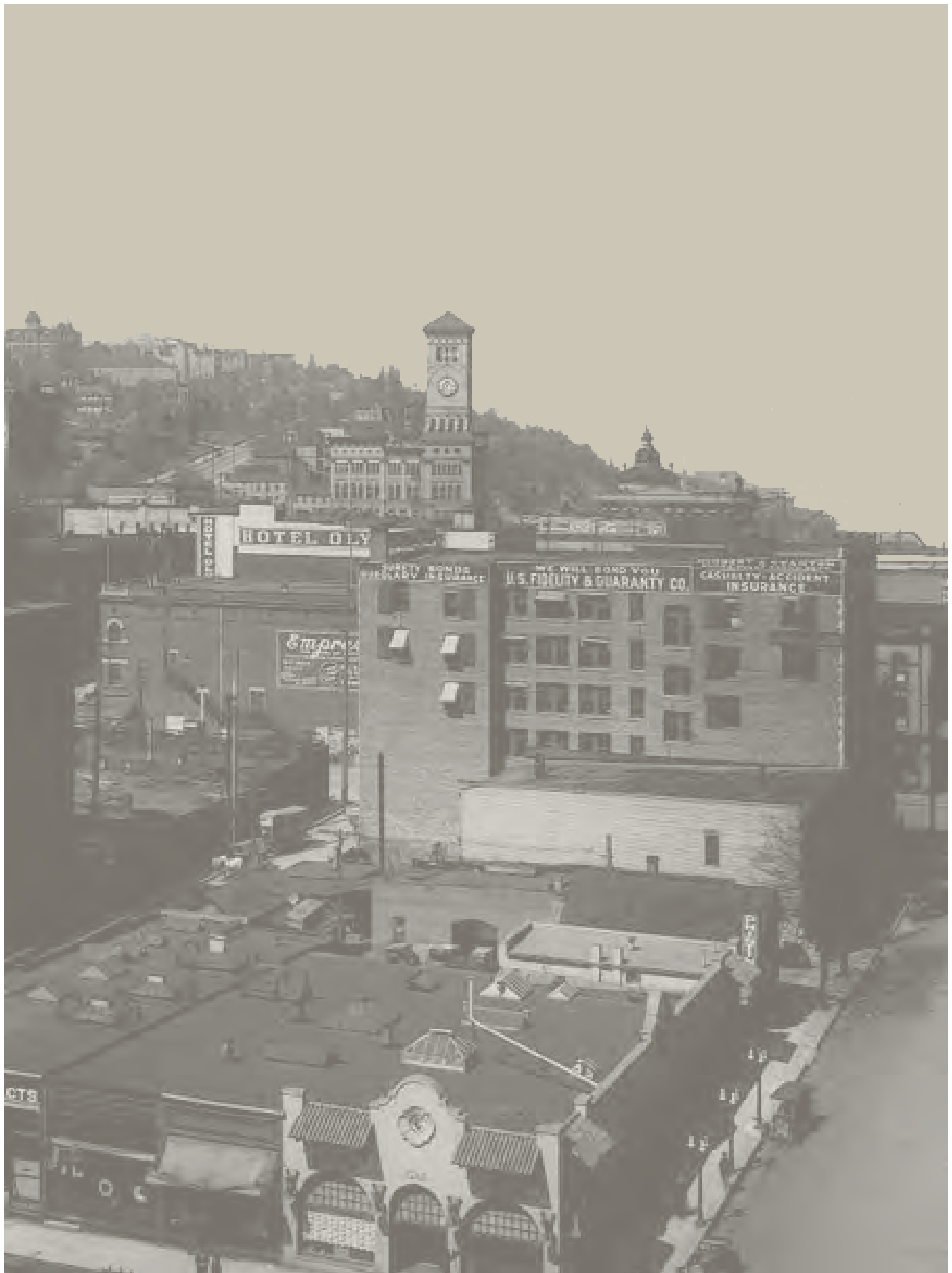
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Preservation Plan is a portion of the Tacoma Comprehensive Plan. It defines the City of Tacoma’s preservation goals, policies and actions for preservation and neighborhood conservation. It also provides a framework for other groups and organizations engaged in community-based initiatives with interests in protecting and experiencing cultural resources. The plan’s primary goal is the preservation and active use of cultural resources to enhance the city’s quality of life, economic vibrancy and environmental sustainability.



## PLAN BACKGROUND

Tacoma has a well-established preservation program, which enjoys broad support by its citizens. It is recognized as a key ingredient in community well-being and livability. Noteworthy landmarks, such as the Old City Hall and Union Station, stand as signature reference points in the city and other places, including numerous churches and schools, symbolize the community’s heritage. Some parks, sites and other structures also are valued for their historic significance. Archaeological remains extend this sense of connection with the past.

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*Many of Tacoma's important historic resources, such as the South J Street Historic District, are locally designated.*

## HISTORIC RESOURCES

Recognition of historic resources from early settlement to the more recent past continues to change and grow. The City uses a variety of tools to organize and define resources.

### Historic Property Types

Groups of properties with common physical attributes or that share relationships with historic figures and events may be considered distinct historic resource types. In many cases, historic resource types are associated with particular historic contexts or periods in the city's history.

### Existing Landmarks and Districts

Many of Tacoma's historic resources are officially recognized in the national, state or local historic registers. Additional historic resources exist but have not yet been identified or formally listed. Historic listing provides opportunities for specific preservation incentives and may provide specific protections for listed properties. Substantial parts of the city exist that have the potential for listing, but are not.

In many parts of the city, entire neighborhoods maintain their historic character and provide places to live today while retaining a sense of the past. Other older neighborhoods with traditional building patterns also contribute to the sense of place that is Tacoma, even though they may not have historic significance. These areas, both residential and commercial, enhance the city's quality of life.

Many historic resources are formally recognized as individual landmarks and as contributors to historic districts. Others remain to be identified as having historic significance and still others, while known to be of historic value, have not been formally designated.

While historic resources are valued, many factors challenge their preservation. Some properties may be altered in ways that diminishes their integrity. Others may be under pressure for demolition, sometimes for redevelopment and sometimes because of extensive deterioration.

These challenges exist in part because some people may not value their properties as historic resources. Others are not aware of the significance of their buildings, or lack the means to maintain them. In some cases, other objectives may appear to be in conflict with preservation. Responding to these factors in strategic ways is key to an effective preservation program.

While challenges will continue, this is a particularly exciting time of opportunity for preservation in Tacoma, as well as nationally. There is an increasing understanding of the roles that preservation and neighborhood conservation can play in sustainability and how it complements many other community development objectives. New partnerships are forming in which a variety of groups promote historic resources in their work programs. For example, health care providers are promoting "Healthy Heritage" walks as part of their preventive medicine strategies.

New technologies also are emerging that will make it easier to identify historic resources, distribute information about their proper stewardship and facilitate appropriate management. Linking historic resource information to Geographic Information Systems is an example. This tool will make historic survey information available to a wide range of users, enhance an understanding of historic properties, and make the formal preservation system more understandable and predictable to the community at large.

## WHAT IS HISTORIC PRESERVATION?

Preservation means having properties and places of historic and cultural value in active use and accommodating appropriate improvements to sustain their viability while maintaining the key, character-defining features which contribute to their significance as cultural resources. In addition, preservation means keeping cultural resources intact for the benefit of future generations. Tacoma's preservation program also extends to the conservation of older established neighborhoods where maintaining traditional character and quality of life are objectives.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Historic preservation plays a key role in sustainability as described in these three basic categories:

### 1. Cultural/Social Component of Sustainability

Preserving historic places, including landmarks and neighborhoods, helps maintain a connection to the community's heritage. This is fundamental part of the preservation movement in Tacoma.

### 2. Environmental Component of Sustainability

Sensitive stewardship of the existing building stock significantly reduces environmental impacts. Re-using a building also preserves the energy and resources invested in its construction, avoids landfill impacts, and reduces the need to produce new construction materials, which require more energy.

### 3. Economic Component of Sustainability

The economic benefits of protecting local historic districts are well documented across the nation, and in Washington. These include higher property values, job creation in rehabilitation industries, and increased heritage tourism.



*Preserving historic places such as the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District helps maintain a connection to the community's heritage.*

## A VISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN 2020

Tacoma's vision for historic resources and its preservation program as it will be in 2020 is described in these qualitative statements:

1. Historic resources are integral to the City's overall goals and objectives.
2. Historic resources convey the humanity of Tacoma.
3. Historic resources are key to the City's sustainability initiatives.
4. A network of individuals and organizations supports historic preservation throughout the community.
5. Historic Preservation is "horizontally integrated" into planning efforts.
6. The City's historic preservation program is readily accessible.
7. Historic preservation looks forward while valuing the past.
8. Historic preservation is solution oriented.
9. The preservation program guides treatment of historic resources.

## OVERALL GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

These goals and policies for historic preservation apply to the overall program and throughout the city.

### Goal: A Livable Community With a Strong Sense of History

Innovative policies and procedures should build upon the history of Tacoma and its residents.

#### **Policies:**

HP-1 Preserve archaeological resources as part of Tacoma's rich history.

HP-2 Integrate Tacoma's historic resources into community planning efforts.

### Goal: A Sustainable Community Supported by Preservation Efforts

Tacoma's preservation program should be at the forefront of the sustainability movement. Land conservation, retaining embodied energy and reduced demolition waste make preservation inherently sustainable.

#### **Policies:**

HP-3 Promote preservation's role in community sustainability efforts.

HP-4 Include sustainability objectives in an update to the City's historic design guidelines.

HP-5 Use the City's programs to promote the link between preservation and sustainability.

### Goal: An Economically Vibrant Community Supported by Preservation Activities

In Tacoma, preservation contributes significantly to a vibrant local economy. It supports economic development opportunities, retains local businesses and facilitates tourism development.

#### **Policies:**

HP-6 Encourage active use of historic resources.

HP-7 Leverage the economic development opportunities provided by Tacoma's historic resources.

### Goal: Tacoma's Preservation Program Employs Nationally Recognized Best Practices.

The City of Tacoma will be a national leader in adaptive reuse and historic preservation programs.

#### **Policies:**

HP-8 Incorporate new trends and issues in preservation and neighborhood conservation.

HP-9 Promote ease of use, transparency of administration, and predictability in the preservation program.

### Goal: Preservation is Integral to Other Community Goals and Policies.

Historic preservation should be integral to City planning programs and balanced with community objectives.

#### **Policies:**

HP-10 Integrate historic preservation policies into citywide planning efforts.

HP-11 Capitalize on and promote historic resources in community planning efforts.

### Goal: Historic Resources are Integral Features of the Public Realm.

The City should be a leader in preservation through best practices in the management of its own historic facilities.

#### **Policy:**

HP-12 Promote best practices in the City of Tacoma's stewardship of historic resources.



# GOALS AND POLICIES FOR PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Tacoma's preservation program has these components:

- Administration: The framework for operating the preservation program
- Identification: The survey and recognition of properties with cultural or historic significance
- Management Tools: The specific mechanisms for protecting historic resources
- Incentives and Benefits: Programs that assist property owners and support preservation
- Education: The tools to build awareness and strengthen skills to support preservation
- Advocacy: The promotion of policies and partnerships that support preservation

The following are goals and policies related to each program component:

## ADMINISTRATION COMPONENT

Effective administration is a critical part of a successful preservation program. It includes overall organization, the roles of various City departments, staffing and the procedures that work to assure effective operation of the preservation program.

A successful preservation program requires ongoing administrative support and commitment by the City. The overall administration of this plan will be through the Community and Economic Development Department, but interdepartmental cooperation is essential to achieve its goals and objectives.

**Goal: The City Maintains a Functional, Integrated Preservation Program.**

Best practices for administering a preservation program include providing sufficient staff, maintaining a well-managed Landmarks Preservation Commission and providing convenient access to information needed by property owners and other users. Review processes should be efficient as well, making best use of time for all participants.

### **Policies:**

HP-13 Monitor the performance of the preservation program on an on-going basis to assure that it maintains a high level of performance.

HP-14 Ensure that administrative resources are adequate for efficient operation of the program.

HP-15 Maintain a certified historic preservation program.

HP-16 Promote collaboration among City departments, boards and commissions.



*A successful preservation program requires ongoing administrative support and commitment by the City.*



*In 2007, Historic Tacoma sponsored a lecture series that helped people understand the historic significance of their properties.*

## RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION COMPONENT

A first step in preservation is to determine which properties have significance as cultural resources. The City employs a variety of research tools to assist in making those determinations. Research tools include summaries of historical patterns, defined as “contexts” and “themes,” along with descriptions of the typical property types and building styles associated with them. The City’s Geographic Information System has also emerged as an important tool for identifying potentially significant resources.

Historic resources should be presented in a manner that helps people understand their significance and interpret their association with the community. Surveys should cover all key areas of the city and the information should be up to date. Historic contexts should help serve as a basis for planning, in terms of predicting where historic resources are likely to be found, and in setting priorities for historic surveys.

**Goal:** A Detailed Understanding of Tacoma’s History Provides a Base for Preservation Efforts.

**Policies:**

- HP-17 Provide a set of historic contexts which establish a background for understanding Tacoma’s historic resources.
- HP-18 Maintain a comprehensive survey of Tacoma’s cultural resources.

**Goal:** Historic Survey Information Supports All Program Components.

A survey acts as the first step in the management of historic resources. It should identify the significance of the resources and also operate as a planning tool that is coordinated with other local land use regulations and incentive systems.

**Policies:**

- HP-19 Use cultural resource survey information in the City’s resource designation and management tools.
- HP-20 Enhance the level of survey information that is available to the public digitally.

## MANAGEMENT TOOLS COMPONENT

Management tools are the mechanisms for protecting historic resources and providing technical assistance. Tacoma's primary tools are the ordinances that guide historic preservation efforts as well as underlying zoning regulations, the design review process and design guidelines that manage treatment of the city's historic resources. These provide an effective framework for preservation. In some cases, however, individual tools lack sufficient clarity or they conflict with others.

A diverse assortment of preservation tools should serve Tacoma's needs. These should be based on national standards of best practices, and at the same time should be tailored to Tacoma.

**Goal: Historic Resources are Protected from Demolition.** Historically significant properties should be protected from demolition whenever possible. This includes those eligible for, or listed in, local, state or national historic registers.

### Policies:

- HP-21 Provide effective demolition review procedures.
- HP-22 Provide tools and funding to address preservation emergencies.
- HP-23 Provide incentives to protect historic resources from demolition.
- HP-24 Ensure continuing maintenance of historic buildings.

**Goal: Clear and Complete Ordinances Guide the Preservation Program.**

The preservation ordinance and other related codes, should be clear and easy to interpret. They should also reflect best practices in organization and content.

### Policies:

- HP-25 Update the Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts Code to reflect current preservation policies and goals.
- HP-26 Use zoning tools to promote historic preservation goals and support an overall heritage conservation system.



*An emergency preservation fund should be established to allow for the acquisition of threatened resources.*

## ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS

A "bundle" of ordinances establishes the basic rules for construction related to historic resources and sets forth the process for establishing certain protections for them.

In addition to the International Existing Buildings Code (IEBC), key Tacoma regulations that address historic preservation are included in the following sections of the Tacoma Municipal Code:

- Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts Code (Chapter 13.07)
- Landmarks Preservation Commission Code (Chapter 1.42)
- Zoning (Chapter 13.06)
- Waterfront Structures and Marina Code (Chapter 2.13)
- Environmental Code (Chapter 13.12)



*The desired character of traditional areas of the city, such as the North Slope Historic District, should be maintained.*

**Goal: The City’s Project Review and Enforcement Programs Promote Preservation Objectives.**

The City’s process for project review and approval should be streamlined to provide a positive experience for applicants and to promote both overall, and preservation specific, goals. Enforcement programs should be closely coordinated with the review process to ensure that projects are developed per approved specifications.

**Policy:**

HP-27 Streamline project review and enforcement to promote preservation objectives.

**Goal: Resource Designation Categories Indicate Priorities for Conservation of Resources.**

Different types of designation categories should be used to reflect degrees of significance, alternative approaches for protection and different management objectives. Having a range of program tools allows each one to better fit the intent of their use. It also provides options for program flexibility.

**Policies:**

HP-28 Establish clear categories for resource designation.

HP-29 Schedule designation of historic resources according to clearly defined priorities.

**Goal: The Desired Character of Traditional Areas of the City is Maintained.**

Preservation and conservation efforts should be guided by standards and criteria that are tailored to Tacoma. These should focus on retaining key features of traditional building while accommodating compatible changes and new investment that respect the established context.

**Policy:**

HP-30 Provide design guidelines that promote compatible development.

## INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS COMPONENT

Effective preservation programs offer special benefits to stimulate investment in historic properties, encourage owners to follow appropriate rehabilitation procedures, and assist those with limited budgets. This includes:

- Financial or technical assistance
- Tax or regulatory relief, such as streamlined review
- Special flexibility in building codes

Incentives and benefits for preserving historic properties should attract investment in historic properties.

**Goal: A Coordinated System of Incentives and Benefits Stimulates Preservation and Conservation in Tacoma.**

Incentives should support appropriate rehabilitation and continued use of historic resources. In addition, some incentives should encourage owners to seek local designation of eligible historic resources and conservation areas.

### **Policies:**

HP-31 Offer incentives and benefits to cover a wide range of conditions.

HP-32 Promote financial incentives that stimulate investment in historic properties.

HP-33 Enhance regulatory incentives to encourage preservation and conservation.

HP-34 Expand technical assistance programs to promote preservation and conservation.



*An effective preservation program offers special benefits to attract investment in historic properties such as the old industrial buildings in the Brewery District.*



*In 1994, the City of Tacoma produced an educational brochure on historic storefronts.*

## EDUCATION COMPONENT

Helping property owners learn how to maintain their historic properties as active, viable assets is a key part of a successful preservation program. Many property owners willingly comply with appropriate rehabilitation procedures and develop compatible designs for new construction when they are well informed about preservation objectives.

Workshops that provide helpful information about rehabilitation techniques and publications that build an understanding of historic significance are examples of education and outreach strategies. Well-written design guidelines that provide useful information can also serve an educational role.

Education should take a more prominent role in preservation and work to build the constituency for historic preservation. Helping property owners learn how to maintain their historic properties as active, viable assets is key to a successful preservation program. Education and outreach are key functions of partner organizations, and non-profit groups that promote preservation and history.

**Goal: The Public Appreciates Tacoma’s Diverse History and Its Historic Resources.**

Promote the understanding of a diverse set of historical perspectives, and embrace Tacoma’s rich cultural history.

**Policy:**

HP-35 Provide tools to educate the public regarding Tacoma’s history and resources.

**Goal: Practical Education Programs Support Historic Preservation**

While building a general appreciation of cultural resources is important, a special initiative to build practical skills among property owners, construction trades and City departments is essential.

**Policies:**

HP-36 Establish preservation training programs.

HP-37 Expand the use of web-based preservation tools.

HP-38 Incorporate preservation education into local school programs.

## ADVOCACY COMPONENT

Advocacy programs promote policies and plans that support historic preservation. This includes lobbying for zoning codes that are compatible with traditional development patterns in older neighborhoods and supporting creation of new incentives to maintain historic structures. They also work to expand the base of preservation players and engage partners in collaborative preservation programs. Private citizens and non-profit organizations lead preservation advocacy in Tacoma.

While the City's historic preservation office will act as coordinator, advocacy efforts should be shared across a broad base of independent community organizations and City departments. Community organizations should be the primary advocates for historic preservation in Tacoma with the City's preservation office providing support.

### Goal: Community Organizations are Strong Advocates for Historic Preservation.

Community organizations should be the primary advocates for historic preservation in Tacoma. Historic Tacoma, the Tacoma Preservation Society and other interest groups are well equipped to play advocacy roles, with the City providing support.

#### Policies:

HP-39 Support existing partnerships for historic preservation.

HP-40 Foster new partnerships in historic preservation.

### Goal: City Departments Collaborate to Promote Historic Preservation.

City departments and agencies should work with the historic preservation office to promote preservation efforts and assist with implementation of the Preservation Plan. Collaboration among City departments ensures that historic preservation is an integral part of the culture of the city.

#### Policy:

HP-41 Collaborate with other City departments to promote the benefits of historic preservation.



*Congregations of historic churches are increasingly aware of the value of historic preservation.*



*Historically, Tacoma was a busy, diverse city as illustrated by the 1893 Oddfellows Parade on C Street. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*





# INTRODUCTION

This Preservation Plan is a part of the Tacoma Comprehensive Plan. It defines the City of Tacoma’s preservation goals, policies and actions for preservation and neighborhood conservation. It also provides a framework for other groups and organizations engaged in community-based initiatives with interests in protecting and experiencing cultural resources. The plan’s primary goal is the preservation and active use of cultural resources to enhance the City’s quality of life, economic vibrancy and environmental sustainability.

The Preservation Plan works in harmony with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan as well as related federal, state and local regulatory programs. It consolidates previously adopted policies, sets forth new ones, and defines specific actions that will achieve them.



## PLAN OVERVIEW

The Historic Preservation Plan covers a wide spectrum of strategies and objectives. These include very broad themes that touch on many aspects of community development. The plan approaches historic preservation as an integral element of community development. In this respect, it touches on many subjects that also appear in other City of Tacoma Comprehensive Plan elements. At the same time, it presents program-specific actions related to components of a conventional preservation program. These will require strategic use of resources and collaboration among others who see the benefits of heritage conservation.

### Plan Development

The Historic Preservation Plan builds on the previous Culture and History element of the City of Tacoma Comprehensive Plan. It has been expanded to address a much broader range of issues, goals, policies and actions based on community input through workshops, focus groups and interviews. Work sessions with the Tacoma Landmarks Preservation Commission also provided material for the plan.

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*The Tacoma waterfront in 1912 with the Tacoma Municipal Dock, Alaska Pacific Dock and Tacoma Hotel. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

This plan uses the term **Historic Preservation** to refer to a wide range of plans and strategies that promote conservation of the community's heritage. In most cases, the term is used in reference to buildings, but it may also apply to other man-made structures, objects, archeological resources and cultural landscapes.

**Historic Preservation** promotes active use of older buildings and traditional neighborhoods. The term also describes a range of specific treatments for older properties such as rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction.

### Plan Chapters

The plan is organized into these chapters:

#### **Chapter 1: Historic Character of Tacoma**

This chapter includes background on the history of preservation in Tacoma and a general overview of its historic resources.

#### **Chapter 2: Preservation Program Components**

This chapter describes the key components of Tacoma's existing preservation program, which include:

- Administration
- Identification
- Management Tools
- Incentives and Benefits
- Education
- Advocacy

The chapter also identifies issues related to each of the preservation program components.

#### **Chapter 3: Goals, Policies and Actions**

This chapter sets forth goals for historic preservation in Tacoma. The goals are organized into categories by preservation program component. The categories are:

- Overall Goals, Policies and Actions
- Administration Goals, Policies and Actions
- Identification Goals, Policies and Actions
- Management Tools Goals, Policies and Actions
- Incentives and Benefits Goals, Policies and Actions
- Education Goals, Policies and Actions
- Advocacy Goals, Policies and Actions

Each goal then has one or more Policies listed under it, and these in turn have specific Actions that would be taken to accomplish them. This structure reflects the most direct connection of an individual policy and its actions to a goal. However, there often are interrelationships among the policies and actions with other goals.

#### **Chapter 4: Implementation**

This chapter establishes a strategy for executing individual actions in a sequence that will be most effective in reaching the stated goals for preservation.

# PRESERVATION IN TACOMA

Tacoma is a special place with an identity expressed in its cultural resources. The city covers hills and lowlands that provide places for industry, commerce and culture and reaches out into bays that connect it with the wider world. In this place, generations of Native Americans and more recent immigrants made their livelihood, and in doing so left an imprint on the land that speaks of their passing. This is preserved in the archeological record of the early native settlements and in the built environment that exists today.

Street patterns, buildings, open lands, landscapes and site features combine to tell the story of Tacoma's humanity. These properties also serve the city in vital, sustainable ways, by supporting economic development, affordable housing, healthy living and cultural enrichment.

This unique collection of archaeological sites and built resources is one of the city's greatest assets. Promoting an understanding and appreciation of these resources, and also keeping them in active service is important to the community.



*Tacoma in 1888 (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*

## WHAT IS HISTORIC PRESERVATION?

Preservation means having properties and places of historic and cultural value in active use and accommodating appropriate improvements to sustain their viability while maintaining the key, character-defining features which contribute to their significance as cultural resources. Preservation also means keeping cultural resources intact for the benefit of future generations. That is, while maintaining properties in active use is the immediate objective, this is in part a means of assuring that they will be available for others in the future.

Historic preservation also is an integral component of other community initiatives in neighborhood livability, sustainability, economic development and culture. With this understanding, the term "historic preservation" includes the specific methodologies associated with maintaining integrity of significant resources, but also covers a range of "character management tools" that serve to maintain traditional features of established neighborhoods. Many of these tools are described later in this plan.



*The 1891 Merchants National Bank building at 11th and Pacific was demolished in the early 1960s.*



*The National Bank of Commerce Building*

## BALANCING INTERESTS

Because preservation is a part of many community interests, including housing, sustainability, livability and economic development, the program inherently seeks to balance broader community objectives while achieving its core mission of retaining cultural resources. For this reason, the process of identifying and managing cultural resources occurs in the context of other city planning work. This is best illustrated in the way in which sustainability initiatives interact with components of the preservation program.



*The steamers Flyer, Vashon and Crest docked at the 1911 Tacoma Municipal Dock which was demolished in the early 2000s. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Community sustainability has several overlapping components, including cultural/social, environmental and economic sustainability. Historic preservation is closely linked to each of these components, making it an important part of a community's overall sustainability program.

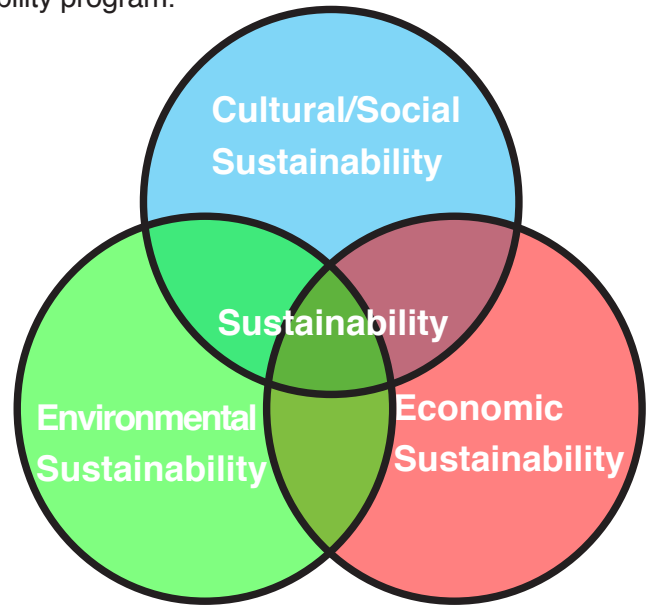
## CULTURAL/SOCIAL COMPONENT OF SUSTAINABILITY

This component of sustainability relates to the maintenance of the community's cultural traditions and social fabric. Preserving historic places and patterns promotes cultural and social sustainability by supporting everyday connections between residents and the cultural heritage of the community. These connections are reinforced by the physical characteristics of historic places, which often directly support environmental sustainability.

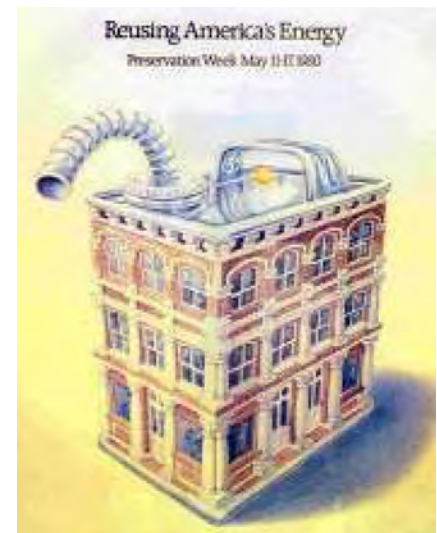
Historic properties, neighborhoods and archeological sites provide direct links to the past. These links convey information about earlier ways of life that help build an ongoing sense of identity within the community. Residents anchored in this sense of identity may be more involved in civic activities and overall community sustainability efforts.

The design of most historic development promotes social interaction that supports a high quality of life and helps build a sense of community. Historic development is often compact and walkable, providing an environment for impromptu mixing of different cultural and economic groups. Porches, plazas and other direct connections to the public realm provide additional opportunities for community interaction in historic areas.

The compact, pedestrian-friendly nature of most historic areas directly supports environmental sustainability by promoting smaller, more energy efficient structures, reducing vehicle use and supporting healthy-living initiatives. Historic neighborhoods also tend to be centrally located with convenient access to public transportation systems. This physical pattern, combined with the inherent cultural connections, provides significant support for the community's overall sustainability effort.



*Preserving historic places promotes the three basic components of sustainability.*



*The National Trust for Historic Preservation highlighted the linkage between preservation and sustainability on their official poster for Preservation Week in 1980.*



*The 1912 Tacoma Building at 1021 A Street housed the headquarters of the Weyerhaeuser Company until the late 1960s. More recently, it was rehabilitated into a modern office building. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*

## ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENT OF SUSTAINABILITY

This is the most often cited component of sustainability. It relates to maintenance of the natural environment and the systems that support human development. Historic preservation is an important part of environmental sustainability and green building initiatives. It directly supports environmental sustainability through conservation of embodied energy, adaptability, and other factors that keep historic buildings in use over long periods of time.

### Embodied Energy

Embodied energy is defined as the amount of energy used to create the original building and its components, and then maintain them. Preserving a historic structure retains this energy. Re-using a building also preserves the energy and resources invested in its construction, and reduces the need for producing new construction materials, which require more energy to produce. Studies confirm that the loss of embodied energy by demolition takes three decades or more to recoup, even with the reduced operating energy costs in a replacement building.



*Union Depot's copper dome was replaced in 1994 after 83 years of service.*

### Building Materials

Many historic building materials contribute to environmental sustainability through local sourcing and long life cycles. Buildings constructed with wood, stone, and brick were built for longevity and ongoing repair. Today, new structures utilize a significant percentage of manufactured materials. These materials are often less sustainable and require extraction of raw, non-renewable materials. High levels of energy are involved in production, and the new materials may also have an inherently short lifespan.



*Buildings constructed with durable materials such as stone and brick were built for longevity. (Source: Artifacts, Inc.)*

### ***Sustainability and Historic Windows***

The sustainable nature of historic building materials is best illustrated by a window. Older windows were built with well seasoned wood from durable, weather resistant old growth forests. A historic window can be repaired by re-glazing as well as patching and splicing the wood elements. Many contemporary windows cannot be repaired and must be replaced entirely. Repairing, weather-stripping and insulating an original window is generally as energy efficient and much less expensive than replacement.

While older windows are often cited as being major sources of heat loss, other parts of a building typically account for a greater proportion of overall losses. For example, as much as 50% of the energy lost from a house is from air infiltration through the attic, uninsulated walls, and around windows and door cavities, and not through the glass in a window itself (*Gotthelf, Jill H. & Walter Sedovic. What Replacement Windows Can't Replace: The Real Cost of Removing Historic Windows. APT Bulletin: Journal of Preservation Technology. Volume 36. Number 4*). Repairing an existing window and adding insulation to the attic saves more energy than the replacement of single paned wood windows with double or triple-paned alternatives. Adding 3.5 inches of insulation in the attic has three times the R value impact compared with moving from the least energy efficient single pane window with no storm window to the most efficient new window (*Rypkema, Donovan D. Speech, December 7, 2009*).



*As a rule, the quality of early construction materials, such as those used in the Old City Hall building, was higher than those used in many late 20th Century buildings.*

### Construction Quality

As a rule, the quality of early construction and materials was higher than those used in many late 20th Century buildings. Lumber used in early Tacoma came from mature trees, was properly seasoned and typically milled to “full dimensions,” providing stronger framing and construction. The high quality of construction in earlier buildings is an asset that is difficult to replace.

### Adaptability

The floor plans of many historic properties easily accommodate changing needs. They permit a variety of uses while retaining the overall historic character. Large warehouse floor plates, for example, are easily adapted to loft residential units and offices.

### Landfill Impacts

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, building debris constitutes around a third of all waste generated in the country. The amount of waste can be reduced significantly if historic structures are retained rather than demolished.



Historic resources provide visitors with a glimpse into Tacoma’s heritage while allowing for new economic development such as the rehabilitated Garretson Woodruff Pratt building on the University of Washington Tacoma campus. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)



The small settlement of Tacoma was less than a decade old in 1871.

## ECONOMIC COMPONENT OF SUSTAINABILITY

This component of sustainability relates to the economic balance and health of the community. Historic buildings represent a substantial economic investment by previous generations. The economic benefits of protecting historic resources are well documented across the nation, and in Washington. These include higher property values, job creation in rehabilitation industries, and increased heritage tourism. Quality of life improvements associated with living in historic neighborhoods may also help communities recruit desirable businesses.

### Historic Rehabilitation Projects

Historic rehabilitation projects generate both direct and indirect benefits. Direct benefits result from the actual purchases of labor and materials, while material manufacture and transport results in indirect benefits. Preservation projects are generally more labor intensive, with up to 70% of the total project budget being spent on labor, as opposed to 50% when compared to new construction. Expenditure on local labor and materials benefits the community’s economy.

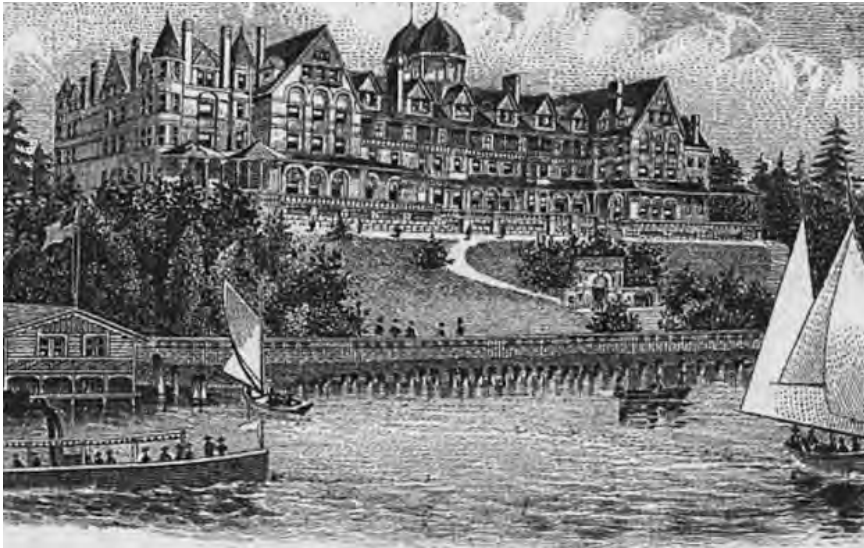
### Heritage Tourism

The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines cultural heritage tourism as, “traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.” Investing in historic preservation helps provide visitors with a glimpse into Tacoma’s heritage and its contribution to state and national history. Heritage tourists spend more on travel than other tourists, which generates jobs in hotels, bed and breakfasts, motels, retail stores, restaurants, and other service businesses (Mandala Research, Study for the USCHT Marketing Council, 2009).



## Support for Local Business and Trades

Because historic rehabilitation projects are more labor intensive than new construction and often use specialized materials, more of the project investment stays in the local economy rather than being spent on non-local materials. A rehabilitation project can also provide affordable space for local small businesses. The Go Local! Tacoma organization helps consumers connect with local independent businesses, providing a resource for property owners seeking to use local materials and labor as part of a historic rehabilitation project.



*The Stanford White designed Tacoma Hotel was built in 1884 and became one of the preeminent hotels on the west coast. It was destroyed by fire in 1935.*

# A VISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN 2020

This vision for preservation in Tacoma is in part inspired by a recognition of the benefits it yields, as described in the preceding section. Tacoma's vision for historic resources and its preservation program as it will be in 2020 is described in these qualitative statements:



*Streetcars and automobiles shared Pacific Avenue in 1912. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*

Historic resources are integral to the city's overall goals and objectives.

Historic preservation in Tacoma is a vital part of broader community development policies and objectives. It serves as an important tool in sustainability, economic development, public health, housing and cultural enrichment. In this respect, it embraces a holistic approach to planning and development.

Historic resources convey the humanity of Tacoma.

They provide links to heritage and enable people to feel a sense of connection with their past and with the community as a whole. Historic resources provide opportunities to interpret the history of the community, to comment on events that have shaped it, and to build an understanding of our culture.

Historic resources are key to the city's sustainability initiatives.

Preserving historic resources is a fundamental part of a comprehensive approach to sustainability. Keeping historic properties in use conserves the energy embodied in their creation. Historic structures also operate in energy conserving ways, and compatible retrofits for energy conservation are encouraged. Preserving close-in historic neighborhoods also supports alternative modes of transportation, including walking, bicycling and using mass transit.

A network of individuals and organizations supports Historic Preservation throughout the community.

The preservation program is community-based. It links official city preservation components with conservation-related activities of other groups and individuals.

# A VISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN 2020

Historic Preservation is “horizontally integrated” into planning efforts.

Many departments and agencies employ strategies which support Historic Preservation as they seek to achieve their individual missions.

The City’s Historic Preservation program is readily accessible.

Program components are easy to understand. Lay people as well as professionals participate in the system at a variety of levels. They engage in researching and nominating resources for designation. They also can easily comment on city preservation activities and they can anticipate the potential outcomes of properties that are managed by preservation tools.



Professionals in various departments of government and other agencies also engage in the preservation system and see it as a useful tool. Property owners, builders and developers understand how the system operates and can make informed decisions about properties that may be of historic significance and of others that may be important to the identity of the community.

Historic Preservation looks forward while valuing the past. The program seeks ways in which historic resources maintain the vitality of the city. It is forward looking, helping the community meet its aspirations for the future in ways that make the best use of its older buildings, sites and neighborhoods.

Historic preservation is solution oriented.

The program helps owners maintain historic resources in active and appropriate uses. Design guidelines, “how to” information and other media illustrate the range of appropriate options.

The preservation program guides treatment of historic resources.

Historic resources are identified and described in a manner that conveys their significance and interprets their association with the community. They are then designated in a manner that facilitates informed management. A set of well-reasoned tools is applied, including regulations, incentives and benefits.

*In 1880, the young city was still low in scale. The two-story Mosmer House is the only surviving structure visible in the above photograph (center with hipped/mansard roof). In the 1920s, it was moved to face south on 9th street between Market and St. Helens. It remains the oldest structure in downtown Tacoma. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*



*The 17-story Washington Building at 1019 Pacific Avenue. was completed in the mid 1920s and is now on the National Register of Historic Places. (Source: Tacoma Public Library)*



## CHAPTER 1

# HISTORIC RESOURCES

Thousands of years of historic and pre-historic settlement in Tacoma have yielded a rich array of archeological, historic and cultural resources.

This chapter provides a brief summary of historic resources in Tacoma including a synopsis of the local preservation movement, a description of historic property types and a summary of the city’s existing historic landmarks and districts.

### THE PRESERVATION MOVEMENT IN TACOMA

The historic preservation movement in Tacoma began in the late-1950s when post war neglect and Federal Housing and Urban Development programs threatened one of the Pacific Northwest’s oldest and most intact downtowns. Then, the construction of Interstate 5 in the early 1960s put older parts of the city in increased competition with outlying areas. In response, many older buildings were replaced in an attempt to modernize and redevelop the center of the city.



### IN THIS CHAPTER

Historic Themes and Topics .....	1-3
Historic Property Types .....	1-9
Existing Landmarks and Districts .....	1-13



*The preservation and re-use of the 1892 Old City Hall Building became a civic success that began a wave of new downtown projects. The Old City Hall was the first locally designated Tacoma Historic Landmark.*

that began a wave of new downtown preservation projects. Along Pacific Avenue, however, some new parking garages replaced older brick commercial buildings. This process seemed destined to be repeated in the neighborhood around Old City Hall.

In the 1970s, the local arts community, led by architects Robert Evans and Alan Liddle, began a push for policy changes that would preserve the Old City Hall district and encourage preservation of older buildings elsewhere in the city. The City Council adopted Tacoma's first Landmark Preservation Ordinance in July 1976. Soon after, in 1978, the Old City Hall Historic District was designated as the City's first design review district. In 1983, the City Council designated a second downtown district, the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District, followed in 1985 by the Pacific Avenue Historic District.

Soon after the completion of the new County-City Building in 1959 and the demolition of the iconic Romanesque Pierce County Courthouse on the same block, a preservation group emerged to challenge reports that the abandoned Old City Hall Building was structurally unsound and should be torn down. The potential loss of the 1892 landmark triggered a civic debate that grew in intensity through the 1960s. "A movement to save and renovate Old City Hall appears to be rubbing off on some of the Tacoma area's other old buildings," stated a major newspaper article in 1966.

In 1968, Old City Hall was sold to a San Francisco real estate developer whose project to preserve and reuse the building became a civic success

# HISTORIC THEMES AND TOPICS

Historic themes are used to group information that relates to existing historic resources based on a subject, specific time period or geographic area. The relative importance of specific historic resources can be better understood by determining how they relate to these themes. An individual historic resource may relate to more than one theme.

Three general themes that relate to the development of Tacoma are briefly summarized in the following pages. These illustrate how themes may be described, but do not attempt to cover the full range of Tacoma's history. Chapter 3 includes recommendations for additional research to support an understanding of the full range of historic themes within the community.



## Native American Settlement

Prior to European settlement, the Nisqually and Puyallup peoples had many settlements near the shores of what came to be known as Commencement Bay. Salmon provided the primary economic basis for these societies who were semi-sedentary, moving between different settlements depending upon the season. Resources associated with Native American settlement are generally found in archeological sites. Archeological resources associated with Native American settlement may include shell middens, camp sites, burial sites, tools, implements or other artifacts or features.

*Archeological work, such as that done during the excavation for the Pacific Plaza project, assists with an understanding of earlier settlement in the Tacoma area.*



*11th Street was a major corridor for streetcars running between Pacific and K (now Martin Luther King Street). In 1893, streetcars still shared the street with horse-drawn carriages. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*

## Early European Settlement

The earliest European settler in the Tacoma area was Nicolas Delin, who constructed a sawmill in 1852 where the Puyallup River enters the bay. However, Delin and several other early settlers abandoned the area during a conflict with local tribes in the mid-1850s. European settlers did not return until the mid-1860s when Job Carr claimed 168-acres in the area now referred to as Old Town. Once the settlement had been platted, it was given the name Tacoma City, after the original Salish name for Mount Rainier. Today, historic resources associated with early European settlement in the Tacoma area may be identified through archeological activities.



*Tacoma took its name from the original Salish name for Mount Rainier.*



## Transportation Development

Following early settlement, the pattern of urban development in Tacoma was largely shaped by the development of transportation resources. Early neighborhoods were densely clustered around the port and railroad terminus while later development spread outward along streetcar lines and eventually around new automobile routes.

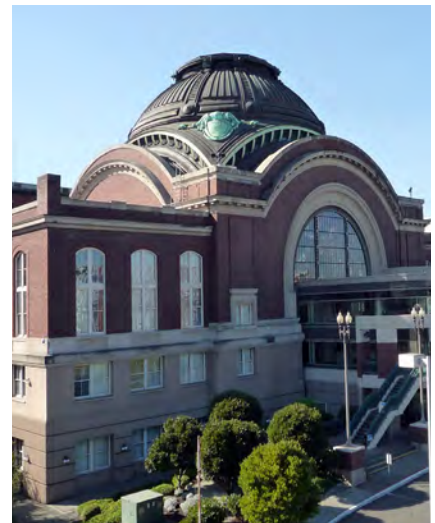
### ***Railroads***

A 1873 decision to terminate the Northern Pacific Railroad's trans-continental line at Tacoma caused a development boom that turned the village into a city almost overnight. The terminus was located away from the original Old Town, causing the center of the city to move south towards what is now downtown Tacoma. In 1874, railroad service began, the community incorporated as Tacoma and the Northern Pacific's Tacoma Land Company began selling lots on newly platted streets.

Although the headquarters of the Northern Pacific moved to Seattle after the economic depression of the early 1890s, railroads continued to be a significant force in Tacoma's development well into the 20th Century. A wide range of historic resources are associated with railroad activities in Tacoma, from landmark buildings like the 1888 Northern Pacific Headquarters and 1911 Union Station, to the warehouse buildings now occupied by the University of Washington, as well as the rail corridors themselves.



*The warehouse buildings now occupied by the University of Washington are associated with historic railroad activities. The canopied walkways emulate historic loading bays.*



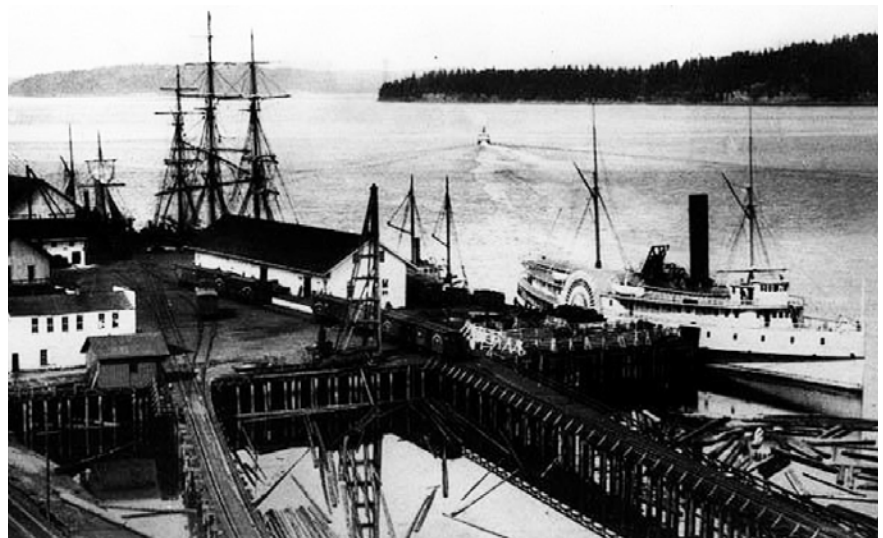
*The 1888 Northern Pacific Railroad Headquarters building at 621 Pacific Avenue and the 1911 Union Station at 1717 Pacific Avenue are important historic landmarks associated with railroad activities in Tacoma.*



*The Port of Tacoma remains a leading West Coast Gateway. (Source: Artifacts Inc.)*

### ***Maritime Activities***

Large scale maritime activities began in the early 1870s with lumber shipments from Tacoma to California, South America, Australia and other points. Once the Northern Pacific Railroad arrived, the company’s activities dominated the port area as they augmented outgoing lumber and coal shipments with incoming cargoes from Asia destined for the east coast. The public Port of Tacoma was created in 1918 and the port remains a leading West Coast gateway, primarily handling cargo bound to or from Asia. Historic resources associated with maritime activities in Tacoma include wharves, warehouses and canals. In many cases, such resources are closely associated with both railroad and maritime contexts.



*The side wheel steamer Alaskan arrived at the Northern Pacific Dock in 1880. The wharf was a semi-independent neighborhood due to its distance from downtown. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*

### ***Streetcars***

Tacoma's first horse-drawn streetcar line began service in 1888. From 1890, electrified streetcar lines radiated out from the center of the city and significantly impacted the general pattern of development. At one time, Tacoma claimed to have the longest electric trolley line in the world, running from downtown southwest to Steilacoom. By the mid-1930s, however, the electrified rail system was dead, to be replaced by automotive transport.

A number of historic resources are associated with the development of Tacoma's streetcar system, from early commercial corridors and centers to the historic residential areas that extend south and west beyond downtown. The concentrations of historic buildings that still line these corridors reflect the locations of these early streetcar lines as illustrated on *Map 2.2: Year Built of Oldest Improvements on Parcels With Historic Streetcar Routes* on page 2-11.



*From 1890, electrified streetcar lines radiated out from the center of the city and had a significant impact on the general pattern of development. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*



*A number of historic resources are associated with the development of Tacoma's streetcar system. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*



Much of the city, such as South Tacoma Way (Old Highway 99), was shaped, or later re-shaped in the automotive era.

### **Automotive Circulation**

Much of the city was shaped, and some older parts were re-shaped in the automotive era. The dense early development pattern was sometimes replaced with a lower density of commercial and residential development. Early automotive routes, such as Old Highway 99 primarily carried local traffic, while later routes, such as Interstate 5, which reached the city in 1967, created a more regional transportation network. The Interstate did not slice through the downtown as it did in Seattle and Portland, but it did encourage growth of suburban areas that diminished the relative importance of the city center. Historic resources associated with automotive development include automobile-oriented commercial centers, outlying residential areas and bridges. In many cases, these date from after World War II and may be considered the “Recent Past.”

## HISTORIC THEMES IN TACOMA

The historic themes briefly summarized in this chapter relate to more general themes that provide an understanding of Tacoma’s historic development. General historic themes may be organized as follows:

### **Community Development**

- Human settlement
- Immigration
- Neighborhood development

### **Social Institutions and Movements**

- Clubs and organizations
- Religious institutions
- Recreational activities

### **Politics**

- Parties, protests, and movements
- Governmental institutions
- Military institutions and activities

### **Culture**

- Education
- Visual and performing arts
- Literature
- Mass media
- Architecture, landscape architecture and urban design
- Popular and traditional culture

### **Economy**

- Extraction and production
- Distribution and consumption
- Transportation and communication
- Workers and work culture
- Labor organizations and protests

# HISTORIC PROPERTY TYPES

Groups of properties with common physical attributes or that share relationships with historic figures and events may be considered distinct historic resource types. In many cases, historic resource types are associated with particular historic contexts or periods in the city's history.

Some of Tacoma's best known historic resource types are summarized below. They include industrial, commercial, residential and civic/religious resources, as well historic properties associated with the "recent past," constructed in the 1950s through the 1970s.

## Industrial Resources

Tacoma's industrial development initially was shaped by natural resource exploitation, followed by economic depression and then fueled by the coming of the railroad in 1873. During these cycles, the city benefited from the ample natural resources that surrounded it, including the deep-water port.



Early lumber mills gave way to the unbroken "mile of grain" warehouses, wharves and shipyards along the waterfront in the 1890s and the early 1900s. Albers Mill, a remnant of that industrial era, is now luxury waterfront condominiums. Italianate and Romanesque heavy-timbered masonry buildings took hold along Pacific Avenue during this same period. These were three to four stories, with commercial spaces fronting the street on the east and warehouse docks on the west. They are now the core of the University of Washington-Tacoma campus, and are included in the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District.

*Industrial resources in Tacoma include the Foremost/Meadowsweet Dairy building on Pacific Avenue, which is being rehabilitated into commercial office space.*

Adjacent to this area, the Brewery District (not a designated historic district) houses important early 20th-century industrial buildings, including the Nisqually Power Substation, the Royal Ice Cream Building, and the Pacific Brewing and Malting Company. Other potential historic industrial properties associated with wood products manufacturing, aerospace, automobiles, shipbuilding and other industries remain to be identified.



*The historic central business district is typified by sturdy masonry buildings, such as the 1892 Old City Hall.*



*A number of historic commercial buildings are located along Pacific Avenue in the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District.*

## Commercial Resources

Tacoma has varied historic commercial resources from modest wood frame buildings to high-style commercial buildings. Early wood frame buildings within the central business district (generally contained within the current Old City Hall Historic District) were destroyed by fire in 1894, and replaced by masonry buildings. The post-fire commercial building boom lasted well into the 1920s, turning the area around Pacific Avenue into an important hub.

As a major port and railroad terminus, trade and finance was the lifeblood of Tacoma commerce, and this translated into high-style commercial buildings, such as the Northern Pacific Headquarters and the Tacoma Building. Historic theaters along Broadway contributed to the cultural and commercial life of the city.

In contrast to downtown, Old Town Tacoma, which is now a neighborhood commercial center, includes more modest historic commercial resources such as early wood frame buildings. Other neighborhood commercial centers generally include low-rise wood frame and masonry buildings typical of areas along the city's original street car lines (See *Map 2.2: Year Built of Oldest Improvements on Parcels With Historic Streetcar Routes* on page 2-11).



*Many older commercial buildings survive in Tacoma's neighborhood centers.*

## Residential Resources

Tacoma's historic residential resources range from high-style single-family homes to working class apartment buildings and simple fishing shacks. Each type can be generally characterized through their association with the city's historic districts.

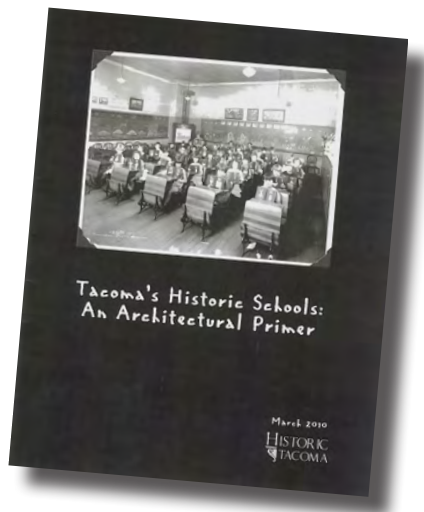
Within the Seminary/Stadium Historic District, large high-style single-family homes include Queen Anne, Craftsman, Bungalow, Colonial Revival and Georgian Revival examples in a largely intact neighborhood. The North Slope Historic District represents prosperous middle-class values from the turn of the century. Among the styles found here are Bungalow, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Mission Revival and American Foursquare. Both historic districts also include modernist homes from the 1950s and 1960s as well as fine apartment buildings, mostly dating from the 1920s through the 1950s.

The South J Street Historic District includes a row of Victorian Era homes and more modest working class homes can be found throughout the Hilltop neighborhood. The Salmon Beach Historic District is typified by former fishing shacks built over water. They are now used as residential homes.



*The South J Street Historic District consists of a row of intact Victorian Era homes.*

*Tacoma's neighborhoods include a wide variety of residential styles reflecting high-style architecture, builder's homes, vernacular and pattern book, and unique regional interpretations of popular styles.*



*Historic Tacoma sponsored a publication highlighting a selection of significant historic school buildings in Tacoma.*



*Tacoma is home to hundreds of historic churches.*

## Civic and Religious Resources

The political and cultural development of Tacoma is reflected in its many historic civic and religious buildings. Identified resources include landmark buildings such as the Old City Hall and Stadium High School. Additional civic and religious resources include neighborhood churches, fire stations and other public or semi-public places or spaces. Ongoing efforts to identify historic civic and religious buildings include the school district's survey of its historic resources and the City's and Historic Tacoma's survey of sacred places.

## Mid-Century Resources

Interest in Mid-Twentieth Century design (The Recent Past) is well established in Tacoma. Many properties at or near the 50-year age threshold could qualify for listing as historic resources. Buildings and districts from the 1950s and 1960s that exemplify potential recent-past historic resources may include suburban ranch-style residential areas, curtain-wall commercial buildings, drive-in restaurants, motels and gas stations. Further community discussion and heightened community awareness will be needed to determine a direction for treatment of Tacoma's recent past historic resources. Ongoing work by the state Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation supports this effort.



*Many properties near the 50-year age threshold (such as the Skidmore Owings and Merrill-designed Wells Fargo Center), could qualify as historic resources.*



## EXISTING LANDMARKS AND DISTRICTS

Many of Tacoma's historic resources are officially recognized in the national, state or local historic registers. Additional historic resources exist but have not yet been identified or formally listed. Depending on the type of designation, historic listing may provide opportunities for specific preservation incentives and may provide specific protections for listed properties.

Tacoma recognizes historic resources as individual landmarks, or as contributors to its historic districts. Other properties of value to the city's heritage may also be identified in its conservation districts. The current status of these types of designations is summarized below and in *Chart 1.1: Existing Historic and Conservation Districts in Tacoma* on page 1-17. Additional information on Landmarks and Districts is provided in the Identification section of Chapter 2.

### LOCALLY DESIGNATED TACOMA INDIVIDUAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

Tacoma's Register of Historic Places lists over 130 individual historic landmarks throughout the city. Individual landmark buildings represent a range of historic themes, resource types and architectural styles. Structures on over 30,000 properties in the city are over 50 years old and could potentially be eligible as historic landmarks. An expanded understanding of existing historic themes and resource types will be necessary to inform an ongoing historic survey process. This process will help determine which of the many potentially eligible properties should be prioritized for designation as local historic landmarks.

### LOCALLY DESIGNATED TACOMA HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Tacoma has three districts listed in the local Tacoma Register, known officially as Historic Special Review Districts. These are the North Slope, Old City Hall, and Union Depot/Warehouse Districts. In addition, the Wedge Neighborhood, the West Slope Neighborhood and the Whitman Area Neighborhood are being studied as potential new locally designated historic districts. *Map 1.1: Locally Designated Tacoma Historic and Conservation Districts* on page 1-18 illustrates locally designated historic districts and *Map 1.2: Areas Under Study as Future Locally Designated Tacoma Historic and Conservation Districts* on page 1-19 illustrates areas under study as potential historic districts.



*Bob's Java Jive, built in 1929, is a designated Tacoma historic landmark and a rare example of historic Roadside architecture along Old Highway 99.*



*The Nisqually Power Station building is a designated Tacoma historic landmark.*



*The North Slope Historic District includes more than 950 residential properties.*

### North Slope Historic District

The North Slope Historic District is designated at the local, state and national levels. Encompassing more than 950 properties, it is one of the largest residential historic districts in the country. Most homes in the district were built from the 1880s through the 1940s. Victorian, Craftsman, Colonial Revival and Foursquare styles dominate the area. Residents of the neighborhood initiated the original historic designation and continue to promote the protection and enhancement of the district's historic character.



*Old City Hall, built in 1892, is a striking Italianate-style building.*

### Old City Hall Historic District

The Old City Hall Historic District is a local, state and nationally designated historic district encompassing the city's commercial, governmental and entertainment center. Its period of significance ranges from 1886 through the 1920s.

Old City Hall, built in 1892, is a striking Italianate building symbolizing the grand aspirations of early Tacoma. Other important landmark buildings in the district include the 1888 Northern Pacific Headquarters, the 1916 Elks Temple and the 1925 Winthrop Hotel.



*Union Station, built in 1911, is one of the city's most important historic landmarks.*

### Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District

The Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District is a local, state and nationally designated historic district. It includes many rugged brick commercial high-style and industrial vernacular style structures built primarily in the early 1900s. Union Station, erected in 1911, is one of the city's most important historic landmarks and symbolizes the district's role as a primary railroad transportation and distribution center.

Many historic buildings in the district have been successfully adapted to new uses. The rehabilitation and conversion of Union Station into a Federal Courthouse has received several preservation awards. Just to the southwest of Union Station, a number of adjacent historic warehouse buildings have been converted into the Tacoma campus of the University of Washington, which received a National Trust for Historic Preservation Honor Award. The re-use and rehabilitation of the district is ongoing as additional buildings are converted into offices, restaurants, shops and residential lofts.

## LOCALLY DESIGNATED TACOMA CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

In addition to local historic special review districts, the City of Tacoma has also designated one local conservation district.

### Union Station Conservation District

The Union Station Conservation District is a locally designated conservation district surrounding the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District. The district is intended to act as a buffer and ensure that adjacent development is compatible with the character of the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District.



*Some buildings that are now part of the University of Washington Tacoma campus are located within the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District.*

## STATE AND NATIONALLY DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICTS

In addition to the North Slope, Old City Hall and Union Depot/Warehouse Historic Districts, Tacoma has four historic districts that are not locally designated but have either state or national designation.

### Salmon Beach Historic District

The Salmon Beach Historic District is a state designated historic district. It includes a collection of waterfront cabins along the Tacoma Narrows built in the early 1900s. Several cabins are in close to original condition and are individually listed as historic landmarks.



*The state designated Salmon Beach Historic District includes a collection of waterfront cabins along the Tacoma Narrows.*

### Stadium/Seminary Historic District

The Stadium/Seminary Historic District is listed as a National Register Historic District. As the neighborhood of choice for the city's early lumber barons and railroad executives, the district includes many examples of high-style residential architecture from the late 1800s to early 1900s.



*Stadium High School, originally built in 1891, is a locally designated Tacoma historic landmark and sits within the Stadium/Seminary National Register Historic District. (Source: Artifacts Inc.)*

### South J Street Historic District

The South J Street Historic District is a National Register Historic District. It is not a locally designated Tacoma historic district, but the individual properties are listed as local historic landmarks. The district consists of eight Late Victorian Era detached row-houses which were constructed in 1889 and 1890. The homes are similar in appearance, with only two distinct styles creating a rhythmic pattern of bays and gables over the block.



*The 1906 Pythian Temple, at 926 Broadway, has been preserved and maintained in active use with the help of small historic preservation grants.*

## PROTECTING LOCALLY DESIGNATED LANDMARKS AND DISTRICTS

All of the districts described in this chapter enjoy recognition of their historic significance. A variety of incentives and benefits are available to properties at all levels of historic designation. Tacoma’s locally designated historic landmarks and districts are also subject to special protection, such as design review and permitting, as described in Chapter 2.

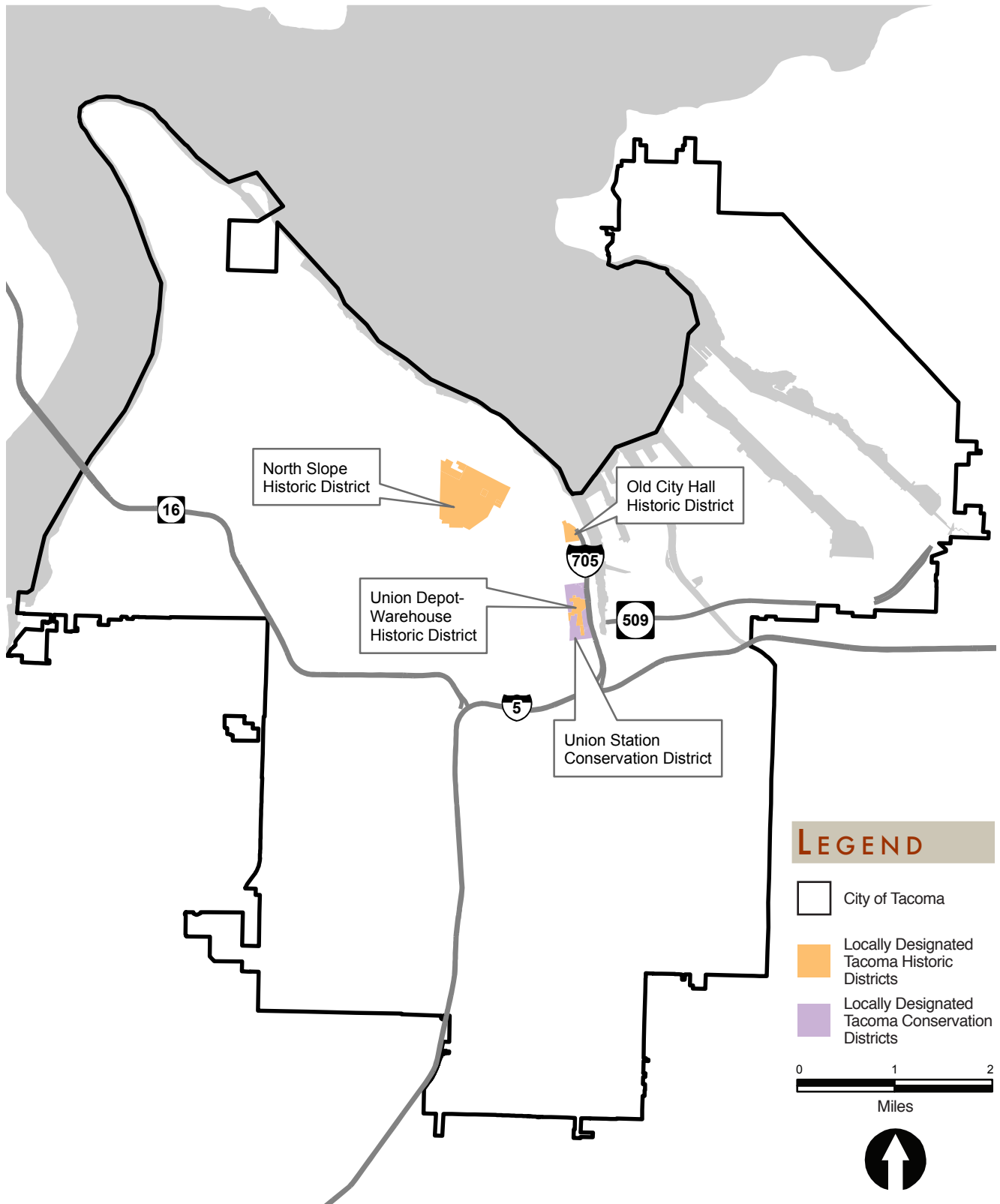
Note that the summary of historic resources in this chapter reflects the status of the various official historic designations as of August, 2010. Additional historic designations may occur in the near future, while several remaining parts of the city may be eligible for historic designation. The tools used to identify additional historic resources and potential districts, and the processes for designating them, are described in Chapter 2.

**CHART 1.1: EXISTING HISTORIC AND CONSERVATION DISTRICTS IN TACOMA**

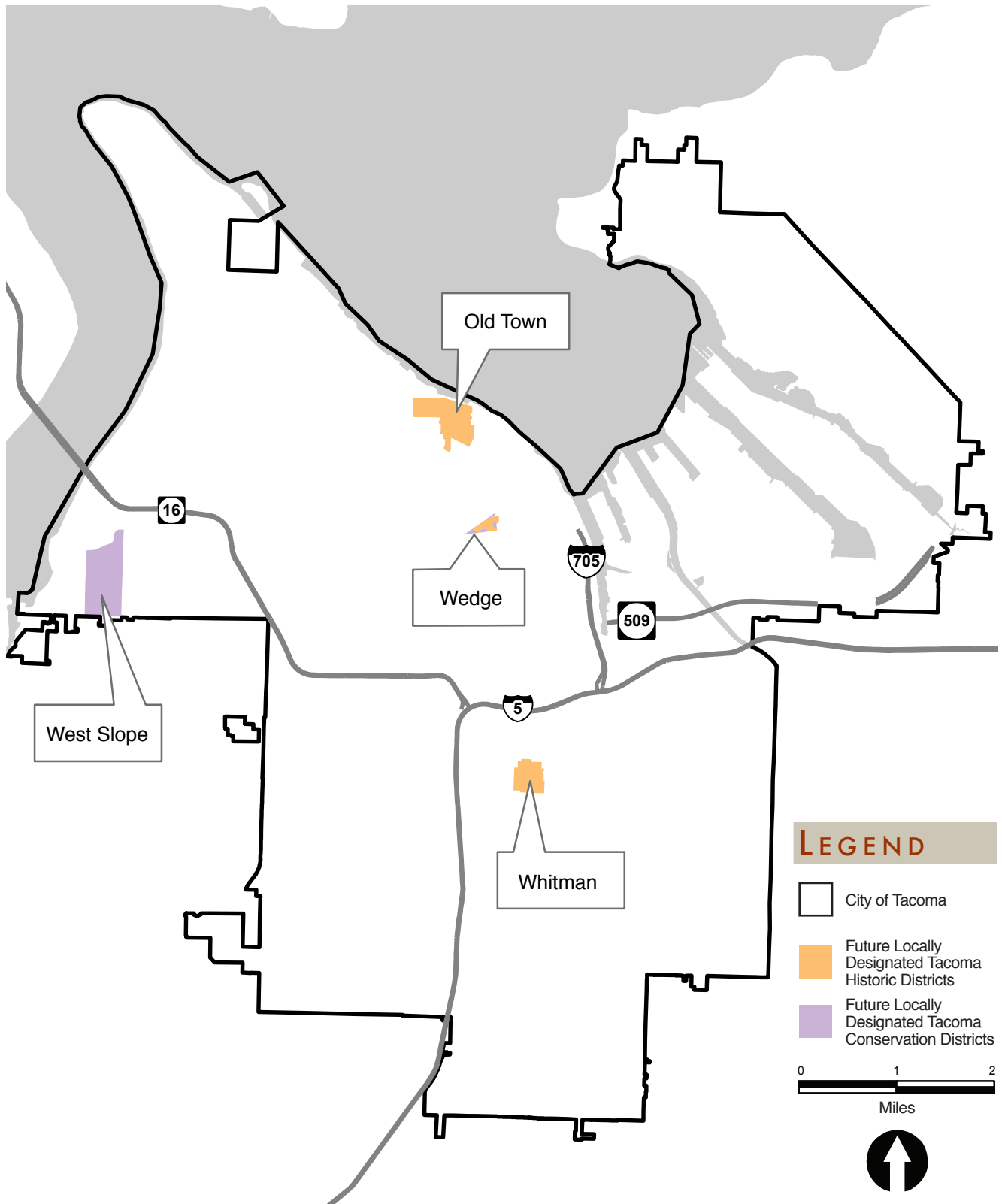
DISTRICT	DESIGNATION			
	Locally Designated Tacoma Historic Districts	Locally Designated Tacoma Conservation Districts	State Designated Historic Districts	Nationally Designated Historic Districts
North Slope Historic District	■		■	■
Old City Hall Historic District	■		■	■
Stadium/Seminary Historic District			■	■
South J Street Historic District <sup>1</sup>			■	■
Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District	■		■	■
Union Station Conservation District		■		

<sup>1</sup>Note that the structures in the South J Street Historic District are locally designated Tacoma individual historic landmarks.

MAP 1.1: LOCALLY DESIGNATED TACOMA HISTORIC AND CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



MAP 1.2: AREAS UNDER STUDY AS FUTURE LOCALLY DESIGNATED TACOMA HISTORIC AND CONSERVATION DISTRICTS









## CHAPTER 2

# PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Many groups contribute to Tacoma’s preservation program using a range of strategies and tools that work together to form its essential components.

This chapter describes the existing state of each preservation program component and provides a discussion of key questions and issues related to each one. Policies and actions for each program component are described in Chapter 3.



The preservation program components are:

- **Administration:** The framework for operating the preservation program
- **Identification:** The survey and recognition of properties with cultural or historic significance
- **Management Tools:** The specific mechanisms for protecting historic resources
- **Incentives and Benefits:** Programs that assist property owners and support preservation
- **Education:** The tools to build awareness and strengthen skills to support preservation
- **Advocacy:** The promotion of policies and partnerships that support preservation

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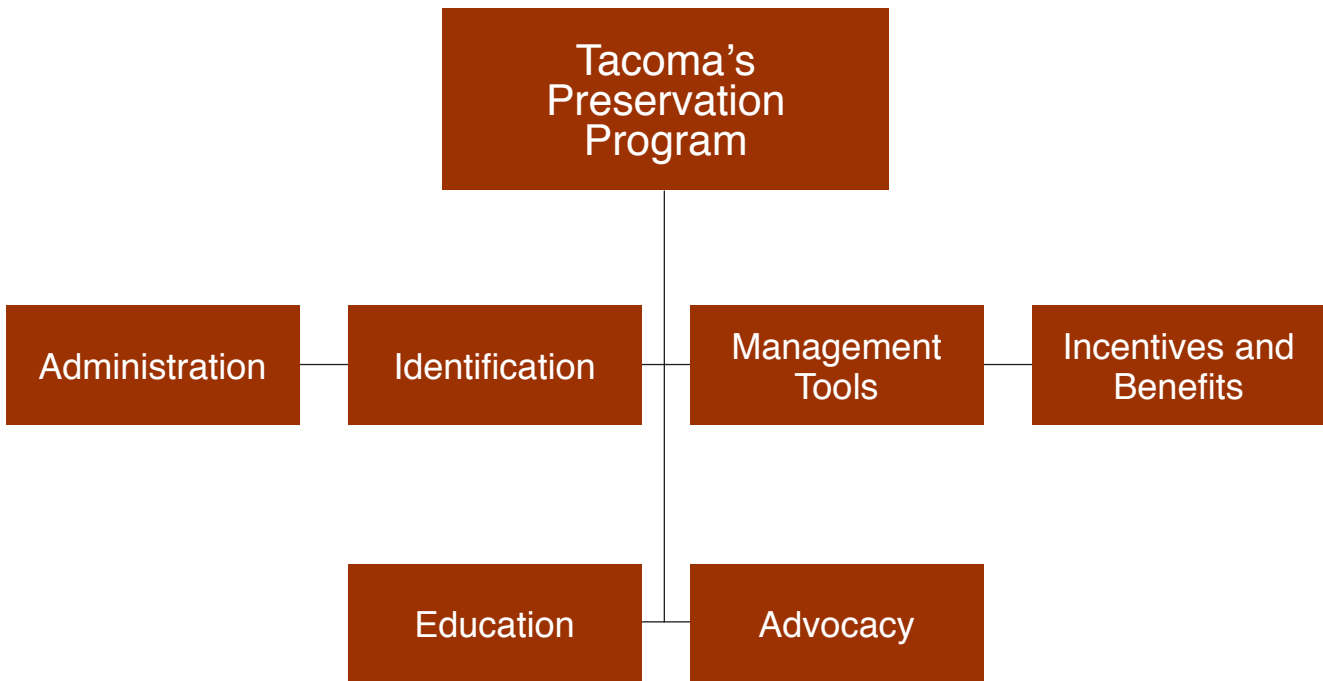


*The City and its preservation partners direct the key components that form the overall historic preservation program.*

While the City directs a number of the preservation program components, some are led by other players. Historic Tacoma for example, and other local non-profit groups specifically established to promote historic preservation, as well as others who see the benefits of using historic resources in accomplishing their individual missions, are among those who contribute to the program.

The chart below illustrates the key components of the preservation program. The City is directly active in the four components shown on the middle line of the chart. Preservation partners often lead the two activities shown on the lower line, with the City providing additional support.

**CHART 2.1: PRESERVATION PROGRAM COMPONENTS**



# ADMINISTRATION

Effective administration is a critical part of a successful preservation program. It includes overall organization, the roles of various City departments, staffing and the procedures that work to assure effective operation of the preservation program.

A description of the components of Tacoma's preservation system begins with Administration, because it is essential for the success of all the other components that are described in this chapter. Professional staff and members of the Landmarks Preservation Commission are the core team who administer the program. Other City planning staff, and those with allied advocacy organizations, are also key players.



*The City's historic preservation office administers Tacoma's preservation program.*

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Tacoma's Historic Preservation Office operates within the Long-Range Planning Division of the City's Community and Economic Development Department. Historic Preservation staff review nominations to Tacoma's Landmarks Register, process applications for changes to historic landmarks, support the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and assist the public and other government agencies with historic preservation issues. The City's preservation staff consists of one full-time preservation planner and one half-time program coordinator.

These are among the administrative tasks of the preservation program:

- Grants writing and management
- Survey management
- Nomination processing
- Design review and compliance monitoring
- Demolition review
- Coordination of programs with other agencies
- Neighborhood meetings and other outreach events
- Assist with City-owned buildings of historic significance
- Maintain survey and register data systems
- Manage preservation components of a web site
- Information and publications
- Research



*The rehabilitation of historic buildings helps the community meet goals for sustainability.*

## ADMINISTRATION ISSUES SUMMARY:

1. Preservation goals and other City development and sustainability policies are insufficiently integrated.
2. The functions of the preservation office are not as well integrated with other City activities as they should be.
3. The historic preservation office lacks sufficient resources to oversee a comprehensive preservation program such as that set forth in this plan element.
4. The program's "customers" expect quick responses to their requests, and this is difficult to provide with the current staff size.

# IDENTIFICATION

How is it determined that a property has historic significance? Professionals in the fields of history, historic preservation and historical architecture work with staff, commission members and advocates to evaluate properties, using adopted standards that are recognized nationally. They employ a variety of research tools to assist them in making those determinations.

Research tools include summaries of historical patterns, defined as “contexts” and “themes,” along with descriptions of the typical property types and building styles associated with them. The City’s Geographic Information System has also emerged as an important tool for identifying potentially significant resources.



Historic surveys have identified significant resources throughout Tacoma including a range of individual historic landmarks and districts. As of 2011, Tacoma had over 1,300 properties listed in the local, state and national historic registers.



## IDENTIFICATION VS. DESIGNATION

Note that there is a distinction between identifying that a property has historic significance and formally designating it as a historic landmark.

*Surveys have identified historic resources throughout Tacoma.*



## HISTORIC THEMES AND CONTEXTS

“Historic themes” group information related to existing historic resources based on a subject, specific time period or geographic area. The relative importance of individual historic resources is better understood by determining how they fit into a theme. Individual historic resources may relate to more than one theme. (A few of Tacoma’s historic themes are summarized in Chapter 1.)



Historic contexts discuss the historical patterns and trends that produced individual properties in the city. Other terms are frequently used, such as trend, pattern, or cultural affiliation, but the concept is the same. The core premise is that properties represent interweaving factors in history and did not occur in isolation. These relationships are understood in the context descriptions.

A historic context includes three elements: a historical theme, geographical area, and a chronological period.

*Historic contexts discuss the historical patterns and trends that produced individual properties in the city.*

A historic context provides an essential basis for determining the association that a specific property may have in the history of the community and, therefore, is a key tool used to identify resources with historic significance.



*The 1911 Murray Morgan/11th Street Bridge is a rare remaining landmark on Tacoma’s waterfront. It is currently being restored.*

*Developing Historic Context Statements* on page 3-22 includes a table summarizing the status of some historic contexts in Tacoma. It indicates that several important context statements remain undeveloped, or are in need of an update.

Themes are often used to organize a historic context. For example, the theme of transportation may address a variety of methods of moving people and goods during different periods in the history of the city. In other cases, a geographic approach may be used. A historic context addressing the waterfront, for example, could include a wide range of peoples and time periods. In other cases, a chronological approach is used. The impact of the Great Depression in Tacoma is an example of a context that could be a snapshot of a span of time in the city’s history. (Some specific themes appear in Chapter 1, as examples.)

Tacoma has few historic contexts that have been formally developed. Some recent ones are associated with specific survey projects. A recent survey report for the Tacoma West Slope area, for example, includes a historic context of the years immediately following World War II, which relates to post-war development in the West Slope. Materials such as these could serve as a base for more formal historic contexts.

Another potential source for preliminary historic contexts is through the National Park Service Information System database. The Park Service has digitized thousands of Multiple Property Submissions that are a part of the records of the National Register of Historic Places. While many portions must be more finely tailored to Tacoma, these often include historic contexts of similar settings, and can at least provide parts of a context statement that would be useful.

## PROPERTY TYPES

A property type analysis occupies the middle ground between the general historic context and surveys of individual properties.

At the most basic level, the city's survey form illustrates how an individual property or historic district relates to the historic contexts, and how it represents a property type, and meets requirements for potential designation as a historic resource. See *Historic Property Types* on page 1-9 for more information.

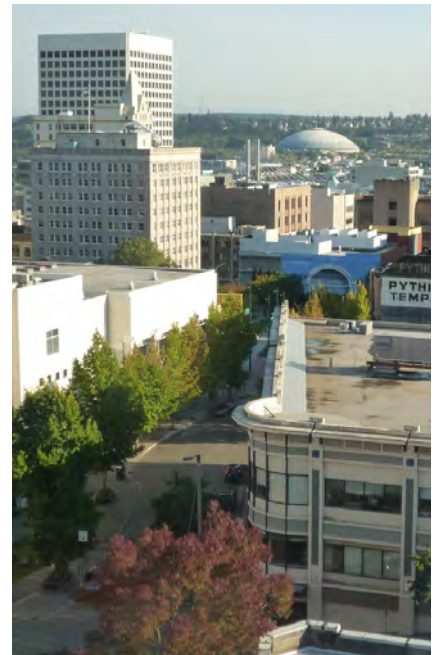
## RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION AND THE GIS

In recent years, the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) has emerged as an important tool in developing an understanding of where historic resources may be located and how they relate to other planning factors, including land use, transportation patterns and socioeconomics. The GIS system contains many "layers" of information linked to individual properties in the city. It is widely used in many departments and thus offers the capability of combining information from individual disciplines, including preservation, with other community programs.

*Map 2.1: Year Built of Oldest Improvement on Parcels* on page 2-10 and *Map 2.2: Year Built of Oldest Improvements on Parcels With Historic Streetcar Routes* on page 2-11 demonstrate how GIS data can be plotted to yield pictures of different development patterns relevant to the city's history. The chart on the following page illustrates how data from the City's GIS can be used to understand potential categories of historic resources for identification.

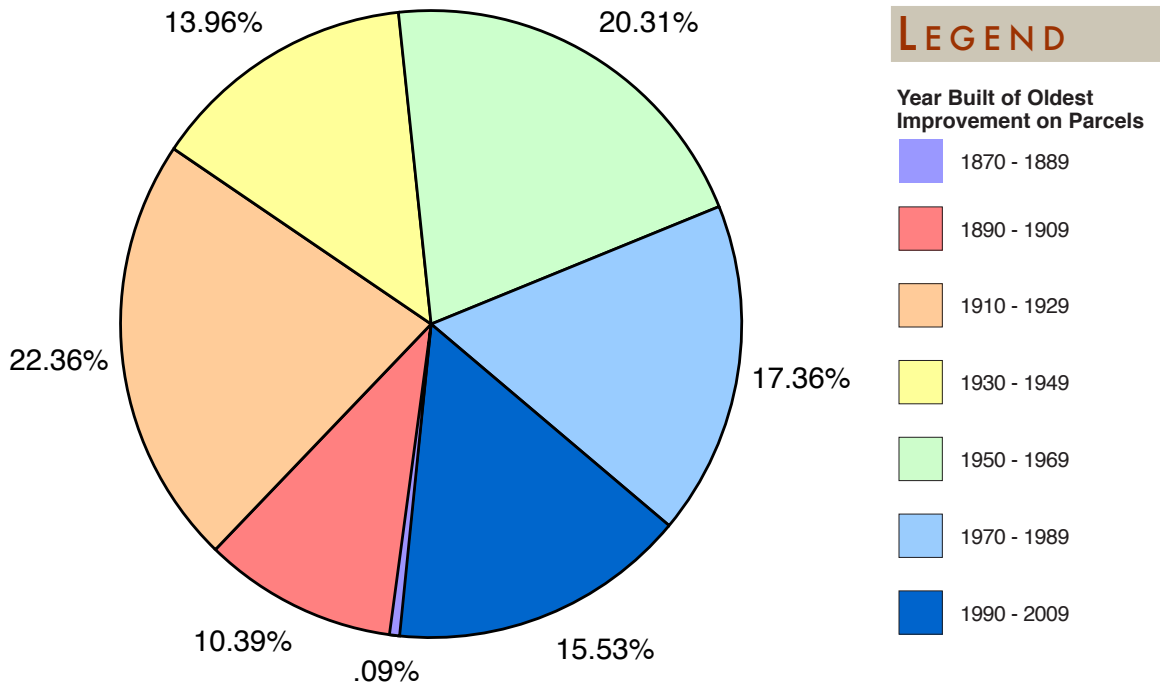


*The historic warehouse buildings along the 700 block of Broadway illustrate the industrial property type and may be part of several economy-related historic contexts.*



*The City's GIS database provides information about the age of buildings throughout Tacoma.*

**CHART 2.2: DISTRIBUTION OF BUILDINGS IN TACOMA BY AGE**



*Almost half of Tacoma’s existing structures are more than 60 years old.*

**General Observations About Building Age Distribution**

The chart groups properties in 20-year segments by the earliest date of construction. Note that the first period from 1870 to 1889 has been expanded to make it visible. A number of general observations can be made as summarized below.

***Early Properties May Have a High Level of Significance***

Only 52 structures survive from the earliest two decades of 1870 to 1889. The small number of properties in the category indicates their rarity and potential importance as historic resources. (Also see the discussion on tiered rating systems under *New Survey Techniques* on page 2-17).

***Almost Half of Existing Properties Have Structures Over 60 Years Old***

47% of existing properties include structures that are more than 60 years old. Some properties within this category form the core of what has been traditionally considered to be historically significant resources of Tacoma. This suggests that a substantial portion of the city’s structures could have historic significance and that future surveys may identify more of them as such.



In other cases, it may indicate that groups of buildings from these time periods would be in areas that could be appropriate for designation as conservation districts. A character-based analysis in those places may yield more information.

Of the large number of structures in Tacoma that are over 60 years old, many were built with durable materials and in ways that are likely to be adaptable to energy conservation initiatives. Retaining these structures will be important to support sustainability goals and programs.

***Many Structures May Be Considered as “Recent Past” Resources***

20% of existing properties include structures that date from 1950 to 1969. Even the most recent structures in this category will reach 50 years of age in 2020. This is a period of the “recent past” that may now be considered for potential historic significance. Despite meeting the age threshold, many of these structures may not be considered to have historic significance. They may, however, be included in conservation districts. See *Conservation Districts* on page 3-40 for more information.

Design issues related to these newer properties sometimes will be different from those of buildings from earlier periods. When preservation design guidelines are updated, this must be taken into consideration.

***Many Structures Will Not Be Considered for Potential Historic Significance Until the Mid 21st Century.***

The remaining third of the existing buildings (33%) dates from 1970 to the present day. Few of these properties are likely to be eligible for consideration as historic resources until the mid 21st Century.

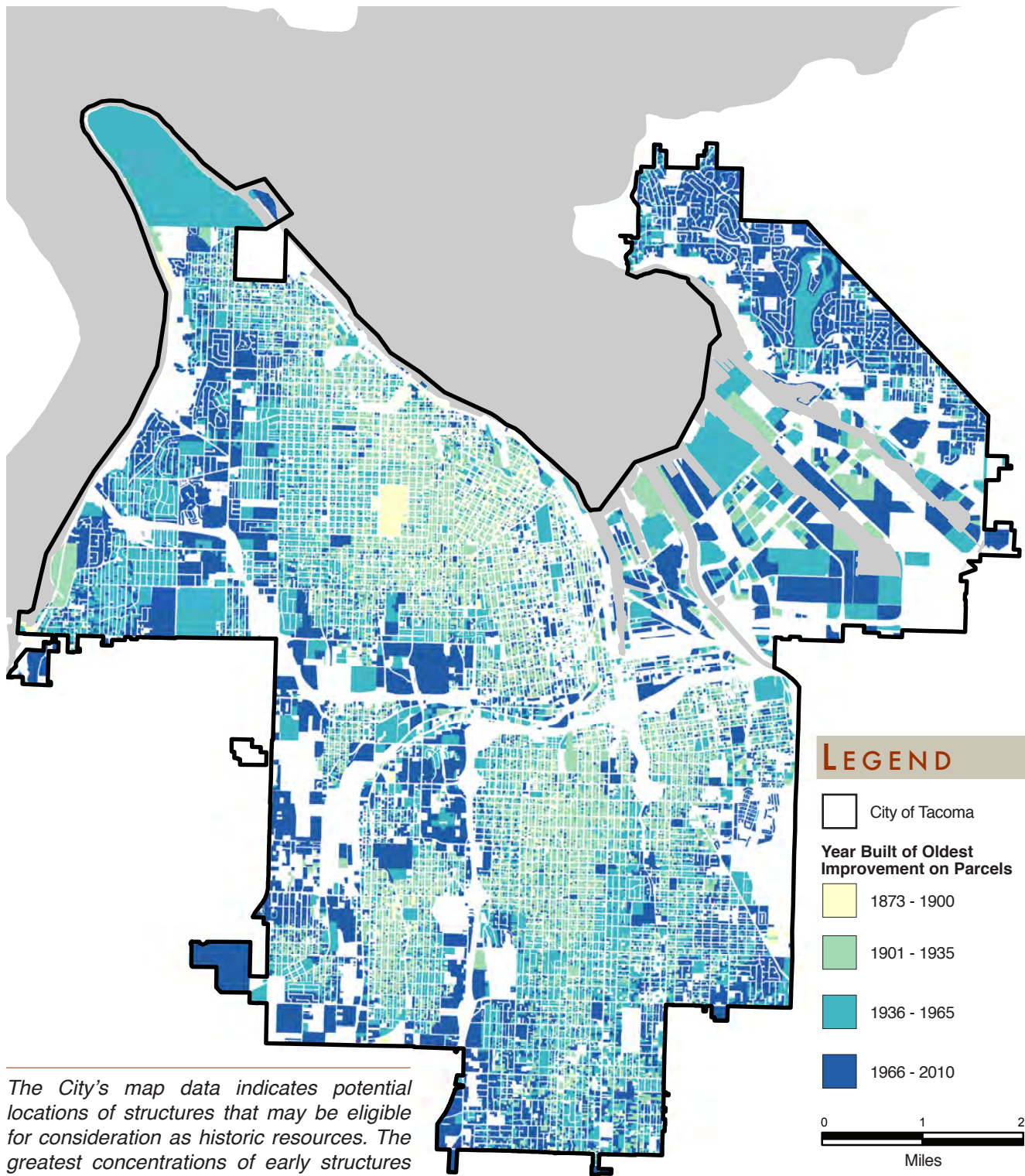


*Many structures in Tacoma will pass the 50-year age mark in the coming decades.*

## BUILDING AGE AND HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

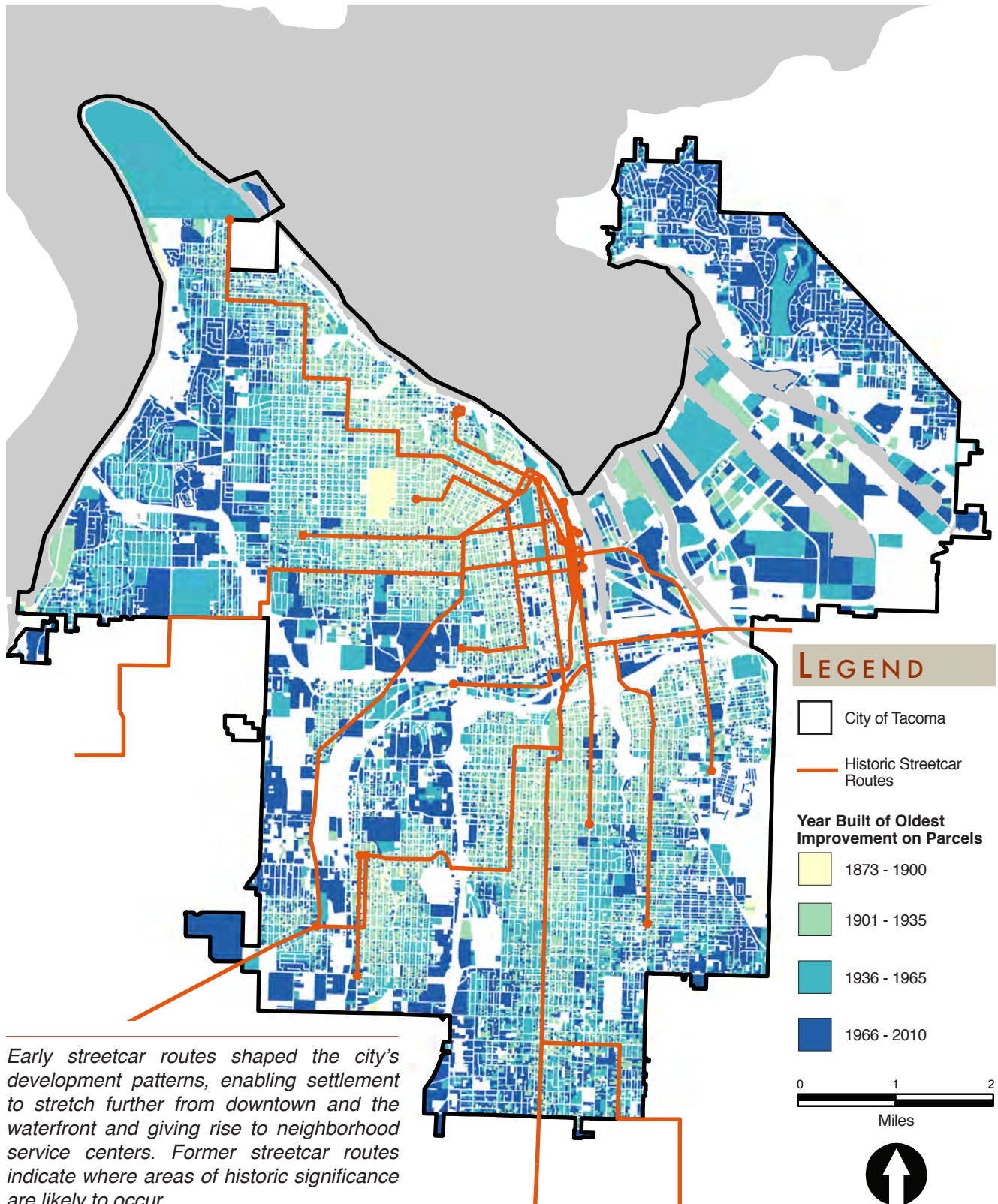
Note that age in and of itself does not bestow historic significance to a property, but instead serves as a “first filter” to sort properties that may then be evaluated for historic significance. Therefore, while a third of the city’s existing building stock may reach a 50-year mark in the coming decades, this does not mean that all will be considered significant at that time.

## MAP 2.1: YEAR BUILT OF OLDEST IMPROVEMENT ON PARCELS



*The City's map data indicates potential locations of structures that may be eligible for consideration as historic resources. The greatest concentrations of early structures appear near downtown and along hilltops facing north and west. Other concentrations reflect development along streetcar lines.*

MAP 2.2: YEAR BUILT OF OLDEST IMPROVEMENTS ON PARCELS WITH HISTORIC STREETCAR ROUTES



*Early streetcar routes shaped the city's development patterns, enabling settlement to stretch further from downtown and the waterfront and giving rise to neighborhood service centers. Former streetcar routes indicate where areas of historic significance are likely to occur.*



*Cultural resource surveys identify which properties have historic or archaeological significance in Tacoma.*

## SURVEYS

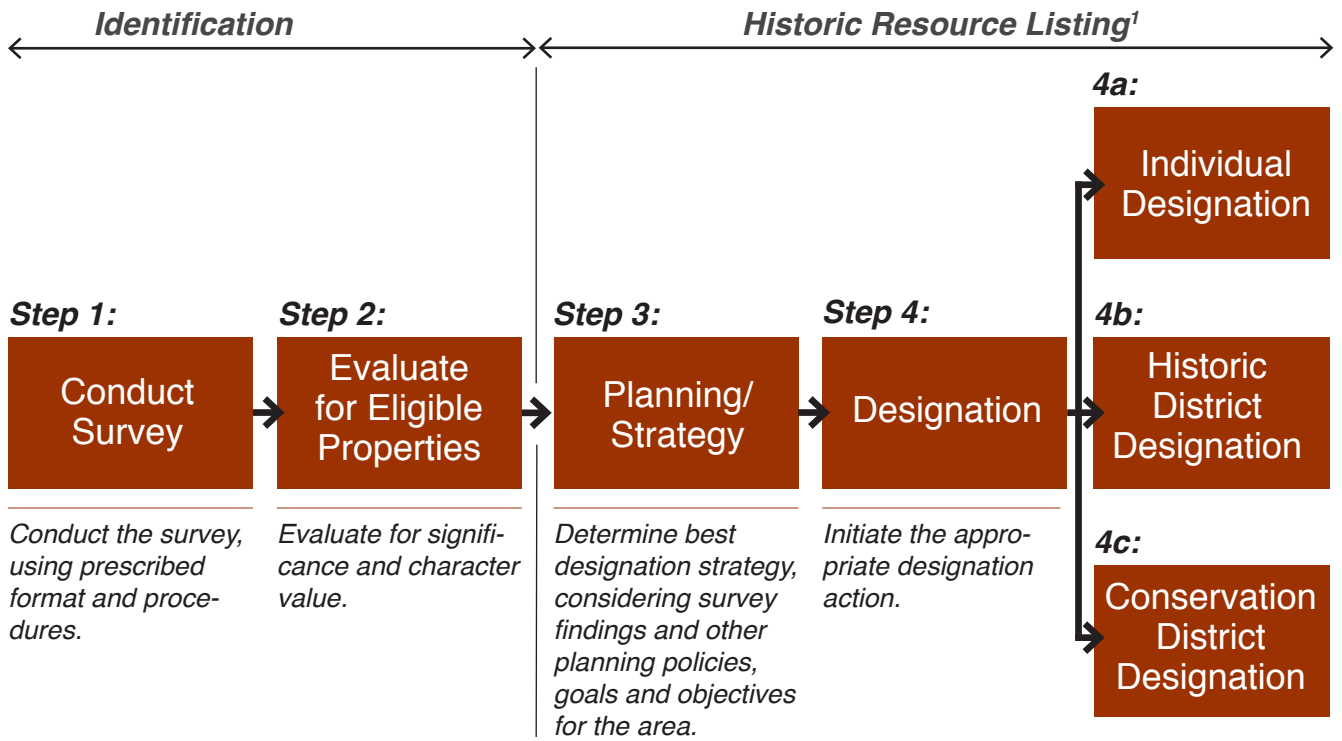
Historic resource surveys collect information about the history and disposition of properties citywide or in selected areas. They use adopted criteria for determining which properties or districts have historic or archeological significance.

The survey process includes a field inspection, collecting historic information about the physical and cultural history of the property and documenting it in photographs, drawings and maps. A survey should include a listing of all of the properties researched, indicating the significance of each of the resources and, where applicable, should also include a description of the general character of the district. Additionally, the survey should include a definition of the key characteristics of individual properties as well as the defining characteristics of groups of neighborhoods or groups of buildings.

For archaeological surveys, fieldwork is commonly required to assess significance. In many cases this involves the placement of hand-excavated probes to analyze site stratigraphy and identify any artifacts and subsurface deposits. The final product of any cultural resource study is a full and detailed report documenting the methods and results of the survey.

Tacoma's process for identifying and then designating properties of historical significance and neighborhoods of conservation value consists of four steps as summarized in Chart 2.3 on page 2-13. This orderly sequence provides for reasoned consideration of the significance of properties, and for the best approach to designation that will meet objectives for the resource.

**CHART 2.3: CITY OF TACOMA SURVEY AND HISTORIC RESOURCE LISTING PROCESSES**



<sup>1</sup>Note that the survey process may include only the identification steps (survey and evaluation) and does not automatically proceed into the historic resource listing steps (potential designation of eligible historic resources).



*The 1925 Romanesque-style First Presbyterian Church building is located at 20 Tacoma Avenue South. A survey of Tacoma's religious structures and properties was completed in 2009.*

Tacoma has undertaken some survey updates in recent years, but like many communities, it is substantially behind. From time to time, the City is able to fund surveys of small areas, usually with grants. Priority should be given to surveying, with emphasis placed upon areas that are targeted for redevelopment, or where pressure for demolition is anticipated.

### Survey Status Update

A 2008 Status Update on Historic Surveys cites a need to complete a city-wide comprehensive survey. Other specific contexts or resource types identified in the report in need of surveying include:

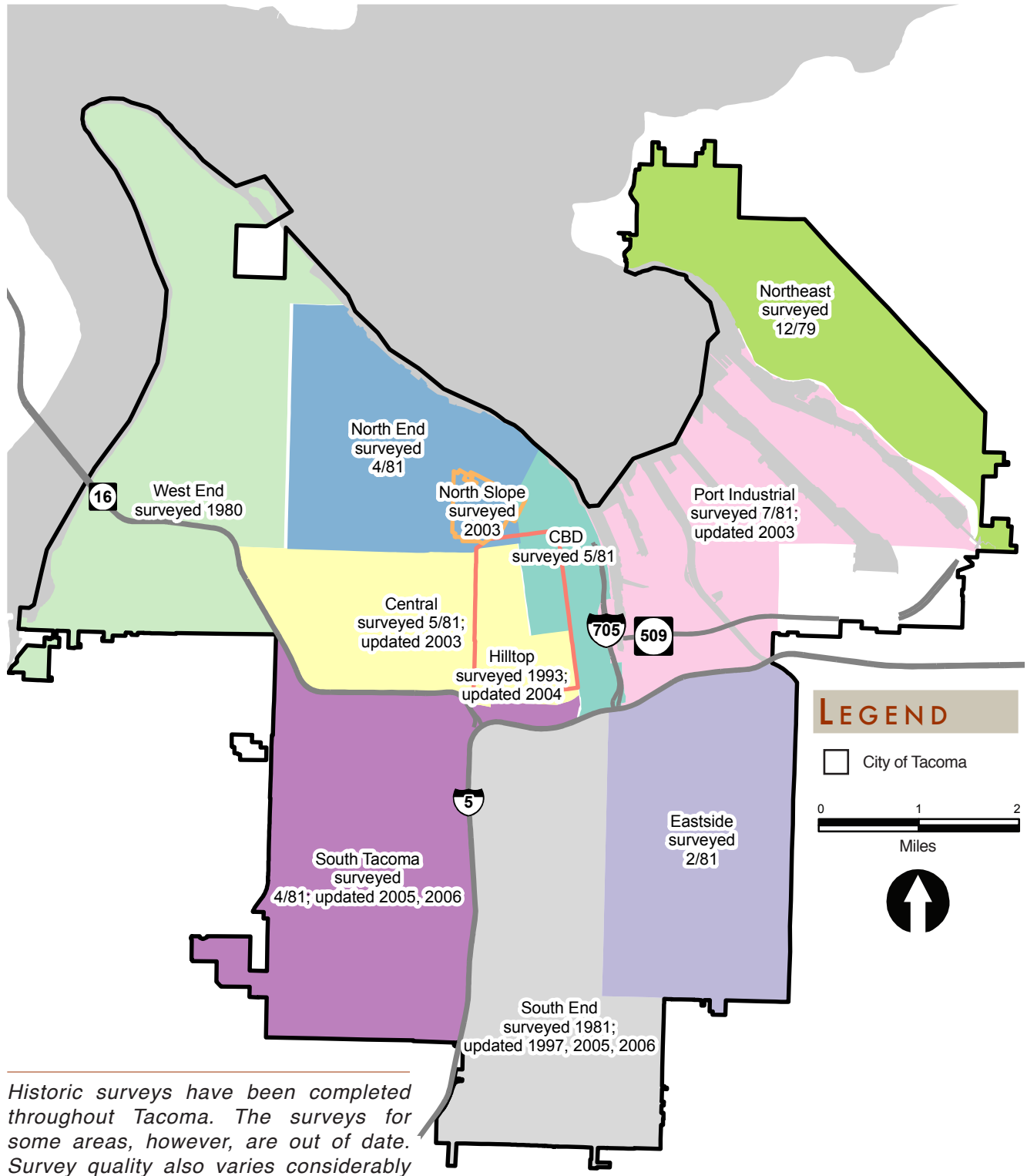
- Religious structures and properties (Completed 2009)
- Educational facilities (Expected completion - winter 2010)
- Mid-century buildings (those constructed after 1941)
- Surveys in West End, East Tacoma, and Central Area

### Existing Surveys (2010)

Tacoma's existing surveys cover individual areas of the city and date back as far as 1977. Some identify only those properties that are of historic significance and do not address more modest resources that may contribute to the overall historic character of an area. In addition, most early surveys omit properties that do not contribute to the historic character of an area. While this approach was sufficient at the time to identify a potential historic district, it is less useful as a planning tool. This results in less predictability for property owners because the status of their properties may be unclear, requiring a case-by-case determination of historic significance.

Variations in the amount of information provided by older surveys also means that the most important features of historic properties are not always documented. This information is important to have available when a property owner is planning improvements, because it helps them identify those features that should be preserved.

MAP 2.3: HISTORIC PROPERTY SURVEY STATUS



*Historic surveys have been completed throughout Tacoma. The surveys for some areas, however, are out of date. Survey quality also varies considerably from area to area.*

CHART 2.4: CITY OF TACOMA CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY STATUS

AREA	SURVEY DATES		SURVEY STATUS			Priority	Comment
	Last Surveyed	Scheduled for Survey	Current	Needs Update	Not Surveyed		
North Slope Historic District	2003		■				Databased
Old City Hall Historic District				■			
Salmon Beach Historic District				■		High	Not in database
Stadium/Seminary Historic District				■			Not in database
Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District				■			Not in database
Union Station Conservation District					■	High	
Whitman Area	2007						Not in state format
West Slope Neighborhood		2008	■				
"Wedge" Neighborhood	2008		■				not in state format
Central Business District	1981 (updated 2003)			■			Databased
North End	1981			■			
North East Tacoma	1980			■			
Port Industrial Area	1981 (updated 2003)			■			Databased
Central Area	1981			■		High	
South Tacoma	1981 (updated 2005/06)		■				Databased
South End	1981 (updated 1997, 2005/06)		■				Databased
West End, Ruston & Pt. Defiance	1980			■			
East Side	1981			■		High	



## New Survey Techniques

New technologies now allow data gathering and evaluation to occur more efficiently. An important innovation is linking survey data through the City's Geographic Information System. Combining historic records and building permit information in Geographic Information Systems improves recording and access to a wide range of property information.



Additional data may also be gathered by allowing property owners to upload information about their properties to a City web site. When combined, these new technologies can support ongoing survey efforts that ensure up-to-date documentation of a community's historic resources.

Some communities are also using a tiered survey system that indicates varying levels of integrity and significance for historic structures. Such a survey may also identify new buildings that are compatible with their context. A tiered survey can be linked to a variety of planning objectives, or be calibrated to fit differing benefits and incentives, or review and permitting processes. For example, properties with a high level of historic significance may be subject to review by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, whereas those of a lesser level may be handled by staff. (Recommendations related to GIS and tiered surveys appear in Chapter 3.)

*In a tiered survey system, structures may be listed with varying levels of historic integrity.*

## TIERED SURVEY EXAMPLES

For many years, San Francisco has employed a variety of rating categories. These indicate the relative significance of a resource which is then linked to a priority for designation.

Oakland, California also uses a rating system that includes information about how different categories of historic resources should be treated in development review and permitting.



*The 1910 YMCA building at 714 Market Street is listed in both the National Register of Historic Places and Tacoma Register of Historic Places. It has been rehabilitated and converted into condominiums.*

## HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION

Properties and districts officially designated as having historic significance are listed in national, state and/or local historic registers. Eligibility for historic designation is generally determined during a historic resource survey. However, it is important to note that not all eligible properties are officially designated and listed in a historic register. Designated historic resources are protected using the management tools described in this chapter.

Historic resources in Tacoma may be officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Washington Heritage Register or the Tacoma Register of Historic Places. Properties may be listed in multiple registers with each listing relating to specific benefits and requirements.

## National and State Historic Registers

Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places are reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Washington State Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. If the nomination is successful at the state level, a recommendation is forwarded for final determination and listing on the national register. Nominations to the Washington State Heritage Register are approved by the Washington State Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

National or state listing provides benefits such as tax incentives. With the exception of projects subject to shoreline, environmental or other special review, national or state listed properties are not subject to additional regulations.

## Tacoma Register of Historic Places

Those resources listed in the Tacoma Register of Historic Places are a key focus of local preservation efforts. Locally designated properties may be listed in one of three categories:

- Individually Listed Historic Landmarks
- Historic Special Review Districts
- Conservation Districts

Properties listed in the Tacoma Register of Historic Places may be eligible for benefits such as the Special Tax Valuation program. Alterations to the properties are also subject to design review by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. See page 1-17 for a summary of locally designated Tacoma historic landmarks and districts.



*Properties listed in the Tacoma Register of Historic Places, including homes located in the North Slope Historic District, may be eligible for incentives and benefits.*

## RESOURCE INVENTORY VS. HISTORIC REGISTER

**Historic Resource Inventory** is a term that refers to the City's complete collection of historic survey information. It may include older or incomplete information as well as properties that have not been fully evaluated for historic significance. Many properties on the historic resource inventory are not officially designated as historic, and are therefore not listed in a historic register.

**Historic Register** is a term that refers to a listing of properties that are officially designated as historic and appear on the National Register of Historic Places, the Washington State Heritage Register and/or Tacoma Register of Historic Places. Properties on a historic register may be eligible for special benefits and subject to specific requirements.



*The 1918 Rialto Theater at 310 South 9th Street is a locally designated Tacoma individual historic landmark and is also listed in the national and state historic registers.*



*Individually listed historic landmarks should embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction.*

### ***Locally Designated Tacoma Individual Historic Landmarks***

To be eligible for listing as a locally designated Tacoma individual historic landmark, properties must first meet a set of threshold criteria related to age and integrity, and then must meet at least one of six criteria related to significance.

Threshold criteria are:

1. A property must be 50 years old or older at the time of nomination.
2. A property must retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association such that it is able to convey its historical, cultural, or architectural significance.

Once threshold criteria have been met, properties are reviewed for historic significance using six additional criteria as provided in the City’s Title 13 Land Use Regulatory Code.

Official consideration of listing a property begins with a formal request. Any city resident, City staff, and members of City Council, the Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Planning Commission may nominate a landmark. Nominations first go through a preliminary review before the Landmarks Preservation Commission. If the Commission finds that the property meets the threshold criteria, it will be scheduled for a special public meeting. If approved, the nomination is then forwarded to City Council. The City Council votes on the designation at its next available agenda.

***Locally Designated Tacoma Historic Districts***

To be eligible for designation as a Historic Special Review District, a district must meet both the criteria for individual designation and must be found to contain a concentration of structures having a special character or special historic, cultural, architectural, engineering, or geographic interest or value. In addition, the area must be found to constitute a distinct section of the city.

Designation as a Historic Special Review District is initiated through a nomination process. As with an individual landmark, this is then reviewed by the Landmarks Preservation Commission and, if approved, referred to the Planning Commission, which may recommend to City Council that they establish the proposed district.



*The 1889 Bostwick Building at 755 St. Helens Avenue is a locally designated Tacoma individual historic landmark and is also in the Old City Hall National Register Historic District.*

***Locally Designated Tacoma Conservation Districts***

A conservation district may be established in conjunction with a Historic District. To be designated, a conservation district must be found to possess special historic, architectural, or cultural significance that is a part of the heritage of the city as well as historic character which shares, or is sympathetic to, the development patterns and period of significance of the adjacent historic district. Conservation districts are not required to meet the criteria for locally designated Tacoma historic districts.

The conservation district was established to be used as a protective edge to a historic district, but there is no clear policy difference for the treatment of properties within a historic district as compared to a conservation district. In addition, the same design review process and guidelines are used to evaluate projects in both Historic Special Review Districts and conservation districts. Chapter 3 includes additional discussion of the current and potential future role of conservation districts in Tacoma.

## POTENTIAL DISTRICTS

Several neighborhoods and areas in Tacoma merit evaluation as potential locally designated Tacoma historic or conservation districts. Policy recommendations for designation of historic and conservation districts are provided in Chapter 3.



*Historic resources should be consistently identified throughout the community.*

## IDENTIFICATION AND HISTORIC RESOURCE LISTING ISSUES SUMMARY

- Incomplete or inconsistent survey information results in a lack of predictability in their treatment.
- Surveys should provide sufficient information for use at the local level as administrative/property management tools.
- Old surveys do not always provide sufficient information about the key defining features of properties.
- Some have asked if the survey can indicate differing levels of significance to aid in management and treatment decisions.
- The differences between national, state and local historic designations are not well understood among the general public.
- Recent-past historic resources may be insufficiently identified.
- Survey findings of historic significance (which are informational) are often assumed to lead directly to designation as an official historic resource.
- There is a lack of distinction between historic districts and conservation districts.
- Many potentially eligible districts are not designated.

# MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Management tools are the mechanisms for protecting historic resources and providing technical assistance. The City seeks to streamline preservation management tools to accomplish its goals in the most efficient way. This includes simplifying design review and some related forms of permitting.

Tacoma’s primary management tools are the ordinances that guide historic preservation efforts as well as underlying zoning regulations, the design review process and design guidelines that manage treatment of the city’s historic resources. These provide an effective framework for preservation. In some cases, however, individual tools lack sufficient clarity or they conflict with others.



# ORDINANCES

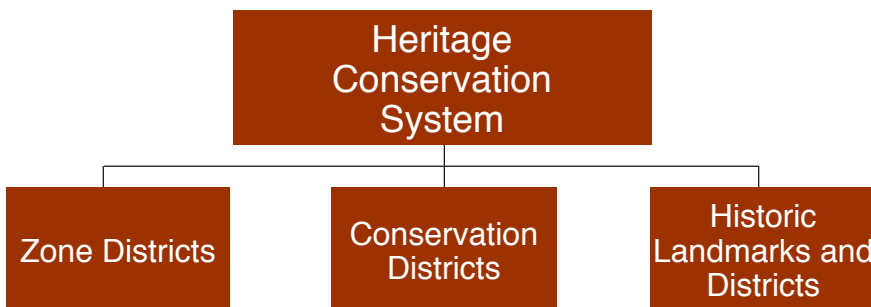
Ordinances bundled into the Tacoma Municipal Code establish the basic rules for construction related to historic resources and set forth the process for establishing protections for them. In addition to the International Existing Buildings Code (IEBC), several chapters of the Municipal Code relate to historic preservation. They are:

- Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts Code (Chapter 13.07)
- Landmarks Preservation Commission Code (Chapter 1.42)
- Zoning (Chapter 13.06)
- Waterfront Structures and Marina Code (Chapter 2.13)
- Environmental Code (Chapter 13.12)



*The City’s ordinances establish the basic rules for construction related to historic resources.*

Each of the key ordinances that address historic preservation in Tacoma are summarized in the following pages.



*A series of districts and tools described within the City’s ordinances provide the framework for a heritage conservation system that protects neighborhood character and historic resources. Note that the historic preservation program does not play a direct role in the administration of zone districts. See Zoning Code on page 2-25 and The Heritage Conservation System on page 3-36 for more information.*



*The Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts section of the municipal code is the primary mechanism for protecting Tacoma's historic resources.*

## Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts Code

As a part of the municipal code, the Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts section is the primary mechanism for protecting historic resources.

This ordinance states the purpose of the City's goals and responsibilities to promote preservation, enhance awareness and protect the finite resources that define the community. It establishes criteria for the designation of buildings and districts, as well as policies and review procedures for their treatment.

The code loosely follows the format of Washington State's model historic preservation code, with the addition of sections adopting historic special review districts and their associated guidelines.

The landmarks code lacks clarity in several areas. Some of these are minor or procedural issues, whereas others are program-wide. One of the main areas of concern is a lack of distinction between a conservation district and a Historic District, including what levels of review and protection they provide for properties within them.

Other topics are not addressed at all in the existing code but should be. Among these are tools for maintaining the character of traditional neighborhoods, providing an emergency response mechanism for historic properties and preventing demolition by neglect. Demolition is discussed in more detail in the section below.

## Landmarks Preservation Commission Code

The Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) is established in Tacoma Municipal Code Section 1.42. The Commission reviews and approves applications for changes to registered landmarks and buildings within local historic districts, reviews nominations and advises City Council regarding additions to the Landmarks Register, and participates in the planning process. The Commission consists of eleven members, eight of whom must be Tacoma residents with professional experience in the fields of architecture, history, planning, construction, engineering, real estate, the arts and art history, in addition to three at large members.



## Zoning Code

The basic regulations that shape development throughout Tacoma are part of the city's zoning code, which is provided in chapter 13.06 of the Tacoma Municipal Code. The zoning code defines permitted uses and densities as well as dimensional limits such as setbacks and building heights. These regulations apply to both historic and non-historic properties.



The zoning code includes base zone districts and overlay districts. Base zone districts provide the regulations that apply to all properties throughout the city while overlays provide additional context-specific regulations in certain areas. The code includes base zone districts for residential, commercial, industrial and other uses at varying densities and scales. Special districts such as downtown districts and Mixed-Use Center Districts (see *Mixed-Use Center Districts* at right for more information) apply to specific areas. The code also includes overlay districts such as the View-Sensitive Overlay, which enables special height regulations in view-sensitive areas. Additional design overlay districts may be developed to implement neighborhood-specific zoning standards as part of an overall heritage conservation system. See *The Heritage Conservation System* on page 3-36 for more information.

In some cases, the requirements of existing zoning districts may conflict with goals and objectives for historic preservation because they allow for development that is out of character with the historic pattern. For example, if maintaining low scale is a goal, zoning regulations that allow significant height increases could be incompatible. In other cases, zoning regulations may be incompatible with preservation goals because they are too restrictive. For example, if a goal is to preserve the character of a neighborhood where houses were typically built very close together, zoning regulations that require a significant setback between properties could be incompatible.

## Building Code

Requirements for fire safety, emergency exiting, seismic mitigation and other construction-related issues are part of the building code. The City uses the International Existing Building Code for projects involving historic structures. City staff can assist applicants with flexible design solutions that promote preservation objectives and meet code requirements. However, applicants must balance requirements made by other City departments without the benefit of a staff team leader to coordinate preservation-friendly solutions.

*The View-Sensitive Overlay enables additional height regulations in areas where views should be protected.*

## MIXED-USE CENTER DISTRICTS

Tacoma's zoning code includes a series of districts intended to promote flexible development options and greater integration of land uses. These Mixed-Use Center Districts apply within several existing neighborhood commercial centers that include older buildings. Such centers are also often surrounded by lower-scale traditional residential neighborhoods.

Although Mixed-Use Centers often allow for increased development opportunities, they also provide incentives for historic preservation including waiver of parking requirements for existing buildings and height bonuses for voluntary historic designation, rehabilitation of adjacent historic buildings or preservation of historic facades. As described in Chapter 3, the City should evaluate the effectiveness of such incentives and determine whether they should also be considered for historic resources located outside of Mixed-Use Centers.



*The Burnham and Root designed Luzon Building was demolished as a safety hazard in 2009 after several decades of neglect.*

## DEMOLITION-RELATED TOOLS

Tools that prevent or discourage the demolition of historic resources are essential elements of a city's preservation system. Each loss of a historic structure raises questions about the effectiveness of the preservation system.

Sometimes a property is neglected until it must be demolished. These cases of "demolition by neglect" may reflect many causes including:

- An owner cannot afford the necessary maintenance because of personal financial circumstances, or
- An owner is unwilling to invest in the structure, or
- An owner anticipates reuse opportunities for the site that seem to be greater without the historic structure being there, or
- There is no apparent viable economic use for the property, or
- An owner is disinterested or unaware of the condition of the property

At a certain point, the decay becomes so substantial that the City's building official must cite the property as a hazard to public safety. Most local preservation ordinances acknowledge that, when this state is reached, the property may be demolished. The objective, however, is to avoid having a property reach this state.

Typically, by the time a building reaches this stage, it has already passed a point at which many of the architectural details and building components that contribute to its significance have deteriorated to a point beyond repair. That is, when it reaches a public safety hazard stage, the building may have already lost its integrity as a historic resource. The challenge, therefore, is to interrupt the cycle before decay reaches this stage.

## Tools to Prevent the Loss of Historic Resources

Tacoma's primary demolition prevention tool is a requirement for a demolition permit. Other strategies to protect historic resources from demolition include direct intervention, and incentives as well as working to create a climate that encourages good stewardship. Because the appropriate tools will vary with the circumstances of the case, the most effective preservation programs use these tools:



- Property owner notices of need to repair
- Publication of endangered property lists (often managed by preservation partners)
- Emergency protection clauses in the ordinance
- Minimum maintenance requirements
- Forced sale or condemnation
- Emergency preservation funds
- Removal of inverse incentives
- Creating a supportive economic environment

*Minimum maintenance requirements and other tools help prevent the loss of historic resources.*

When demolition is proposed, the question of economic viability typically arises. At present, there is not a clear set of criteria to evaluate the feasibility of preserving a structure.



*A well organized design review process helps protect a community's historic character.*

## DESIGN REVIEW

Design review is a collaborative process used to examine public and private projects for their aesthetic, architectural, or urban design quality, historic appropriateness and compatibility with surrounding context. A well organized design review process helps protect a community's historic character. It is a management tool that applies in addition to zoning regulations that may provide some context-sensitive standards.

Tacoma's Building and Land Use Division staff review improvements to all properties in Tacoma to ensure compliance with zoning, building code and other base regulations. Designated city landmarks and properties within a conservation or historic district also undergo additional design review by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. In general, only exterior work that is visible from the public way must go through design review.

In some instances, such as for larger or more complex projects, a pre-application meeting or Landmarks Preservation Commission briefing is available. If the Commission finds the proposed work meets the City's standards for historic preservation, they will issue a certificate of approval.

In order to determine the appropriateness of a proposed improvement, the City uses these criteria:

- The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties
- The National Park Service's Preservation Briefs
- Locally-adopted Historic District Design Guidelines (for individual historic districts where applicable)

While the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Preservation Briefs provide valuable guidance, they are not specific to Tacoma's historic resources and may be difficult for the public to understand. The basic principles set forth in these documents are therefore adapted to local resources in the City's own design guidelines. As a result, Tacoma's local design guidelines provide some of the most critical review criteria.

## Local Design Guidelines

Design guidelines provide objective criteria for determining the appropriateness of proposed work affecting historic resources. They inform a property owner in advance of how a proposal will be evaluated.

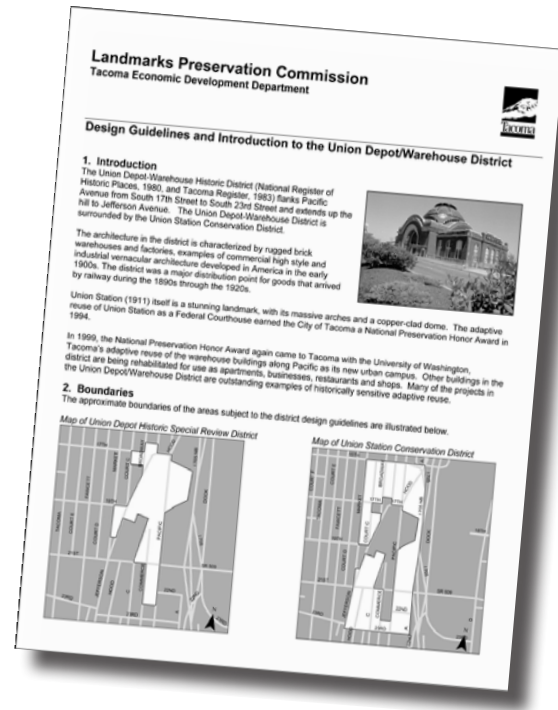
Effective guidelines provide clear examples of appropriate and inappropriate design treatments using local examples. They also define the range of flexibility that may be available for alterations and additions to properties. They also can help to identify which features are significant and should be preserved, and conversely, which features are less critical to the integrity of a historic resource, thereby indicating where greater flexibility may be afforded. Such guidelines are especially important for administrative reviews related to recent past properties.

Design guidelines should address sustainability, including energy conservation and generation. They should also provide help in resolving apparent conflicts between preservation and sustainability.

Tacoma has published custom-tailored design guidelines for two of its historic districts. They guide the design review process for work involving officially designated historic resources and provide an advisory tool for non-designated resources that may have historic significance.

These existing guidelines generally provide a good base by which to consider treatment of historic properties. However, few guidelines include adequate illustrations and many lack a sufficient level of detail on specific design topics to provide clear guidance for decision-making.

Some districts lack their own design guidelines and in these cases the City must use the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. As a result, different levels of details are used in different districts in the city. Even though the underlying principles are the same for all these districts, there is a potential that the review process can be considered confusing, or even inconsistent. Some cities address this issue by crafting a general set of guidelines that apply to all resources and then supplement these with additional guidelines tailored to each district.



*Tacoma has published custom-tailored design guidelines for two historic districts including the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District.*



*Design guidelines provide objective criteria for determining the appropriateness of proposed work affecting historic resources.*

## Landmarks Preservation Commission Design Review in the Broader Context

The design review process in the preservation program occurs in the context of other City regulations that affect the character of building and neighborhoods. Base zoning, for example, establishes maximum potential building envelopes, using simple tools for minimum setbacks, lot coverage (or minimum yard space) and building height. In addition, the City uses special overlay designations where other forms of design review may occur.

As the preservation review process is refined, it will be important to consider how it interacts with other regulations. In some cases, modifying the

underlying zoning in an established historic district to more closely reflect historic development patterns would reduce potential conflicts in design review. In other neighborhoods that are not designated as historic districts, or perhaps are designated as conservation districts, adjusting the underlying zoning may be the only tool needed. For example, the permitted maximum building area would be calibrated to be more in keeping with traditional development patterns, and may be sufficient in some places to protect character.

The City may also consider introducing more form-based standards in the zoning code over time. These can also help protect neighborhood character, including places that are in historic and conservation districts. The extent to which the underlying zoning can be better synchronized with design objectives for an area, the more effective the system can be.

## COMPLIANCE PROCESS

Enforcement and compliance of historic preservation ordinances is an ongoing issue in many communities, including Tacoma. Some construction work may be executed without required approvals, or deviate from approved plans. Addressing this issue requires clear documentation of what has been permitted as well as active field monitoring and enforcement.

To promote compliance with preservation ordinances, Tacoma's historic preservation staff has worked with building inspectors and the Landmarks Preservation Commission to adopt a priority system.



*Monitoring construction in the field is important to an effective compliance program.*



*Existing tools do not address new trends in preservation, such as sustainability, recent past resources, and integration with other planning objectives and policies.*

## MANAGEMENT TOOLS ISSUES SUMMARY

### **Overall Issues**

- Existing tools are not sufficient to ensure maintenance of historic resources.
- Existing tools are not sufficient to prevent the demolition of historic structures.
- Existing tools do not address new trends in preservation, such as sustainability, recent past resources, and integration with other planning objectives and policies.

### **Ordinance Issues**

- Technical clean-up of existing codes is needed.
- The existing zoning code includes provisions that may conflict with preservation objectives. Existing issues as of August, 2010 include:
  - » The HMR-SRD residential zone district allows the Landmarks Preservation Commission to exempt historic properties from zoning standards when there is a conflict with historic goals, but this is not available in other districts.
  - » The View-Sensitive Overlay does not include exceptions for historic structures, such as for reconstruction of a documented historical feature.
  - » The design standards that apply in the special downtown zone districts do not include exceptions for older buildings that are not specifically designated as historic.

### **Design Review Issues**

- Design review criteria are not specific to Tacoma's resources.
- Design guidelines do not describe or illustrate desired design responses.
- Design guidelines for different districts address varying levels of detail.
- Guidelines do not exist to address the general treatment of historic resources citywide.



# INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS

Effective preservation programs offer special benefits to stimulate investment in historic properties, encourage owners to follow appropriate rehabilitation procedures, and assist those with limited budgets. This may include:

- Financial or technical assistance
- Tax or regulatory relief, such as streamlined review
- Special flexibility in building codes

Many historic properties in Tacoma may be eligible for the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit and the Washington State Special Tax Valuation.



## FEDERAL REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT PROGRAM (HRTC)

The Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program is a one-time federal income tax credit for costs associated with the certified rehabilitation of historic buildings.

Features:

- Applies only to income-producing properties.
- The National Park Service and the IRS jointly administer the program.
- The Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) coordinates the certification of projects.



## WASHINGTON STATE SPECIAL TAX VALUATION

Washington State allows local governments to offer tax relief for historic property owners in the form of reduced property taxes. This is a very effective tool, and is the key preservation incentive for many property owners.

Features:

- Provides for a “special valuation” of the property with reduced property taxes.
- Extends for a period of ten years.
- The Tacoma Landmarks Preservation Commission acts as the Local Review Board.



*Owners of historic homes who complete appropriate rehabilitation projects may be eligible for specific incentives and benefits.*



*Incentives and benefits support the preservation and rehabilitation of historic resources.*

## PIERCE COUNTY AND CITY OF TACOMA CURRENT USE ASSESSMENT

This program allows Pierce County to assess land at a lower value based on current use rather than potential uses or market value. The program is primarily used to promote preservation of unimproved natural, agricultural and open space land, but may be expanded to include properties with designated historic resources.

Features:

- Jointly administered by Pierce County and the City of Tacoma.

## CITY OF TACOMA TAX INCENTIVE FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING

Tacoma offers a local tax exemption for creation of multifamily housing in specially designated areas. Although this incentive is not specific to historic preservation, it may be used to assist with the rehabilitation and re-use of historic buildings as multifamily housing in a designated Mixed-Use Center.

Features:

- Offers an 8 to 12 year exemption from local property taxes.
- Available to historic and non-historic properties in designated Mixed-Use Center districts.
- Some housing units must be designated as affordable (for 12-year exemption).
- May be combined with the Special Tax Valuation.

## CITY OF TACOMA ZONING INCENTIVES

Properties located in Downtown Tacoma or within a designated Mixed-Use Center may be eligible for zoning incentives that promote preservation of historic resources. These include height bonuses for preservation of designated historic resources and waiver of parking requirements for existing buildings. See *Mixed-Use Center Districts* on page 2-25 for more information.

## INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS ISSUES SUMMARY

- A perception exists that preservation efforts are too focused on regulation rather than benefits or incentives.
- The City does not have a specific system to coordinate the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program.
- Existing incentives are insufficient to promote historic designation of some commercial properties.

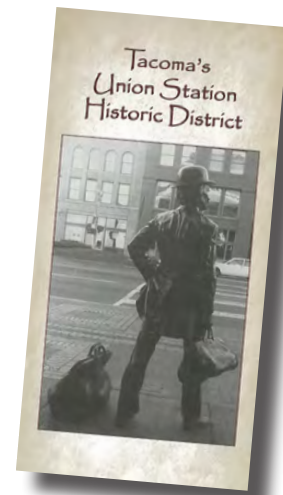
## EDUCATION

Helping property owners learn how to maintain their historic properties as active, viable assets is a key part of a successful preservation program. Many property owners willingly comply with appropriate rehabilitation procedures and develop compatible designs for new construction when they are well informed about preservation objectives.

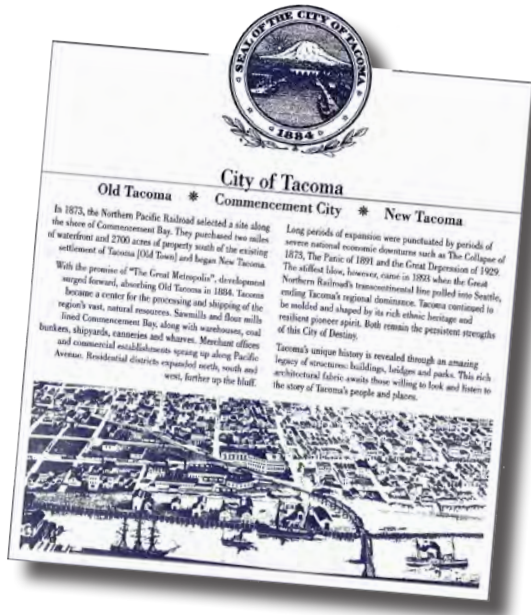
Workshops that provide helpful information about rehabilitation techniques and publications that build an understanding of historic significance are examples of education and outreach strategies. Well-written design guidelines that provide useful information can also serve an educational role.

Education and outreach efforts also help ensure that the importance of historic preservation is well understood within the community. They may also help property owners better understand the range of flexibility that is available to adaptive reuse of historic properties.

The City of Tacoma's culture web site at [www.tacomaculture.org](http://www.tacomaculture.org) is a key tool for providing educational information. A number of other groups and organizations, such as Historic Tacoma, also provide education and outreach programs that help broaden awareness of history and preservation in the city.



*Brochures and pamphlets help raise awareness of Tacoma's historic resources.*



## CITY OF TACOMA EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The City administers education programs including historic markers, street naming, property research database and the City’s web site.

### Tacoma Culture Web Site

The Tacoma Culture web site at [www.tacomaculture.org](http://www.tacomaculture.org) provides information on the arts, historic preservation and international programs in Tacoma. The historic preservation portion of the site is well organized and includes a significant amount of useful information on preservation programs, processes and regulations. It outlines many components of the City’s preservation program including the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Individual

*The City of Tacoma sponsored a self-guided walking tour of community churches and other places of worship in the historic Hilltop area.*

Landmark and District nomination and designation, financial incentives, design review and standards for historic properties. The web site also provides links to outside preservation resources.

## SUSTAINABILITY OUTREACH

A particularly critical area of need is in providing property owners tips on effective planning for energy conservation and related aspects of sustainability.

This serves, in effect, as the web site for the City’s program while also presenting material related to other preservation partners. This affords an integrated view of preservation in the community. However, the web site is somewhat difficult to find for a first time user, whose initial instinct is to search on the City’s web site.

While the web site offers extensive resources for understanding the City’s preservation program, it lacks sufficient information regarding the historic background of Tacoma, specifically as “historic contexts,” and does not provide information that would help a property owner determine the potential significance of a building that has not been surveyed. It also lacks sufficient information for property owners seeking information about preservation techniques or rehabilitation strategies.



*The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition held in Seattle in 1909. (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*

## Historic Properties Inventory Database

The City has developed an online database that enables users to find historic properties and review bibliographic resources. The BETA version of the database includes data from cultural resources surveys from 1977-2005, as well as maps, aerial photos, historical descriptions, and street-level images. Most properties in this database are not listed landmarks, and information is not available for all listed properties. The Historic Properties Inventory Database will be merged into a more comprehensive historic survey database under development as of 2011.

## Historic Markers Program

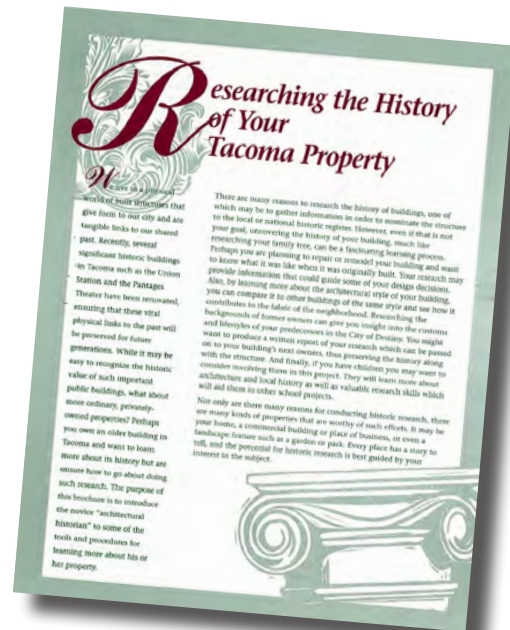
The City of Tacoma seeks to formalize a program of interpretive markers to be installed on City-owned buildings and in city right-of-way areas. Its purpose is to increase public awareness of the City's cultural heritage and to enhance the enjoyment of its historic sites by citizens and visitors. Traditional interpretive markers and plaques continue to be a key part of Tacoma's education and outreach efforts. Bronze plaques and photo-metal markers are popular types that may be used.

New techniques for conveying interpretive information continue to develop. Systems that enable users to access audio/visual material at an interpretive site are examples. In addition, historical information can be linked to web-based data searches and mapping services. In many cases, the new technologies will be identified on site by some form of "hard copy" marker to indicate the availability of the electronic information.

## Street Naming

Many communities re-name streets to recognize persons of historical or cultural significance. This serves to honor these people and also builds awareness of their contributions. In this sense, street naming serves an educational role in the City's preservation program.

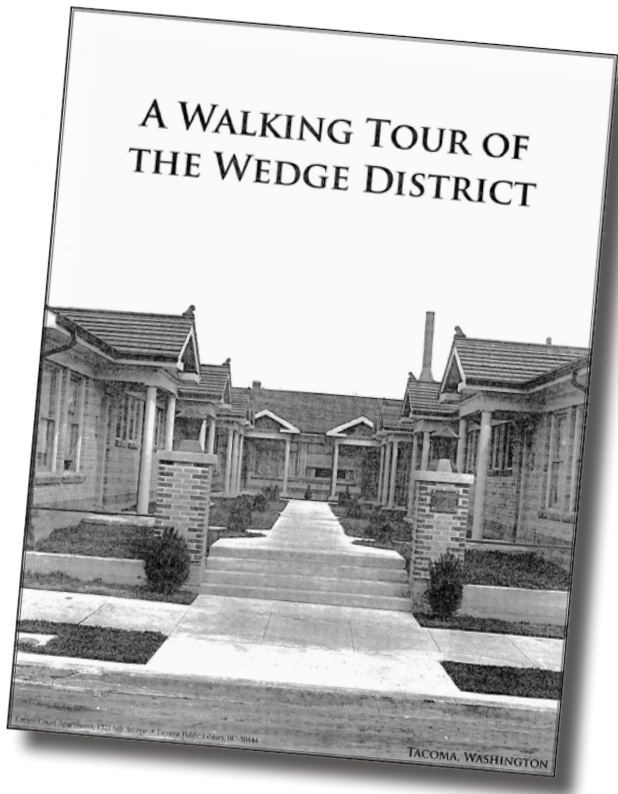
Tacoma's current street naming policy includes criteria that encourage consideration of context and geographical location, natural features, historic significance or contributions made by individuals and organizations.



*The City of Tacoma produced a brochure to help owners research the history of their properties.*



*Tacoma's Old City Hall is marked by a cast metal plaque.*



*Historic Tacoma, the North End Neighborhood Council, the Tacoma Historical Society and Pacific Lutheran University funded a walking tour of the Wedge District.*

## OTHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Though the City itself has a limited role in education and outreach, many of its preservation partners play key roles. The educational roles of several of the City’s most important preservation partners are summarized below.

### Historylink.org

The History Link web site provides an extensive online searchable database of articles relating to Puget Sound history.

### Historic Tacoma, Inc.

Historic Tacoma, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Tacoma’s architectural legacy through education and advocacy. Historic Tacoma advocates for the thoughtful preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures, sites and neighborhoods, while urging policy makers, developers and citizens to consider the value of the city’s unique built environment.

### National Alliance of Preservation Commissions

The Alliance represents the nation’s preservation design review commissions, provides technical support and manages an information network to help local commissions accomplish their preservation objectives. It also serves advocates for national, state and local policies and programs that support preservation commission efforts.



*The National Alliance of Preservation Commissions staged one of its popular CAMP training sessions in Tacoma in 2008. This educational activity brings together Landmarks Preservation Commission members and others interested in effective preservation programs to refine their skills.*

## Puget Sound Regional Archives

The archives provide a repository for government records from Washington State, including tax rolls, property assessment, and maps.

## Tacoma Historical Society

This non-profit organization is dedicated to the research and preservation of Tacoma's history.

## Tacoma and Pierce County Business Organizations

Organizations such as the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Tacoma Business Improvement Area help sponsor education programs including walking tours that feature historic resources and signage programs that may promote historic character.

### Sponsors



Tacoma Regional Convention & Visitor Bureau



The City's preservation partners help educate the community about historic resources.

#### Why Walk?

If a daily fitness walk could be put in a pill, it would be one of the most popular prescriptions in the world. Walking can reduce the risk of many diseases - from heart attack and stroke to hip fracture and glaucoma. And of course, walking has significant positive implications for strength, mood, and weight loss.

Calories Burned per Hour*	110 lbs	125 lbs	140 lbs	155 lbs	170 lbs
Leveling (uphill)	368	414	460	506	552
Maximum uphill	375	421	467	513	559
Level (downhill)	300	337	374	411	448
Very mild (downhill)	265	298	331	364	397
Moderate (downhill)	200	224	248	272	296

\*Source: [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/physical\\_activity/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/physical_activity/index.html)

#### Why Walk Tacoma?

Getting out of your office, hotel room, home, or car means you get to see Tacoma up close and personal - and there is so much to see. Check out historic sites, public art, parks, and cultural icons of Tacoma, while also envisioning the future. On each of the five routes, you are guaranteed to learn something new about the City, and build a greater appreciation of the assets that Tacoma has to offer!

\*Courtesy: Tacoma Public Library

### THE BREWERY DISTRICT through SOUTH DOWNTOWN WALK

Tacoma's Historic Baylow Bridge, ca. 1800\* - see site #4

Walk Tacoma's south downtown, an area brimming with historical significance and potential for its future. View the brewery district as it once was, as well as the plans for what it may one day become. An easy though slightly gritty walk, spending time here will encourage you to dream of Tacoma's possibilities while viewing the renaissance that has already begun.

**Walk Info** easy average difficult

Distance **1.79 mi**  
 Average Time **40 min**  
 Terrain **flat-grade, some hills, stairs**

For more information and copies of the maps, become a fan of Downtown: On the Go! on Facebook.  
 \*Courtesy: Tacoma Public Library

#### Sponsor & Organizer

**DOWNTOWN. On the Go!**

#### Sponsors

MultiCare  
 BetterConnected  
 Center for Healthy Living  
 Tacoma Regional Convention & Visitor Bureau  
 Tacoma Office of Sustainability

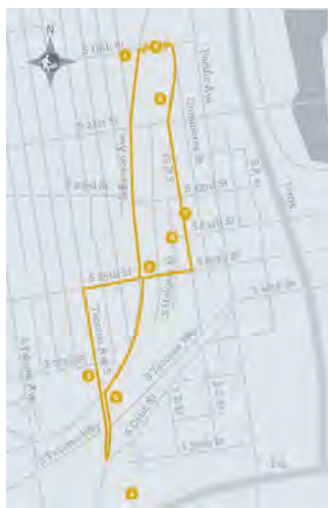
#### Design Team

Nicole Giesle  
 Karyl Stokoy  
 Holly Danning  
 Laurs Clouse

#### Collaborators

Healthy Communities of Pierce County  
 American Heart Association  
 Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce  
 City of Tacoma - Community & Economic Development

### BREWERY DISTRICT TO SOUTH DOWNTOWN DOWNTOWN WALKING MAP



- #### 1 The Swiss Building

The Swiss Society built this hall in 1913 for its convenient location to the warehouse district, the ethnic neighborhoods above Market St, Tacoma's open air markets, and the northern edge of the brewery district. It was a meeting place for Swiss immigrants to conduct business, socialize, and enjoy the company of their fellow Swiss.
- #### 2 Natural Springs

In 1903, the Union Pacific Railroad attempted construction of a railroad tunnel, but abandoned this effort due to the significant amount of ground water in the area. In 1915 the shaft was filled with cordwood, sand and gravel, and the tunnel was closed and all but forgotten. The natural spring is all that remains to bear witness to the failed effort, and is today used to rinse City of Tacoma Streets & Grounds equipment.
- #### 3 Goodwill Living Wall

Tucked near the entrance of Goodwill's Milgard Work Opportunity Center is a masterpiece of living art created by artist/botanist Patrick Blanc of Paris. The 30x40-foot wall has 96 species totaling about 2,500 individual plants, supported by a combination of felt, PVC piping, and a drip irrigation system. The art itself enhances the sustainable design and construction of the building, which achieved LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) gold status in 2009.
- #### 4 Historic Bicycle Bridge

Look just beyond Holy Rosary Church while crossing the Tacoma Ave. bridge to see the location of the world's "toughest, highest, and only existing" bicycle bridge, now a portion of Interstate 5. The bridge, built in 1896 by the Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club, was constructed with funds from the sale of bicycle licenses.
- #### 5 Tacoma Streetcar Disaster

Look to the east as you cross back over the Tacoma Ave. bridge and into the gulch below. On Wednesday morning, July 4, 1900, 43 passengers were killed and many others injured when an overcrowded trolley car carrying more than 100 passengers to downtown Tacoma for the Independence Day Parade, lost traction on the Delta Street tracks, jumped the tracks on the "C" Street trestle, and plunged 100 feet into a ravine below.
- #### 6 Brewery District Cocoon/Art Plaza

Adjacent to the warehouse district that is now UW's campus, the Brewery District was home to the Columbia Brewing Co. (renamed the Heideberg Brewing Co. in 1946), the Pacific Brewing & Malting Co., and more. Despite its abandoned appearance, the district is considered to be the "lynch pin" of Tacoma's continued downtown revitalization. For that reason, the City along with community partners have developed district improvement objectives that include transit-oriented development and the encouragement of companies that produce goods, artistic craft, green technology and active work and living spaces.
- #### 7 City of Tacoma Streets & Grounds Building

Opened in 1910, the Streets and Grounds Maintenance Division's Barn was originally known as the City Shops and Stable, and looks much the same today as it did at its beginning. City of Tacoma Streets and Grounds continues to occupy the building, as they have for the past century, dealing daily with the challenges of an outdated structure built for both men and horses.
- #### 8 UW's Library (formerly Delta Tower Co. Tower House)

Formerly the Snoqualmie Falls Power Company transformer house, it provided power to most of Tacoma and its vital streetcar lines until it closed its doors in 1928. Heralded as a masterpiece of Tacoma's and UW's historic preservation efforts, it became the UW Library and the hub of the campus in 1997. The renovation included artwork by Tacoma native Dale Chihuly; the 23 x 7 foot 900-piece Chihooki Red Chandelier which hangs in the rotunda and glows in the Library's windows at night.
- #### 9 Frame Line Trail

Look to your left and right as you cross through the old tracks at the mid-section of UW's campus. In the coming years, this historic railroad will be transformed into a pedestrian and bicycle trail that activates and enlivenes this downtown corridor. As the future spine of Tacoma's non-motorized network, it will provide vital access to the Foss Esplanade.

The Tacoma Downtown Business Improvement Area partnered with the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber of Commerce, City of Tacoma and Pierce Transit to sponsor a series of walking tours around historic downtown Tacoma.



*Former Tacoma Mayor Bill Baarsma spoke at the announcement of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation's 2008 Most Endangered Properties List, which included the Murray Morgan Bridge.*

### Tacoma Public Library

The Tacoma Public Library provides information and archives relating to Tacoma history, including census data, city directories, maps and media collections. The Library also maintains the Pierce County Buildings Index, a searchable online database.

### University of Washington

The University's manuscripts and special collections includes photographs, maps, rare books, and documents relating to Washington State history.

### Washington Trust for Historic Preservation

The Trust provides advocacy and assistance organization for historic preservation in Washington State. It also maintains a list of the state's most endangered properties.

## EDUCATION ISSUES SUMMARY

- There is insufficient outreach and education efforts to promote preservation goals or correct misinformation.
- Current preservation education and outreach programs are not sufficient to raise awareness and provide support for the city's preservation goals and objectives.
- Existing educational resources are not sufficient to raise awareness and promote collaboration between City departments, boards and commissions.
- Many contractors and property owners lack understanding of appropriate rehabilitation procedures.
- Existing educational resources do not provide a strong basis of awareness through publications and outreach and training programs to promote preservation benefits and best practices.
- Some commercial property owners do not see value in historic buildings on site.
- Many property owners do not understand the role of historic buildings in sustainability.



# ADVOCACY

Advocacy programs promote policies and plans that support historic preservation. This includes lobbying for zoning codes that are compatible with traditional development patterns in older neighborhoods and supporting adoption of new incentives to maintain historic structures. They also work to expand the base of preservation players and engage partners in collaborative preservation programs. Private citizens and non-profit organizations lead preservation advocacy in Tacoma.

Historic preservation in Tacoma is supported by a number of groups and organizations. In some cases, historic preservation is an organization’s primary mandate. Other organizations focus on activities that are not directly related to preservation, but that do have a secondary relationship. Sometimes these are new partners.



## PRESERVATION PARTNERS

Building a stronger, and more extensive, network of organizations who include information in their own programs to building awareness of historic properties is an essential priority. Because historic properties and older neighborhoods can support other community programs, many affiliates make strong partners.

A recent example of a very effective partnership is the development of a series of walking tours in the downtown area as illustrated on page 2-39. The tours were produced by a coalition of groups, including Downtown On the Go!, MultiCare and the Tacoma Regional Convention and Visitor Bureau, and the Office of Sustainability. This partnership reflects the recognition that touring historic sites contributes to health and that it is an asset for heritage tourism as an economic development tool. Preservation’s role in sustainability is also implied. More of these types of partnerships are needed.



*Preservation partners such as MultiCare recognize the importance of historic preservation in promoting healthy, pedestrian-oriented places.*



*Community workshop participants helped identify potential preservation partners.*



*Historic preservation in Tacoma is supported by local preservation partners including developers and businesses.*

### Key Local Preservation Partners

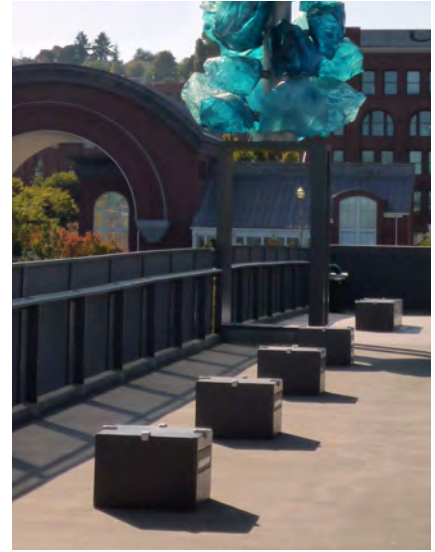
A variety of local groups and organizations have direct stakes in preservation and neighborhood conservation in Tacoma. Some key groups and organizations are listed below along with their general roles related to preservation.

- Arts Commission - Education and outreach
- Business Districts - Stewardship
- City Preservation Office - Overall program coordination
- Developers and Businesses - Impetus and clientele
- Foss Waterway PDA - Stewardship
- Go Local Tacoma - Outreach and education
- Historic District Associations - Education and stewardship
- Historic Tacoma - Advocacy and education
- Landmarks Preservation Commission - Program implementation and maintenance, education
- Metro Parks Tacoma - Stewardship
- Neighborhood Councils – Outreach
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians – Education, stewardship
- Pierce County Landmarks Preservation Commission
- Planning Commission - Program Implementation
- School System – Education and stewardship
- Tacoma Historical Society - Advocacy and education
- Tacoma Public Library, Pacific Northwest Room and Pierce County Building Index web portal – Education, outreach
- Tax assessor - Special valuation
- University of Washington - Historic rehabilitation, education

## Key State, Regional and National Preservation Partners

Beyond the local level, a variety of state, regional and national organizations provide support for historic preservation in Tacoma. Some have on-going relationships with one another, while others may be engaged only for a specific project. Key organizations are:

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- 4culture
- Heritage League of Pierce County
- Historic Seattle
- Historylink.org
- King County HPO
- Municipal Services Research Corporation (MRSC.org)
- National Alliance of Preservation Commissions
- National Park Service
- National Register of Historic Places National Trust for Historic Preservation
- National Trust for Historic Preservation / Green Lab – Education, Outreach
- National Trust Main Street Program
- Preservation Action!
- Puget Sound Regional Archives
- University of Washington Manuscripts and Special Collections
- Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- Washington State Historical Society
- Washington State History Museum
- Washington Trust for Historic Preservation



*A key preservation partner, the Washington State History Museum is located adjacent to the Museum of Glass and historic Union Station.*



*Churches and religious organizations are potential preservation partners.*

## Potential Preservation Partners

Many, primarily local, groups and organizations may not be directly involved in preservation efforts but have goals that relate to historic preservation efforts. For example, the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department espouses a goal to promote walkable places for personal health and to reduce pollution. This clearly overlaps with a preservation goal to preserve historic pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods. The goals of business, economic development and environmental organizations also coincide with goals for historic preservation. Potential partners for historic preservation efforts include:

- Affordable housing organizations
- Business organizations
- Cascade Land Conservancy - Education, stewardship, potential TDR partner
- Chamber of Commerce
- Churches / religious organizations
- Civic organizations
- Department of Health
- Developers interested in preservation
- Economic development organizations
- Environmental protection and sustainability organizations
- Fire inspectors
- Interested residents
- Libraries / librarians
- Local media
- Main Street business program
- Tacoma's Sustainability Commission
- Master Builders Association
- Museums – Education, outreach
- Port of Tacoma
- Tax assessors

## ADVOCACY ISSUES SUMMARY

- The roles of various groups and organizations engaged in preservation activity are not sufficiently clarified.
- Existing policies do not identify or provide a framework to involve groups and organizations that could assist with historic preservation efforts.
- No formal mechanism exists for advocacy groups to communicate roles and collaborate on programs.



*Existing preservation policies do not sufficiently clarify the roles of various groups and organizations engaged in preservation activity or provide a framework for collaboration.*



*Garretson, Woodruff and Pratt Co. Warehouse (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*



CHAPTER 3

PROGRAM GOALS

Realizing the community’s vision for historic preservation in Tacoma requires the coordinated participation of many individuals and organizations.

This chapter describes a series of goals, policies and actions that will help to achieve the vision for historic preservation in Tacoma. They are organized around the six preservation program components described in Chapter 2 and are presented in a hierarchical structure. At the highest level, goals statements indicate desired future conditions. For each goal, a series of policies indicate the general course of action and provide guidelines for decision making. Finally, actions are presented under each policy statement, which describe specific steps to take to meet the policy.



PRIORITY OF THE GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The sequence of goals, policies and actions presented in this chapter does not convey their relative importance or priority. However, the highest priority actions for each program component are highlighted in a sidebar at the beginning of each section. Priorities and timing for all actions appear later in Chapter 4. It is important to recognize that many actions are long range in nature and that some must be completed in a chronological sequence.

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*The history of the Tacoma area and its residents serves as the foundation of the City's identity.*



# OVERALL GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Historic preservation should be an integral part of planning for Tacoma's future. The overall goals, policies and actions described below foster a citywide commitment to historic preservation.

## GOAL: A LIVABLE COMMUNITY WITH A STRONG SENSE OF HISTORY

The history of the Tacoma area and its residents serves as the foundation of the City's identity into the 21st century. Innovative Historic Preservation and Cultural Resource Management policies and procedures should build upon this identity by protecting cultural resources, contributing to the long range planning process, providing economic development opportunities, promoting heritage tourism, encouraging citizen involvement in the city's history, and, overall, fostering civic pride.



*Special care is needed to ensure that on-site archaeological resources are preserved when sites are redeveloped.*

### Policy HP-1

*Preserve archaeological resources as part of Tacoma's rich history.*

Tacoma has numerous archaeological resources of cultural, ethno-historical and scientific importance. This record is conveyed in traces of the earliest native settlements. Material from early European settlement and the development of the port and railroad system are also important parts of the community's archaeological heritage.

#### Action HP-1A

*Preserve and protect identified archaeological resources.*

Archaeological artifacts, features, and sites should be documented and preserved whenever feasible. Where new development does not allow for preservation of archaeological resources, they should be carefully documented according to federal, state and local standards and regulations.

#### Action HP-1B

*Identify and then maintain up-to-date information on potentially sensitive archaeological areas.*

Information on potentially sensitive archaeological areas should be maintained to support preservation efforts. Access to such information should, however, be controlled to reduce the risk of vandalism. Efforts to predict the most likely locations for archaeological resources should also continue as summarized in *Predictive Model* on page 3-4.

## KEY OVERALL ACTIONS

- Action HP-1A  
Preserve and protect identified archaeological resources.
- Action HP-3A  
Provide tools to encourage cooperation between advocates for historic preservation and sustainability.
- Action HP-3B  
Provide information about the environmental benefits of preservation of existing buildings as part of the citywide sustainability program.
- Action HP-4A  
Update preservation design guidelines with solutions for the compatible application of sustainable technologies to historic buildings.
- Action HP-5A  
Tailor energy efficiency standards to fit historic resources.
- Action HP-8A  
Explore alternative tools for heritage conservation that maintain neighborhood character.
- Action HP-12A  
Implement a program for public action when a highly valued historic property is threatened.

**GOAL: A LIVABLE COMMUNITY  
WITH A STRONG SENSE OF  
HISTORY (CONTINUED)**

**PREDICTIVE MODEL**

A project is currently underway to create a predictive model to indicate the most likely locations for archaeological resources in Tacoma. The results will help determine where to concentrate further archaeological research and where special care should be taken when new construction or redevelopment occurs.

**Action HP-1C**

*Develop systematic citywide procedures for identifying and addressing potential impacts to archaeological resources.*

The City should work closely with the Puyallup Tribe on procedures for addressing potential impacts to archaeological resources associated with Native American settlement. The Tribe is a primary source for information on the significance, meaning and purpose of Native resources and should be consulted whenever such resources are discovered or may be impacted.

**Action HP-1D**

*Develop special procedures for groundwork in areas where there is a high likelihood of archaeological resources being present.*

In areas where there is a high likelihood of archaeological resources being present, special care is needed to ensure that such resources are properly preserved and documented so that they are not unnecessarily damaged.

Action HP-1E

*Establish a repository for archaeological artifacts retrieved from local sites.*

Archaeological artifacts that are important to Tacoma's history should be interpreted, curated and displayed as appropriate.

Action HP-1F

*Develop archaeological displays as part of a public arts program.*

Opportunities to partner with arts groups to develop art installations should be explored where appropriate.

Action HP-1G

*Provide educational programs on archaeological resources.*

Educational programs will help build an understanding of archaeological resources in the community. Partnerships with groups that work with archaeological resources will support such programs.

Also see:

- Action HP-38A  
Preservation partners should encourage the integration of cultural heritage and historic preservation in formal curricula.

**GOAL: A LIVABLE COMMUNITY  
WITH A STRONG SENSE OF  
HISTORY (CONTINUED)**

**GOAL: A LIVABLE COMMUNITY  
WITH A STRONG SENSE OF  
HISTORY (CONTINUED)**

**Policy HP-2**

*Integrate Tacoma's historic resources into community planning efforts.*

Community planning efforts should look forward while valuing the past. They should help preserve the city's history, as embodied by its historic structures, as well as seek ways to use those resources to maintain the vitality of the city. Capitalizing on historic resources promotes the unique identity of the city's traditional neighborhoods and will help support the community's high quality of life.

**Action HP-2A**

*Encourage neighborhood-level preservation and conservation programs.*

A focus on neighborhood-level planning will lead to enhanced strategies for preservation and promotion of the architectural, historical, cultural, and landscape features important to neighborhood identity and spirit.

Also see:

- Action HP-7C  
Use historic and conservation districts as ways to enhance property values.
- Action HP-8A  
Explore alternative tools for heritage conservation that maintain neighborhood character.
- Action HP-28A  
Revise the City's existing conservation district tool.
- Action HP-33C  
Extend the range of zoning incentives for historic resources and conservation areas.

## GOAL: A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY SUPPORTED BY PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Tacoma's preservation program should be at the forefront of the sustainability movement. Preserving and re-using historic buildings is the equivalent of large-scale recycling. It conserves land, maintains the energy invested in original construction and reduces demolition waste.



### Policy HP-3

*Promote preservation's role in community sustainability efforts.*

Preservation is a vital component of sustainability and should be part of the community's overall sustainability efforts.

#### Action HP-3A

*Provide tools to encourage cooperation between advocates for historic preservation and sustainability.*

Tools that clarify the roles of, and encourage cooperation between, existing organizations will help promote preservation's role in community sustainability efforts.

Also see:

- Action HP-40F  
Expand partnerships with sustainability organizations and programs.

#### Action HP-3B

*Provide information about the environmental benefits of preservation of existing buildings as part of the citywide sustainability program.*

The role of preservation in sustainability should appear in all City publications related to sustainability including print and electronic media.

#### Action HP-3C

*Include a sustainability section on Tacoma's preservation web site.*

The web site should provide sustainability information and resources applicable to historic structures as well as links to other departments engaged in this field.

*Historic buildings are often part of traditional development patterns that support sustainable lifestyles.*

## ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Preserving historic structures has these environmental benefits:

### Embodied Energy and Building Materials

A historic structure carries the energy that went into the manufacture and transport of its materials, original construction and ongoing maintenance. This embodied energy typically represents between 15 and 30 times the annual energy consumption of a property. While some building materials may be recycled, the demolition of a historic building represents a loss of embodied energy and produces a significant amount of landfill waste.

### Building Materials

Historic buildings were often designed for energy efficiency through use of local materials with long life cycles and operable systems for passive heating, cooling, ventilation and lighting.

### Efficient Transportation

Historic buildings are often part of traditional development patterns where human-scaled development encourages walking, biking and mass transit use. Efficient transportation, especially the use of mass transit, also support cultural and social sustainability.

**GOAL: A SUSTAINABLE  
COMMUNITY SUPPORTED  
BY PRESERVATION EFFORTS  
(CONTINUED)**

Action HP-3D

*Encourage the Tacoma Public Library to provide resource materials on sustainability and preservation.*

Reference materials addressing rehabilitation, weatherization and other historic home repair and energy efficiency measures will help educate property owners and the general public about preservation options that also promote goals for sustainability.

Action HP-3E

*Use historic structures to highlight green building practices.*

Hold public workshops and tours in historic buildings to highlight projects that successfully conserve historic resources and energy. Demonstrate how retaining traditional buildings conserves resources. This should include discussions about the use of local and renewable resources, sighting structures to make best use of passive solar and natural ventilation and the use of roof pitch and landscaping.

Action HP-3F

*Encourage the implementation of sustainability plans in historic districts.*

As citywide sustainability programs are initiated, historic districts should serve as natural partners for their implementation.

**Policy HP-4**

*Include sustainability objectives in an update to the City's historic design guidelines.*

Inclusion of sustainability objectives within the City's historic design guidelines will help promote a strong integration of community sustainability and preservation efforts.

Action HP-4A

*Update preservation design guidelines with solutions for the compatible application of sustainable technologies to historic buildings.*

Guidelines should address compatible energy conserving retrofits and appropriate ways to install solar panels, wind turbines and other energy generating tools on historic properties.

Action HP-4B

*Update design guidelines to provide information on sustainable landscaping strategies.*

Provide information on landscape designs that conserve resources and enhance the energy efficiency of a building. This should include ideas for planting wind breaks and providing for solar access to occupied spaces, and to produce gardens.

**GOAL: A SUSTAINABLE  
COMMUNITY SUPPORTED  
BY PRESERVATION EFFORTS  
(CONTINUED)**

**GOAL: A SUSTAINABLE  
COMMUNITY SUPPORTED  
BY PRESERVATION EFFORTS  
(CONTINUED)**

**DECONSTRUCTION**

**Deconstruction** is a term that refers to the careful disassembly of a building, or key components of it, such that the materials can be reassembled or reused in other construction.

**Policy HP-5**

*Use the City’s programs and processes to promote the link between historic preservation and sustainability.*

City programs, processes and regulations should encourage the link between preservation and sustainability objectives. See the *Environmental Component of Sustainability* on page IN-6 for more information.

**Action HP-5A**

*Tailor energy efficiency standards to fit historic resources.*

Building and zoning code standards for energy efficiency should provide flexibility for historic resources, emphasizing overall energy efficiency rather than the efficiency of individual building elements.

Also see:

- Action HP-26A  
Review the existing zoning code to determine where conflicts may exist with preservation policies and goals.

**Action HP-5B**

*Streamline the permitting process for compatible energy efficiency retrofits to historic resources.*

The permitting process should encourage compatible energy efficiency retrofits to historic buildings.

Strategies include:

- Streamlining the review process for simple energy-efficiency retrofits.
- Updating design guidelines to address the compatibility of energy efficiency retrofits for typical building types in Tacoma.

Also see:

- Action HP-30A  
Provide user-friendly preservation design guidelines that apply citywide.

**Action HP-5C**

*Consider providing credit for preservation of embodied energy and diversion of potential landfill waste.*

Explore potential programs to calculate embodied energy and landfill costs to support credits for projects that preserve existing buildings and reduce landfill waste associated with demolition. Potential City-sponsored sustainability initiatives (such as an incentive or requirement for LEED certification) should provide such credit to preservation projects.

**Action HP-5D**

*Establish a deconstruction salvage program for the reuse of historic building materials.*

When options to demolition have been exhausted, a deconstruction program should guide the careful salvage of historic details and features.



## GOAL: AN ECONOMICALLY VIBRANT COMMUNITY SUPPORTED BY PRESERVATION

In Tacoma, preservation contributes significantly to a vibrant local economy. It supports economic development opportunities, retains local businesses and facilitates tourism development.

Historic buildings represent millions of dollars of infrastructure investment made by previous generations. Funds spent renovating these structures have a greater multiplier effect in the local economy than new construction. A higher percentage of each dollar spent goes to labor in preservation projects which results in more jobs for the community and more dollars recirculated in the local economy.

### Policy HP-6

*Encourage active use of historic resources.*

The preservation program should focus on keeping a building in active service and in accommodating compatible alterations. Change that retains the significance of a property is to be accepted and expected. Note that there are, of course, exceptions for special landmarks and historic building museums.

#### Action HP-6A

*Promote adaptive reuse of historic properties.*

Regulations and incentives should encourage the re-use of historic structures so they remain part of economically vibrant neighborhoods and areas.

Strategies include:

- Promoting tax incentives, loans and grant programs to encourage the adaptive reuse of historic structures to meet community and market needs.
- Revising zoning regulations and the building code when needed to ensure that they support the re-use of historic structures.

Also see:

- Action HP-23A  
Consider establishing a transfer of development rights (TDR) program for historic properties.
- Action HP-26B  
Explore context-sensitive zoning.
- Action HP-33C  
Extend the range of zoning incentives for historic resources and conservation areas.



A 1912 pamphlet illustrates the long-standing role of tourism in Tacoma's economy.

**GOAL: AN ECONOMICALLY  
VIBRANT COMMUNITY SUPPORTED  
BY PRESERVATION (CONTINUED)**

## HERITAGE TOURISM

By encouraging locals and visitors to discover historic sites, neighborhoods and business districts, heritage tourism programs support objectives for preservation and economic development. They may also help forge lasting preservation partnerships between diverse groups and organizations.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation provides an online Cultural Heritage Tourism Survival Toolkit. See: [www.preservationnation.org/issues/heritage-tourism/](http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/heritage-tourism/)

Heritage tourism related programs in the Pacific Northwest include:

**Corvallis Historic Homes Trolley Tour**  
A free weekend trolley tour of historic homes and neighborhoods operated by the Corvallis Tourism, Convention and Visitors Bureau. See: [www.visitcorvallis.com](http://www.visitcorvallis.com)

**The Cascade Loop Heritage Tour**  
A partnership between the Cascade Loop Association and Northwest Heritage Resources, the program provides print and audio tour materials for the Cascade Loop Scenic Byway from the Puget Sound to the Columbia Valley. See: [www.cascadeloop.com](http://www.cascadeloop.com)

**Washington State Main Street Program**  
While this program is not specifically focused on heritage tourism, it does provide financial incentives and assistance that may help communities and neighborhood business centers market themselves to locals and visitors. See: [www.dahp.wa.gov](http://www.dahp.wa.gov)

### Policy HP-7

*Leverage the economic development opportunities provided by Tacoma's historic resources.*

Pursue programs that foster economic development through historic preservation, including heritage tourism, cultural events and adaptive reuse. Extensive research at the state and national levels documents the benefits of historic preservation to local economies. Local historic districts, in particular, increase property values. This information should help guide economic development in the city.

#### Action HP-7A

*Market Tacoma for heritage tourism.*

Promote Tacoma as a heritage tourism destination to support economic development and historic preservation. See *Heritage Tourism* at right for additional information.

Heritage tourism efforts should:

- Engage Tacoma's preservation partners.
- Use electronic outreach strategies.
- Ensure that City staff, volunteers and others engage in heritage tourism efforts are educated about Tacoma's history.
- Ensure public access to designated historic landmarks.

#### Action HP-7B

*Coordinate preservation efforts with support for local businesses.*

Coordinate preservation efforts with programs that support local businesses and partner with business groups, such as Go Local Tacoma.

#### Action HP-7C

*Use historic and conservation districts as ways to enhance property values.*

Establish new historic and conservation districts as economic development strategies. The historic preservation office should seek partnerships with economic development groups to assist with creating and managing such districts.

Also see:

- Action HP-2A  
Encourage neighborhood-level preservation and conservation programs.
- Action HP-8A  
Explore alternative tools for heritage conservation that maintain neighborhood character.
- Action HP-28A  
Revise the City's existing conservation district tool.

## GOAL: TACOMA'S PRESERVATION PROGRAM EMPLOYS NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED BEST PRACTICES.

The City of Tacoma will be a national leader in adaptive reuse and historic preservation programs through the identification, enhancement, preservation and sharing of its rich cultural heritage. It will serve as an example of a dynamic historic urban center in the 21st century.



*The City of Tacoma will be a national leader in the adaptive reuse of older structures.*

### Policy HP-8

*Incorporate new trends and issues in preservation and neighborhood conservation in creative ways that establish Tacoma as a leader.*

Reflecting broader trends in society, preservation programs continue to evolve across the country. Some of these trends are introducing new issues that should be addressed by the City's preservation program.

#### Action HP-8A

*Explore alternative tools for heritage conservation that maintain neighborhood character.*

Many neighborhoods seek historic district status because it is the only available tool to address neighborhood character. New tools should be developed and existing tools should be refined to broaden the options. Such tools may include the use of form-based codes, design overlay districts, and conservation districts. See *The Heritage Conservation System* on page 3-36 for more information.

Also see:

- Action HP-2A  
Encourage neighborhood-level preservation and conservation programs.
- Action HP-26B  
Explore context-sensitive zoning.
- Action HP-29A  
Establish criteria to prioritize requests for historic landmark, historic district and conservation district designation.

#### Action HP-8B

*Horizontally integrate historic preservation into other City planning efforts.*

Many departments and agencies employ historic preservation strategies within their individual missions. Expanding this practice will promote a heightened awareness of the preservation program.

**GOAL: TACOMA'S PRESERVATION PROGRAM EMPLOYS NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED BEST PRACTICES.**  
(CONTINUED)

**Policy HP-9**

*Promote ease of use, transparency of administration, and predictability in the preservation program.*

The preservation program should be readily accessible, with program components that are easily understood by the public.

Action HP-9A

*Focus on employing solution-oriented preservation tools.*

Tools should be available to help owners find solutions for maintaining historic resources in active and appropriate uses. These may include user-friendly design guidelines, technical assistance information and surveys with information for property owners.

Action HP-9B

*Provide clear guidance for the treatment of designated historic resources.*

Clear guidance for the treatment of designated historic resources should provide owners, builders and developers with the ability to make informed decisions about properties that are managed by the City's preservation tools.

Also see:

- Action HP-25A  
Clarify and clean up the existing preservation ordinance.
- Action HP-25B  
Consider a tiered ranking system for historic significance.
- Action HP-30A  
Provide user-friendly preservation design guidelines that apply citywide.

## GOAL: PRESERVATION IS INTEGRATED WITH COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES.

Historic preservation should be integral to City planning programs and balanced with other community development objectives. Preservation goals should be included throughout the City's comprehensive plan elements to ensure that historic preservation efforts are not isolated from other City initiatives.

### Policy HP-10

*Integrate historic preservation policies into citywide planning efforts.*

Citywide planning efforts should promote historic preservation policies. The integration of goals and sharing of information between preservation and citywide planning efforts will be beneficial to both programs.

#### Action HP-10A

*Coordinate short-range and long-range planning with preservation policies.*

Historic survey data and identified resources should be addressed in ongoing neighborhood and subarea planning efforts.

#### Action HP-10B

*Coordinate capital facilities management with historic preservation policy.*

Include best practices for maintenance of historic resources in Capital Facilities Management programs.



*The 1925 First Baptist Church building at 902 Market Street was locally designated as an individual Tacoma historic landmark in 2009. It is now home to Urban Grace Church.*

**GOAL: PRESERVATION IS  
INTEGRATED WITH COMMUNITY  
GOALS AND POLICIES. (CONTINUED)**

### **Policy HP-11**

*Capitalize on and promote historic resources in community planning efforts.*

Where historic resources are present, they should help guide redevelopment of established areas, including the City's designated Mixed-Use Centers.

#### Action HP-11A

*Promote urban development strategies that are compatible with historic preservation.*

Identify development and planning strategies that are compatible with and capitalize on historic resources.

Also see:

- Action HP-40E  
Work with affordable housing organizations to use historic resources in their work.

#### Action HP-11B

*Use historic development patterns to guide planning.*

Recognize historic patterns of land use, infrastructure development and circulation patterns and apply those patterns where appropriate for future planning and development.

#### Action HP-11C

*Use historic assets to guide development in Mixed-Use Centers.*

Historic assets should help guide development and redevelopment in the City's designated Mixed-Use Centers. Preservation incentives that are currently included in zoning standards for Mixed-Use Centers should be promoted to encourage re-use of historic buildings. See *Mixed-Use Center* on page 2-25 for more information.

Also see:

- Action HP-33B  
Promote the use of Mixed-Use Center and Downtown zoning incentives for preservation projects.

## GOAL: HISTORIC RESOURCES ARE INTEGRAL FEATURES OF THE PUBLIC REALM.

The City should be a leader in preservation by demonstrating best practices in the management of its own historic facilities, including buildings, parks and sites.

### Policy HP-12

*Promote best practices in the City of Tacoma's stewardship of historic resources.*

The City should promote public action and potential acquisition of threatened historic resources as well as maintenance and provision of public access to City-owned resources.

#### Action HP-12A

*Implement a program for public action when a highly valued historic property is threatened.*

Establish a tool for the interim public ownership of threatened properties. The tool should enable the City to purchase highly significant resources as a means of ensuring their preservation. The properties could then be transferred or sold to private groups or individuals. The tool should also address public ownership of areas of natural scenic beauty or historic or ecological interest in need of protection for historic, educational, recreational, and other public purposes.



*The City should be a leader in preservation by demonstrating best practices in the management of its own historic facilities. The 1931 Tacoma Municipal Building (formerly the Medical Arts Building) was locally designated as an individual Tacoma historic landmark in 1978.*

**GOAL: HISTORIC RESOURCES  
ARE INTEGRAL FEATURES OF THE  
PUBLIC REALM. (CONTINUED)**

Action HP-12B

*Actively manage and rehabilitate City-owned historic properties according to best practices.*

The City should set an example of good stewardship through the management and proper maintenance of its historic resources, including stabilization of properties when necessary. The City should also support historic designation of eligible publicly-owned resources.

Action HP-12C

*Promote public access to significant historic resources.*

City-owned historic resources should be publicly accessible. Many are already accessible because they house City services, but others that may not normally be open to the public on a regular basis should be open periodically for special tours or events. Private owners and other public agency managers of significant historic resources that have a relationship to the public realm, such as schools and churches, should also be encouraged to allow some public access.



# ADMINISTRATION COMPONENT

## GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

A successful preservation program requires ongoing administrative support and commitment by the City. The overall administration of this plan will be through the planning department, but interdepartmental cooperation is essential to achieve its goals and objectives.

### GOAL: THE CITY MAINTAINS A FUNCTIONAL, INTEGRATED PRESERVATION PROGRAM.

Best practices for administering a preservation program include providing sufficient staff, maintaining a well-managed Landmarks Preservation Commission and providing convenient access to information needed by property owners and other users. Review processes should be efficient as well, making best use of time for all participants.

#### Policy HP-13

*Monitor the performance of the preservation program on an on-going basis to assure that it maintains a high level of performance.*

##### Action HP-13A

*Implement an annual program review.*

The City should conduct an annual review of the preservation program, including presentation of a status report to City Council. A simple reporting form that helps to measure activity in the preservation program may be used to support the annual review.

#### Policy HP-14

*Ensure that administrative resources are adequate for efficient operation of the program.*

##### Action HP-14A

*Maintain a funding strategy that assures sufficient resources for program activities.*

Key funding sources include the City's general operating budget and special grants for designated preservation projects. The City should also work to establish an endowment that can support special preservation programs.



*The City's ongoing commitment to historic preservation includes public outreach such as the 2009 Historic Preservation Plan workshop.*

### KEY ADMINISTRATION ACTIONS

- Action HP-13A  
Implement an annual program review.
- Action HP-16A  
Conduct an annual interdepartmental work session related to historic resources.

**GOAL: THE CITY MAINTAINS  
A FUNCTIONAL, INTEGRATED  
PRESERVATION PROGRAM.**  
(CONTINUED)

### **Policy HP-15**

*Maintain a certified historic preservation program.*

The Certified Local Government (CLG) program, which is a part of the Department of the Interior's support for preservation to each state, is an important funding source for some special projects. In order to be eligible, the City must maintain specific standards of operation to retain certification as a Certified Local Government.

#### Action HP-15A

*Strengthen compliance regulations in the preservation code itself and in other related sections of city codes.*

An effective compliance system is an essential part of maintaining certification.

Also see:

- Action HP-27C  
Enhance enforcement of preservation codes.

### **Policy HP-16**

*Promote collaboration among City departments, boards and commissions.*

#### Action HP-16A

*Conduct an annual interdepartmental work session related to historic resources.*

Include all City departments and agencies involved in development review and planning in a collaborative session to familiarize members with the preservation program and to identify how it can help achieve their other objectives.

#### Action HP-16B

*Include preservation objectives in Capital Facilities Planning.*

The Capital Facilities Planning (CIP) process is an opportunity to plan for protection and rehabilitation of historic features in the public right of way, such as historic street paving materials.

Also see:

- Policy HP-30  
Provide design guidelines that promote compatible development.

#### Action HP-16C

*Include preservation objectives in planning for city recreation facilities.*

Preserve historic sites and structures related to public recreation facilities.

# IDENTIFICATION COMPONENT

## GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Historic resources should be presented in a manner that helps people understand their significance and interpret their association with the community. Surveys should cover all key areas of the city and the information should be up to date. Historic contexts should help serve as a basis for planning, in terms of predicting where historic resources are likely to be found, and in setting priorities for historic surveys.

### GOAL: A DETAILED UNDERSTANDING OF TACOMA'S HISTORY PROVIDES A BASE FOR PRESERVATION EFFORTS.

Collect and make publicly available extensive documentation of Tacoma's Historic Resources.

#### Policy HP-17

*Provide a set of historic contexts which establish a background for understanding Tacoma's historic resources.*

#### Action HP-17A

*Establish a work plan for developing historic contexts.*

Give priority for writing contexts to:

- Topics for which preliminary information is available from other work,
- Themes with resources in areas where investment is highly likely,
- Areas where other planning work is scheduled.

#### Action HP-17B

*Prepare historic context statements that include all key themes in Tacoma's history.*

Contexts should describe the relationship of built resources to the social and cultural history of the community, identifying typical property types that are likely to be involved, and suggesting areas where these resources are most likely to occur. See *Developing Historic Context Statements* on the next page for more information.



*Historic Tacoma sponsored a lecture series that helped people understand the historic significance of their properties.*

## KEY IDENTIFICATION ACTIONS

- Action HP-17B Prepare historic context statements that include all key themes in Tacoma's history.
- Action HP-18B Prioritize survey implementation.
- Action HP-19A Expand survey data categories to assist in decision making about properties.

## DEVELOPING HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENTS

As recommended in Action HP-17A and Action HP-17B on page 3-21, historic context statements should be prioritized and developed to describe the relationship of built resources to the social and cultural history of the community.

The table below lists possible historic contexts for development in Tacoma and provides initial suggestions for their prioritization. It is a working table that is intended to guide and track the development of historic context statements.

THEME	CONTEXT STATUS			Priority	Comment
	Current <sup>1</sup>	Needs Update	Not Developed		
<b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b>					
Native American Settlement			■	High	
Early European Settlement					
Immigration			■	High	
Neighborhood Development			■	High	To include Hilltop, North Slope, South Tacoma, Wedge, West Slope and Whitman.
<b>SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND MOVEMENTS</b>					
Clubs and Organizations			■	Moderate	
Religious Institutions	■			na	Church survey completed in 2010.
<b>CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT</b>					
Culture			■	Moderate	
Education	■			na	Schools survey completed in 2010.
Visual and Performing Arts			■	Moderate	
<b>POLITICS</b>					
Parties, Protests and Movements			■	Low	
Government Institutions			■	Moderate	
Military Institutions			■	Moderate	
<b>ECONOMY</b>					
Extraction and Production			■	Low	
Distribution and Consumption			■	Low	
Workers and Work Culture			■	Low	
Labor Organizations and Protests			■	Low	
Communication			■	Low	
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>					
Bridges			■	High	
Railroads			■	High	
Maritime Activities			■	High	
Streetcars			■	High	
Automotive			■	High	

<sup>1</sup>Where context status is noted as “current,” recent historic surveys have provided sufficient information to comprise a context statement. In some cases where status is listed as “not developed,” past historic survey documentation may be used to provide a basis for a historic context statement.

**Policy HP-18**

*Maintain a comprehensive survey of Tacoma's cultural resources.*

Encourage and support the identification of cultural resources throughout Tacoma. Surveying is an ongoing effort with the objective of including all properties in the city.

**Action HP-18A**

*Identify areas with potential resources for future surveys.*

Areas with potentially eligible, undesignated historic resources should be identified to indicate where surveys may be especially important. This preliminary analysis will help in establishing priorities for survey work.

**Action HP-18B**

*Prioritize survey implementation.*

Identify areas where development pressures and other factors may create a threat to historic resources. Prioritize the execution of surveys in these areas based on threat levels and potential levels of significance of the resources. See *Potential Survey Areas* at right for more information.

**Action HP-18C**

*Design the survey system to support the potential for a tiered ranking of historic significance.*

The survey system should consider a tiered ranking of historic significance to support potential management tools that may use different levels of design review or categories of resource designation. See *Considerations for a Tiered System* on page 3-24 for more information.

Also see:

- Action HP-25B  
Consider a tiered ranking system for historic significance.

**Action HP-18D**

*Enable volunteers and property owners to assist in surveys.*

Tools for survey activities include:

- User guide to conducting surveys
- Instructions on accessing historic information
- Methods of evaluating historic significance and integrity

**POTENTIAL SURVEY AREAS**

Neighborhoods that may have historic character, and which may serve as good locations to implement an expanded survey system include:

- South Side (Whitman, Lincoln business district)
- East Side (McKinley)
- South Tacoma (business district and residential area)
- West End (West Slope neighborhood)
- Brewery District area
- Hilltop (MLK business district)
- North End (Old Town and Stadium areas)
- Metro Parks Properties

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR A TIERED SYSTEM

Informally, Tacoma distinguishes among different historic resources and districts, in terms of the degree of significance that the properties may have, and the rigor with which principles for preservation and compatible new construction are applied. As the City’s system is refined, a more formal tiered system should be considered. This may include a tiered ranking of significance that is reflected in design guidelines. This would link levels of significance and integrity to different levels of review, and the degree of rigor with which design guidelines would be applied. Certain incentives and benefits of preservation could also be tied to the levels of significance. In the review process, one could then consider:

- The level of significance and level of preservation that is expected based on the tiered system
- The context of the property
- The relationship to other planning objectives for the area

The table below illustrates an example of how potential levels of significance could be linked to treatment policies. Note that the table is provided for illustrative purposes only and does not comprise a specific recommendation.

PROPERTY RATING	TREATMENT OBJECTIVES	NOTES
<b>TYPE 1</b>		
Highest level of significance, including properties individually eligible for National Register listing	Require preservation to maximum extent feasible. Retaining all key features is preferred. <sup>1</sup>	High priority for assistance and incentives. Landmark proceedings may be contemplated if necessary.
<b>TYPE 2</b>		
High level of significance, eligible as a contributor for National Register listing in a district	Require preservation to maximum extent feasible. Retaining all key features visible from the public way is preferred. <sup>1</sup>	High priority for assistance and incentives. Landmark proceedings may be contemplated if necessary.
<b>TYPE 3</b>		
Moderate level of significance	Encourage preservation when feasible. More flexibility in compatible alterations may be considered.	Provide incentives, but may consider mitigation alternatives when other compelling City objectives exist.
<b>TYPE 4</b>		
Non-contributor, but retrievable as a historic resource, at the owner’s option	Encourage restoration.	Demolition permitted, but may be discouraged. Provide some incentives and technical assistance.
<b>TYPE 5</b>		
Non-contributor, with no potential significance (New building or one substantially altered)	No preservation expected.	Demolition or alteration permitted.

<sup>1</sup>Note that economic feasibility is always considered when expecting preservation of a historic resource.

## GOAL: HISTORIC SURVEY INFORMATION SUPPORTS ALL PROGRAM COMPONENTS.

Surveys act as the first step in the management of historic resources. The survey should serve to identify resources and also be a planning tool that is coordinated with other local land use regulations and incentive systems.

### Policy HP-19

*Use cultural resource survey information in the City's resource designation and management tools.*

Information gathered in surveys should tie directly into the levels of designation and types management of regulations and incentives that are used.

#### Action HP-19A

*Expand survey data categories to assist in decision making about properties.*

A historic resource survey should provide sufficient information for use as a management tool.

- A survey should collect enough information to indicate a property's level of significance, potential for designation, and aid in its management and treatment decisions.
- The survey should clearly define key, character-defining features of an individual property
- The survey should indicate those areas of the property which are less sensitive, and where greater flexibility for alterations is appropriate.

### Policy HP-20

*Enhance the level of survey information that is available to the public digitally.*

Extensive digital information on the City's historic resources should be readily accessible to the public.

#### Action HP-20A

*Expand the use and content of the Historic Inventory Database.*

The historic property inventory should be integrated with the City's GIS so that all information related to an individual property is easily accessible to City staff and the public, including ongoing building permit records.



*Historic surveys should clearly indicate key character-defining features of an individual property.*

## CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY ENHANCEMENT

The City should strive to refine its cultural resource survey system such that it can be more accessible to users, can be integrated with other databases, and provide an expanded level of information that will support making informed decisions about the treatment of properties, and also facilitate future updates.

The survey should have these features:

### **Active Database**

The survey should be an active database, which can be updated with a range of new information as it becomes available. Authorized personnel may collaborate on the survey, adding additional information or comments.

### **Linked to GIS**

The survey should be a part of the City's GIS system, such that any other permits or actions related to the property are immediately linked. All building permits, for example would be linked, which will facilitate any re-evaluation of the integrity of the resource. It may also be linked to information about energy consumption and embodied energy for the property. This also facilitates the design of future interpretive programs, such as on-line walking tours, using information from the survey.

### **Management Oriented**

The survey should be designed for on-going use as a tool to make decisions about the property. Sections and headings should help lay people understand the information.

### **Easily Accessible**

It should be on line and available to the public, with appropriate limits on certain information as privacy standards may require.

### **Linked to Assessors Office and Title Companies**

Survey information (and subsequent designations that may occur) should be available to aid property owners and prospective buyers in planning and decision-making.



# MANAGEMENT TOOLS COMPONENT

## GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

A diverse assortment of preservation tools should serve Tacoma's needs. These tools should be based on national standards and best practices, and at the same time should be tailored to Tacoma.

### GOAL: HISTORIC RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION.

Historically significant properties should be protected from demolition whenever possible. This includes properties eligible for, or listed in, local, state or national historic registers.



#### Policy HP-21

*Provide effective demolition review procedures.*

Procedures for demolition review should protect both identified and potential historic resources from demolition.

##### Action HP-21A

*Consider expanding a demolition review and consideration period to non-designated properties that may be historically significant.*

Consideration should be given to expanding demolition review to include all properties within a historic or conservation district as well as non-single family residential properties that meet a specific age threshold and appear on a historic register or are likely to be historically significant based on a predictive model. Note that a review period may also allow for public notice and comment. See *Demolition Consideration Period* on page 3-28 for more information.

A demolition review process may be used to explore:

- Options for reuse by the current owner
- Options for addressing potential economic hardship
- Options for sale of the property to another owner
- The merits of considering landmark designation proceedings as a means of making other demolition prevention tools available
- Other options including relocation or deconstruction

Also see:

- Action HP-22E  
Develop criteria for relocating a threatened resource.
- Action HP-25A  
Clarify and clean up the existing preservation ordinance.

*An emergency preservation fund would help protect threatened resources.*

### KEY MANAGEMENT TOOLS ACTIONS

- Action HP-21A  
Consider expanding a demolition review and consideration period to non-designated properties that may be historically significant.
- Action HP-22C  
Establish an emergency preservation fund.
- Action HP-24A  
Expand minimum maintenance code requirements.
- Action HP-25A  
Clarify and clean up the existing preservation ordinance.
- Action HP-26B  
Explore context-sensitive zoning.
- Action HP-27A  
Identify a team leader to coordinate project review.
- Action HP-28A  
Revise the City's existing conservation district tool.
- Action HP-30A  
Provide user-friendly preservation design guidelines that apply citywide.

**GOAL: HISTORIC RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION.**  
(CONTINUED)

## DEMOLITION CONSIDERATION PERIOD

Many communities provide the ability to delay a demolition permit request to allow for consideration of historic significance and a review of preservation alternatives.

For example, when a property meets a certain threshold, a demolition permit application may be referred to the City Preservation Officer to determine whether a consideration period would be appropriate. Factors may include:

### 1. The Threshold for Review

A variety of factors may determine which properties would be subject to a consideration period including:

- Age
- Property Type (i.e., Commercial, Single Family, etc.)
- Presence on an inventory indicating potential historic significance

### 2. Consideration Period Length

A demolition consideration period is usually a maximum of 90 or 120 days. A demolition permit may be issued immediately if the City determines that a property lacks historic significance.

### 3. Alternatives to Demolition

During the consideration period, the City and property owner may explore options including:

- Crafting a strategy for financing preservation and re-use
- Relocating historic structures
- Designating the property as a historic landmark to provide increased protection and incentives

## Policy HP-22

*Provide tools and funding to address preservation emergencies.*

Tools and funding should be available to protect historic resources that are threatened by neglect or have been damaged by natural disasters.

### Action HP-22A

*Expand Historic Tacoma’s endangered property WATCH list to address a wider range of threats to cultural resources.*

Historic Tacoma’s WATCH list raises the level of alert for historic resources that may be threatened with loss. Sites on list may be proposed for demolition, may be suffering deterioration due to neglect, or be subject to potential redevelopment which would destroy their significant features. The City should assist in providing data about such properties and their conditions to those who may respond to these threats.

The WATCH list should be expanded to include:

- A wider range of threatened properties
- Procedures for notifying building owners and City officials of a building’s deteriorating condition
- An education and advocacy function to provide technical assistance to owners of buildings on the WATCH list

Also see:

- Action HP-21A  
Consider expanding a demolition review and consideration period to non-designated properties that may be historically significant..
- Action HP-22B  
Develop a disaster-response program for endangered properties.
- Action HP-24A  
Expand minimum maintenance code requirements.

### Action HP-22B

*Develop a disaster-response program for endangered properties.*

An emergency response program for endangered properties is an important part of the community’s disaster planning efforts. It should define procedures to ensure the preservation of historic resources in the event of an emergency such as an earthquake or fire. The response should include a timely evaluation of impacted structures to determine the best treatment. Procedures for the interim stabilization of salvageable buildings should be included.

**Action HP-22C***Establish an emergency preservation fund.*

A revolving fund administered by the City, a Public Development Authority (PDA) or a local non-profit, should be established to address preservation emergencies. The fund may be used to acquire threatened properties for rehabilitation and/or transfer to a responsible buyer. Proceeds from the re-sale of properties would be used to replenish the fund, but consideration should also be given to establishing a permanent funding source such as a percentage added to permit fees. See *Public Development Authorities* on the next page for more information.

Some preservation emergencies that the fund could address include:

- Threats to historic resources due to owners who are unwilling or unable to make repairs under a minimum maintenance provision
- Threats to historic resources caused by disaster or other damage

The fund could be applied to projects involving one or more of the following property types:

- All properties designated as national, state or local historic landmarks
- Properties that may be eligible for national, state or local historic landmark designation
- Other properties that may be considered to have historic value

Also see:

- Action HP-22D  
Explore creating a Public Development Authority (PDA) or other public corporation to address preservation emergencies.
- Action HP-32E  
Extend the use of grant and loan programs.

**GOAL: HISTORIC RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION.***(CONTINUED)*

*The Pacific Avenue Historic District was demolished in 1985 to make way for redevelopment.*

**GOAL: HISTORIC RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION.**  
(CONTINUED)

## PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITIES (PDAs)

The State of Washington enables cities to form Public Development Authorities (PDAs) to establish and administer special programs and projects. PDAs are government-owned corporations that are legally separate from their parent-city. This separation limits a city’s liability and may allow a PDA to operate with greater speed and efficiency.

An individual PDA is created by city ordinance, which includes a charter specifying the purpose of the PDA and composition of its governing board. PDAs are most often used to engage in quasi-public activities that promote community objectives, such as development of affordable housing or management of city-owned commercial properties.

In a preservation context, PDAs may be used to manage city-owned historic resources or buy and hold real estate to promote preservation objectives and address emergencies.

PDAs operating in Tacoma as of 2011 include the Tacoma Community Redevelopment Authority, which administers loan programs for a variety of public purposes, and the Thea Foss Development Authority, which sells or leases land to promote the master plan for the Thea Foss waterfront.

### Action HP-22D

*Explore creating a Public Development Authority (PDA) or other public corporation to address preservation emergencies.*

Consideration should be given to establishing a PDA or other public corporation to promote preservation objectives and administer emergency preservation funds. See *Public Development Authorities* at left for more information.

Also see:

- Action HP-22C  
Establish an emergency preservation fund.

### Action HP-22E

*Develop criteria for relocating a threatened resource.*

While relocation is not a preferred solution, it may be more desirable than demolition. The criteria for relocating a building should provide for active reuse. See *Criteria for Relocating a Historic Building* below for recommendations on criteria for the relocation of historic resources.

## CRITERIA FOR RELOCATING A HISTORIC BUILDING

Relocating a historic structure usually diminishes its integrity, because the association with the original site is a key feature, and therefore it is not permitted in most cases. However, there may be circumstances, in which a building is threatened in its present location and alternatives for preservation on site do not exist. In such a case, the following criteria may apply:

1. The structure is threatened by further deterioration or loss in its present location.
2. All alternatives to relocation have been reasonably considered.
3. The original building and site will be accurately recorded before removing the structure.
4. Moving procedures are sufficiently planned to protect the key features of the structure.
5. The relocation site provides an appropriate context similar to that of the original.
6. A commitment is in place to complete the relocation and subsequent rehabilitation of the building.
7. There is adequate protection to assure continued preservation of the building at its relocated site.

**Policy HP-23**

*Provide incentives to protect historic resources from demolition.*

Incentives should encourage a climate of “good stewardship” for historic resources that helps protect them from neglect or adverse economic conditions. See the Incentives and Benefits section of this chapter for more information on recommended incentives to protect historic resources.

**Action HP-23A**

*Consider establishing a transfer of development rights (TDR) program for historic properties.*

A TDR program for historic properties would encourage the preservation of historic structures while enabling increased density in other parts of the city. A demonstration project could be used to test the feasibility of using TDR as an incentive for historic preservation. See *Transfer of Development Rights* at right for additional information.

The program would:

- Allow owners of historic properties to sell development rights.
- Allow the purchaser of the development rights to develop at a greater density or height than would otherwise be allowed.
- Be particularly useful in mixed-use corridors and for special property types, such as institutional facilities.
- Use partnerships with other preservation and conservation organizations, such as the Cascade Land Conservancy, to hold development rights for later transfer.

Also see:

- Action HP-33C  
Extend the range of zoning incentives for historic resources and conservation areas.

**Action HP-23B**

*Establish an easement program.*

Easement programs offer tax advantages to property owners who make a charitable gift donation of a portion of a historic property, usually the complete exterior envelope. This tool extends greater protection than many other options, and can be used in combination with other tools. A private, non-profit organization should manage the program. The City’s role is to cooperate in establishing the program and in making its existence known to property owners.

**GOAL: HISTORIC RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION.**

(CONTINUED)

## TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR)

A transfer of development rights (TDR) program allows the voluntary transfer of development rights from one property to another. TDR has been used across the country to help relieve the pressure to replace historic buildings in redeveloping areas where current regulations may allow larger or taller structures. For example, a TDR program might allow a historic church located in a redeveloping area zoned for higher commercial uses to receive compensation for unused development rights.

TDR allows some or all development rights to be sold or conveyed from a “sending site” (a historic property) to a “receiving site.” Receiving sites must generally be in areas where there is demand for larger buildings than are currently permitted and community support for increased density. Both sending and receiving sites must be subject to regulations that make it possible to calculate development rights, such as downtown or commercial areas with maximum floor area ratio and height standards. Setback and building coverage regulations that may exist in residential areas often make absolute development rights more difficult to calculate.

**GOAL: HISTORIC RESOURCES ARE PROTECTED FROM DEMOLITION.**  
(CONTINUED)



The 1890 Waddell Building at 1502 Pacific Avenue was saved from demolition and rehabilitated to become part the Courtyard by Marriott development.

**Policy HP-24**

*Ensure continuing maintenance of historic buildings.*

Historic buildings should be maintained and protected from damage by inappropriate construction techniques.

Action HP-24A

*Expand minimum maintenance code requirements.*

A minimum maintenance clause in the preservation ordinance should require an owner to keep the building in a sufficient state of repair such that key features are preserved.

- The clause should include provisions to notify the owner that the City is concerned about the condition of the property and indicate that the owner should take appropriate measures.
- The clause empowers the City to make repairs if the owner fails to do so and includes a mechanism for recovering City funds that may be spent in stabilizing the property.
- The City should ensure that property owners are aware of incentive and benefit programs that may be available to assist those who do not have the financial ability to maintain their property.

Also see:

- Action HP-22A  
Expand Historic Tacoma’s endangered property WATCH list to address a wider range of threats to cultural resources..
- Action HP-27C  
Enhance enforcement of preservation codes.
- Action HP-32E  
Extend the use of grant and loan programs.

Action HP-24B

*Consider a contractor certification program.*

A certification program would require a license for a contractor to work on buildings of a high level of historic significance, much as a license is required for an electrician or a plumber. Such a program will reduce permit violations.

## GOAL: CLEAR AND COMPLETE ORDINANCES GUIDE THE PRESERVATION PROGRAM.

The preservation ordinance, zoning code and other related codes, should be clear and easy to interpret.

### Policy HP-25

*Update the Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts Code to reflect current preservation policies and goals.*

The Landmarks and Historic Special Review Districts Code should be revised to reflect current preservation goals and policies.

#### Action HP-25A

*Clarify and clean up the existing preservation ordinance.*

A technical clean up of the existing preservation code is needed to ensure usability and consistency with preservation goals and policies.

Include these changes:

- Consolidate and clean up definitions.
- Revise the structure and purpose of the conservation district tool.
- Address demolition by neglect.
- Revise criteria for a determination of economic hardship as it relates to demolition review.

#### Action HP-25B

*Consider a tiered ranking system for historic significance.*

A tiered ranking system should be considered to support different levels of design review or categories of resource designation. See *Considerations for a Tiered System* on page 3-24 for more information.

Also see:

- Action HP-18C  
Design the survey system to support the potential for a tiered ranking of historic significance.

#### Action HP-25C

*Develop procedures for re-classifying properties.*

Provide a process for re-classifying a property where changes have occurred that may lead to a different determination of significance.

This may include:

- Properties that should be re-evaluated when more information is available
- Properties that may have increased in significance
- Properties that may have lost significance



*A system of clear and complete ordinances will help ensure the protection of Tacoma's historic resources such as the 1928 Bank of California Building at 1011 Pacific Avenue.*

**GOAL: CLEAR AND COMPLETE  
ORDINANCES GUIDE THE  
PRESERVATION PROGRAM.**  
(CONTINUED)

### **Policy HP-26**

*Use zoning tools to promote historic preservation goals and support an overall heritage conservation system.*

Zoning tools should promote preservation policies and goals and support an overall heritage conservation system that protects desired development patterns throughout the community. See *The Heritage Conservation System* on page 3-36 for more information.

#### Action HP-26A

*Review the existing zoning code to determine where conflicts may exist with preservation policies and goals.*

The existing zoning code (Chapter 13.06 of the Tacoma Municipal Code) should be reviewed for potential conflicts with policies and goals for historic preservation.

Specific zoning code elements to review include:

- Permitted heights
- Permitted or prohibited uses
- Parking requirements

Also see:

- Action HP-5A  
Tailor energy efficiency standards to fit historic resources.
- Action HP-6A  
Promote adaptive reuse of historic properties.
- Action HP-23A  
Consider establishing a transfer of development rights (TDR) program for historic properties.
- Action HP-26B  
Explore context-sensitive zoning.
- Action HP-33C  
Extend the range of zoning incentives for historic resources and conservation areas.



**Action HP-26B***Explore context-sensitive zoning.*

When updating the zoning code (Chapter 13.06 of the Tacoma Municipal Code), consider how standards may be tailored to specific types of area, neighborhood or development pattern to support historic preservation policies and goals. Such context-sensitive zoning standards could help protect the viability of existing structures and promote compatible infill construction in traditional or historic areas. Note that the historic preservation program does not have primary responsibility for the zoning code. See *The Heritage Conservation System* on page 3-36 for more information.

Context-sensitive zoning standards may be implemented through:

- New base zone districts
- Changes to existing zone districts
- New design overlay districts

Elements that context-sensitive zoning standards may address include:

- Mass and scale
- Height
- Lot coverage
- Setbacks

Also see:

- Action HP-6A  
Promote adaptive reuse of historic properties.
- Action HP-8A  
Explore alternative tools for heritage conservation that maintain neighborhood character.
- Action HP-26A  
Review the existing zoning code to determine where conflicts may exist with preservation policies and goals.
- Action HP-33C  
Extend the range of zoning incentives for historic resources and conservation areas.

**GOAL: CLEAR AND COMPLETE  
ORDINANCES GUIDE THE  
PRESERVATION PROGRAM.  
(CONTINUED)**

## THE HERITAGE CONSERVATION SYSTEM

The City’s heritage conservation system protects neighborhood character and historic resources. It is comprised of a series of districts and tools described within the City’s ordinances. These include zone districts, conservation and historic districts, and tools for protecting individual properties. The historic preservation program directly administers some parts of the system, such as conservation and historic districts, while other parts of the system are administered by the overall Community and Economic Development Department or other City agencies.

The table below outlines a system of current and potential districts that may be used to promote the City’s heritage conservation system. Design overlay districts would support context-sensitive zoning standards as recommended in Action HP-26B on page 3-35. Conservation districts would support a design review process using design guidelines. Note that the City’s current conservation district tool should be revised as recommended in Action HP-28A on page 3-39. See *Conservation Districts* on page 3-40 for more information.

	DISTRICTS			
	Zone Districts		Conservation District	Locally Designated Historic District
	Base Zone District	Design Overlay District		
<b>ELIGIBILITY</b>				
<b>DEVELOPMENT PATTERN</b>				
Includes development patterns that should be protected/promoted		■	■	■
<b>HISTORIC RESOURCES</b>				
Includes significant % of locally designated historic landmarks				■
Includes limited % of locally designated historic landmarks			■	
May not include locally designated historic landmarks	■	■		
<b>REGULATORY FRAMEWORK</b>				
<b>DESIGN STANDARDS</b>				
Implement general design standards	■			
Implement modified/neighborhood-specific standards		■ <sup>1</sup>		
<b>DESIGN GUIDELINES<sup>2</sup></b>				
Apply to all new infill development			■ <sup>3</sup>	■
Apply to additions to all existing structures			■ <sup>3</sup>	■
Apply to facade modifications to “contributing structures”				■
<b>DEMOLITION REVIEW</b>				
Demolition review procedures apply to all properties				■
Demolition review procedures may apply to some properties			■	
<b>AVAILABLE INCENTIVES</b>				
<b>DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES</b>				
May be available for some projects	■	■	■	
<b>PRESERVATION INCENTIVES</b>				
May be available for some projects	■ <sup>4</sup>	■	■	■

■ = Applicable

<sup>1</sup>A specific, limited, menu of new or modified design standards may be implemented with design overlay districts.

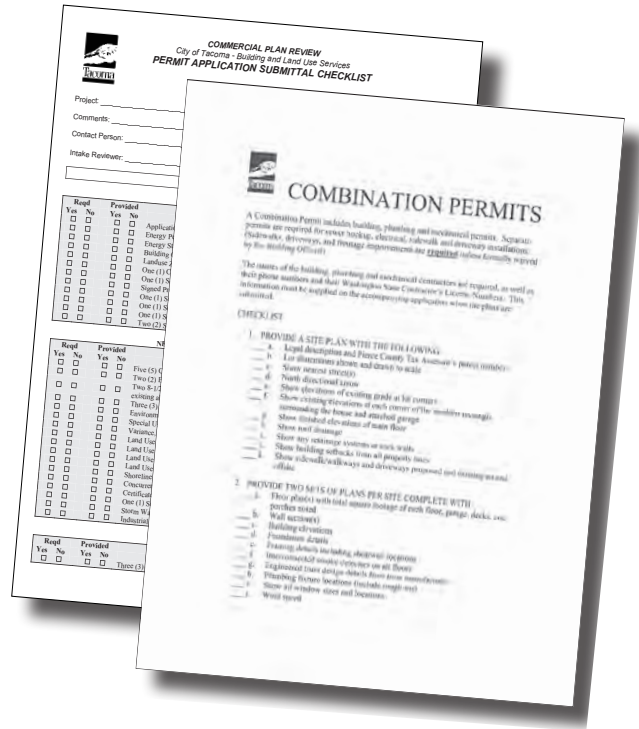
<sup>2</sup>Note that design guidelines apply to locally designated Tacoma Historic Landmarks in all districts

<sup>3</sup>The design review process and associated guidelines should differ from those that apply in locally designated Tacoma Historic Districts

<sup>4</sup>Note that preservation incentives currently apply in Mixed-Use Center base zone districts

## GOAL: THE CITY'S PROJECT REVIEW AND ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS PROMOTE PRESERVATION OBJECTIVES.

The City's process for project review and approval should be streamlined to provide a positive experience for applicants and to promote both overall, and preservation specific, goals. Enforcement programs should be closely coordinated to the review process to ensure that projects are developed per approved specifications. During the review of proposed projects, a City staff team leader should coordinate the requirements of multiple City departments as well as benefits, incentives and flexible building code options available to promote historic preservation.



### Policy HP-27

*Streamline project review and enforcement to promote preservation objectives.*

Seek ways to streamline programs and accomplish core objectives in the most efficient ways.

#### Action HP-27A

*Identify a team leader to coordinate project review.*

A team leader should work with applicants to coordinate requirements made by multiple City departments including the building official and preservation office. This team leader will help resolve any conflicting requirements and help ensure that project strategies promote the City's overall, and preservation-specific, goals.

Also see:

- Action HP-33C  
Extend the range of zoning incentives for historic resources and conservation areas.

*The City's process for project review and approval should be streamlined to provide a positive experience for applicants and to promote both overall, and preservation specific, goals.*

**GOAL: THE CITY'S PROJECT  
REVIEW AND ENFORCEMENT  
PROGRAMS PROMOTE  
PRESERVATION OBJECTIVES.  
(CONTINUED)**

Action HP-27B

*Expand administrative permitting.*

Staff should be able to approve a wide range of projects using detailed criteria for administrative permitting.

Action HP-27C

*Enhance enforcement of preservation codes.*

Consider development of a stand-alone enforcement and penalty policy in the preservation code. Use a Certificate of Occupancy compliance-tracking form to aid code enforcement staff in site inspections for preservation-related work.

## GOAL: RESOURCE DESIGNATION CATEGORIES HELP INDICATE PRIORITIES FOR CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES.

Different types of designation categories should be used to reflect degrees of significance, alternative approaches for protection and different management objectives. Having a range of program tools allows each one to better fit the intent of their use. It also provides options for program flexibility.

### Policy HP-28

*Establish clear categories for resource designation.*

Identify levels of historic designation for individual resources and districts. The expanded set of designation levels should facilitate the strategic management of historic resources. Levels should reflect degrees of significance, the intent of the designation and the desired degree of protection of the resource.

#### Action HP-28A

*Revise the City's existing conservation district tool.*

Redefine and revise the conservation district as a land-use planning and neighborhood character management tool that is clearly distinguished from a historic district. In addition to its current primary use as a buffer area around a historic district, the redefined conservation district tool should be available for use in a wider range of circumstances. A conservation district may be used in an area or neighborhood that does not qualify as a locally designated Tacoma historic district. However, it should include some historic resources.

The revised conservation district should be available for application in:

- Areas seeking to preserve traditional development patterns
- Areas seeking to promote compatible development
- Areas that are adjacent to historic districts

Each conservation district should have a clearly-defined intent statement and may include policies for using zoning, design review and specific incentives. See *Conservation Districts* on page 3-40 for more information.

Also see:

- Action HP-26B  
Explore context-sensitive zoning.



*The conservation district should be defined as a land-use planning and neighborhood character management tool that is clearly distinguished from a historic district.*

## CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

As recommended in Action HP-28A on page 3-39, the City's existing conservation district tool should be revised to be more clearly distinguished from a historic district and also accommodate a wider range of applications. A conservation district may be applied to a defined area to promote maintenance of historic development patterns, scale, massing and/or uses. A conservation district may also be used to promote economic development, affordable housing, neighborhood livability, and/or protection of nearby historic resources.

A conservation district emphasizes compatibility of design in new construction and appropriate additions to historic buildings. The focus is on maintaining a preferred character along the street and sidewalk. Alterations to existing buildings should therefore be compatible with goals for the character of the street as defined in the district's intent statement and illustrated in its design guidelines. Locally designated individual Tacoma Historic Landmarks that are located within the district would also be subject to additional preservation design guidelines.

Design review within conservation districts is generally limited to:

- New buildings
- New site improvements
- Additions to buildings
- Improvements to locally designated individual Tacoma Historic Landmarks

A conservation district should meet one or more of the following purposes:

- To create a buffer around a sensitive area, such as a historic landmark or district, or an area of sensitive natural resources
- To enhance the viability of an abutting historic district, by providing supporting services and amenities
- To maintain a place with a distinctive character
- To retain desirable uses that support the neighborhood
- To promote the continued use of a particular property type
- To promote the conservation of "recent past" historic resources which may not be considered to have sufficient historic significance to be eligible for designation as individual Tacoma Historic Landmarks
- To enable tailored incentives

### **Relationship to historic districts**

A conservation district need not meet the criteria for historic district designation. However, it should include a minimum number of historic resources. Areas that do qualify as locally designated Tacoma historic districts may instead be considered for designation as conservation districts for reasons of community policy. Such areas may still be considered for historic district designation at a later date.

Action HP-28B

*Clarify criteria for historic district designation to assure its appropriate use as a preservation tool.*

Include these criteria for district designation:

- Consideration of historic significance
- Intent of designation
- Other community planning objectives
- Alternative tools to achieve conservation goals for the proposed district

Action HP-28C

*Broaden resource designation criteria to allow for exceptions to the 50-year criterion.*

The resources that are historically significant today do not include all the resources that will be significant in the future. The system should permit younger resources to be designated when they meet criteria.

**GOAL: RESOURCE DESIGNATION  
CATEGORIES HELP INDICATE  
PRIORITIES FOR CONSERVATION  
OF RESOURCES. (CONTINUED)**

**GOAL: RESOURCE DESIGNATION**  
**CATEGORIES HELP INDICATE**  
**PRIORITIES FOR CONSERVATION**  
**OF RESOURCES. (CONTINUED)**

**Policy HP-29**

*Schedule designation of historic resources according to clearly defined priorities.*

Clear priorities for the nomination and designation of historic resources support efficient use of City staff's time.

Action HP-29A

*Establish criteria to prioritize requests for historic landmark, historic district and conservation district designation.*

The criteria for establishing priorities should address the significance of the property, any plans for improvements that the owner may anticipate, as well as fit with other community planning initiatives. See *Criteria For Designating Individual Landmarks* on page 3-43 as well as *Criteria for Designating Historic Districts* and *Criteria for Designating Conservation Districts* on page 3-44 for more information.



## CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING INDIVIDUAL LANDMARKS

As recommended in Action HP-29A on page 3-42, specific criteria should be used to prioritize requests for designation of individual Tacoma historic landmarks. Potential criteria are described below. The degree of priority given to designating individual Tacoma historic landmarks would be influenced by the number of criteria met.

**Appropriate documentation of eligibility is readily available.**

Survey documentation, including a statement of significance, description of key features, and evaluation of integrity of the resource is already prepared, or can be prepared by an outside party in a timely manner.

**The property is recognized as having a high level of significance.**

A property that would be individually eligible to the National Register, or that is determined to be highly significant to Tacoma history would meet this criterion.

**The owner is seeking incentives and benefits that require listing as a historic resource.**

An owner who seeks to apply for federal income tax credits, state valuation, or make use of flexibility offered in other codes to historic properties would meet this criterion.

**Designating the property would support other community plans.**

If the property is in a neighborhood for which a sub-area plan seeks to attract reinvestment in properties, designation could help stimulate desired improvements.

**The property abuts another that is already listed as a city landmark.**

Designating the property could help encourage good stewardship of the abutting property.

**The property is threatened with lost of integrity, or even demolition.**

Designating the property would provide protections and incentives that could help to preserve the resource.

## CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING HISTORIC DISTRICTS

As recommended in Action HP-29A on page 3-42, specific criteria should be used to prioritize requests for designation of local Tacoma historic districts. Potential criteria are described below. The degree of priority given to designating local Tacoma historic districts would be influenced by the number of criteria met.

**Appropriate documentation of eligibility is readily available.**

Survey documentation, including a statement of significance, description of key features, and evaluation of integrity of the properties in the area is already prepared, or can be prepared by an outside party in a timely manner.

**The area is recognized as having a high level of historic significance.**

An area that would be eligible for listing as a historic district in the National Register, or that is determined to be highly significant to Tacoma's history would meet this criterion.

**A substantial number of property owners in the area support designation.**

Strong support may be indicated by letters or petitions, as well as information received in public workshops.

**Designating the district would support other community plans.**

If a neighborhood plan for the area seeks to attract reinvestment in properties, designation could help stimulate desired improvements. Designation could help create a climate for investment, and make other incentives and benefits available.

**The area abuts another neighborhood that is already listed as a historic district.**

This may be a locally designated historic or conservation district, or a National Register district. Designating the area could help encourage good stewardship of properties in the abutting neighborhood.

## CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

As recommended in Action HP-29A on page 3-42, specific criteria should be used to prioritize requests for designation of local Tacoma conservation districts. Potential criteria are described below. The degree of priority given to designating local Tacoma conservation districts would be influenced by the number of criteria met.

**Appropriate documentation of eligibility is readily available.**

Survey documentation, including a statement of significance, description of key features, and statement of goals for the area is already prepared, or can be prepared by an outside party in a timely manner.

**The area is recognized as having a distinctive character that is desirable to maintain.**

Preliminary analyses of character indicate that a distinct identity exists.

**A substantial number of property owners in the area support designation.**

Strong support may be indicated by letters or petitions, as well as information received in public workshops.

**Designating the district would support other community plans.**

If the area is in a neighborhood for which a sub-area plan seeks to attract reinvestment in properties, designation could help stimulate desired improvements.

**The area abuts another area that is already listed as a historic or conservation district.**

This may be a locally designated historic or conservation district, or a National Register district. Designating the area could help encourage good stewardship of properties in the abutting neighborhood.

## GOAL: THE DESIRED CHARACTER OF TRADITIONAL AREAS OF THE CITY IS MAINTAINED.

Preservation and conservation efforts should be guided by standards and criteria that are tailored to Tacoma. These should focus on retaining key features of traditional building while accommodating compatible changes and new investment that respect the established context.

### Policy HP-30

*Provide design guidelines that promote compatible development.*

Clear, well-illustrated design guidelines specific to Tacoma’s resources should guide historic rehabilitation, infrastructure maintenance and new construction in historic or conservation districts. Citywide design guidelines should address the general treatment of historic resources while more specific guidelines address the unique character of individual historic districts. All design guidelines should be easily accessible and provide flexibility for property owners with differing financial resources. See *Action HP-32E* for more information on potential programs to assist owners with limited financial resources.

#### Action HP-30A

*Provide user-friendly preservation design guidelines that apply citywide.*

Well-illustrated design guidelines should be developed to address historic resources citywide, including rehabilitation of buildings, sites and historic infrastructure (such as brick streets).

Citywide design guidelines should:

- Address emerging issues and core preservation principles
- Address sustainability, including energy conservation and generation
- Provide guidance on feasible design solutions
- Encourage new design that is sensitive to its historic context (such as new development that references historic patterns that may have previously existed on a site)
- Promote flexible design solutions that are consistent with preservation principles
- Reflect the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation
- Be extensively illustrated
- Guide compatible retrofits to enhance energy efficiency



*Previously published City brochures could provide a starting point for new well-illustrated citywide historic design guidelines.*



*Design guidelines should promote appropriate rehabilitation projects.*



*Younger properties that may now be considered for historic significance require somewhat different treatment in permitting and review.*

#### Action HP-30B

*Provide design guidelines tailored to individual historic and conservation districts.*

District-specific design guidelines should work in concert with general, citywide guidelines and address features in the public and private realms. Where district design guidelines already exist, an update should be scheduled.

District design guidelines should:

- Clearly illustrate the character of the districts
- Include a description of specific goals for the area

#### Action HP-30C

*Include policies for the treatment of recent past resources.*

Younger properties that may now be considered for historic significance require somewhat different treatment in permitting and review. Some have materials that may be more difficult to treat than those in more traditional historic properties. Specific design guidelines should be developed for the treatment of these recent past buildings and incorporated into citywide design guidelines. These guidelines may offer more flexibility in using replacement materials and even in altering some features.

# INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS COMPONENT

## GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

An effective preservation program offers special benefits to attract investment in historic properties and encourage property owners to follow appropriate rehabilitation procedures. This may include financial assistance for owners with limited budgets, tax breaks, technical assistance or regulatory relief such as streamlined review processes and building code flexibility. Some potential incentives and benefits, such as Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), are described in the Management Tools section of this chapter.

### GOAL: A COORDINATED SYSTEM OF INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS STIMULATES PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION IN TACOMA.

Incentives should support appropriate rehabilitation and continued use of historic resources. Incentives should also support owners seeking local designation of eligible historic resources and conservation areas.



#### Policy HP-31

*Offer incentives and benefits to cover a range of conditions.*

Incentives and benefits should address a range of conditions, recognizing property owner's varied needs.

*An effective preservation program offers special benefits to attract investment in historic properties.*

Conditions that incentives and benefits should address include:

- Different types of owners (i.e., long time owner vs. recent purchaser or resident owner vs. developer)
- Different property types (i.e., commercial, residential, institutional and industrial)
- Different levels of significance and designation (i.e., historic districts, conservation districts, levels of significance)

#### Action HP-31A

*Publish summaries of incentives and benefits.*

Publications should promote the use of incentives and benefits by showing how they may be combined and highlighting successful case studies.

#### Action HP-31B

*Maintain incentives in a range of categories.*

Incentives should be developed and maintained in several categories,

Categories of incentives include:

- Financial
- Regulatory
- Technical Assistance

**GOAL: A COORDINATED SYSTEM OF INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS STIMULATES PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION IN TACOMA.**  
(CONTINUED)

**Policy HP-32**

*Promote financial incentives that stimulate investment in historic properties.*

Property tax incentives and federal income tax credit programs are highly effective and their continued use should be a priority. Other programs complement these incentives and should be featured as well.

Action HP-32A

*Promote continuing use of the Washington State Special Valuation program.*

Action HP-32B

*Promote continuing use of the Federal Income Tax Credit for certified rehabilitation of historic buildings.*

Action HP-32C

*Continue to seek ways to apply the Current Use Assessment program to cultural and historic resources.*

Action HP-32D

*Promote use of the City's multifamily tax incentive in projects with historic buildings.*

Consider offering flexibility in threshold requirements when preservation objectives otherwise may be constrained. Consideration should also be given to establishing a loan fund that focuses on bridging the gap that may exist in market-based financing.

Action HP-32E

*Extend the use of grant and loan programs.*

Grant and loan programs should be available to promote projects that meet preservation objectives and assist property owners that do not have the financial ability to adequately maintain or rehabilitate their property. Criteria for potential financial assistance should be administered separately from the design review process.

Action HP-32F

*Consider a potential local sales tax rebate incentive, to apply to materials purchased in the city and used in an appropriate rehabilitation.*

**Policy HP-33**

*Enhance regulatory incentives to encourage preservation and conservation.*

Focus on avoiding unintentional obstacles to preservation in other city regulations, and also provide added flexibility in other regulations as they apply to historic resources and conservation areas.

**GOAL: A COORDINATED SYSTEM OF INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS STIMULATES PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION IN TACOMA.**  
(CONTINUED)

**Action HP-33A**

*Promote appropriate use of flexibility provided in the building code.*

Promote awareness of the provisions in the International Existing Buildings Code that facilitate rehabilitation of older buildings and provide training to code officials in their constructive use. Case studies should also be published to address specific code issues that frequently arise and to demonstrate successful solutions.

**Action HP-33B**

*Promote the use of Mixed-Use Center and Downtown zoning incentives for preservation projects.*

Promote zoning incentives such as height bonuses for preservation projects in Mixed-Use Centers and parking waivers for existing buildings Downtown and in Mixed-Use Centers. See *Mixed-Use Center Districts* on page 2-25 for more information.

**Action HP-33C**

*Extend the range of zoning incentives for historic resources and conservation areas.*

Incentives to consider when a preservation project is involved:

- Permit additional height in an addition or adjacent new construction
- Reduce or waive parking requirements (i.e. extend waiver of parking requirements for existing buildings in Downtown and Mixed-Use Center districts to designated historic resources in other areas).
- Permit carriage houses (i.e., detached Accessory Dwelling Unit) in selected residential districts
- Permit some conditional uses in historic or conservation districts
- Flexibility in transparency requirements
- Permit flexibility in setbacks where an addition to a historic building is involved
- Shortened review and permitting schedules

Also see:

- Action HP-23A  
Consider establishing a transfer of development rights (TDR) program for historic properties.

**GOAL: A COORDINATED SYSTEM OF INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS STIMULATES PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION IN TACOMA.**  
(CONTINUED)

**Policy HP-34**

*Expand technical assistance programs to promote preservation and conservation.*

Technical assistance is especially valuable to homeowners and to small commercial properties, but also may be strongly appreciated by institutional property owners.

Action HP-34A

*Explore a design assistance program (small assistance grants; voluntary program).*

Action HP-34B

*Explore the potential to apply the Main Street program to neighborhood commercial centers.*

Action HP-34C

*Assist with tax credit certification.*

Action HP-34D

*Provide technical “how to” information to property owners.*



# EDUCATION COMPONENT

## GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Education should take a more prominent role in preservation and work to build the constituency for historic preservation. Helping property owners learn how to maintain their historic properties as active, viable assets is key to a successful preservation program. Many property owners willingly follow appropriate rehabilitation procedures and develop compatible designs when they are well informed about preservation objectives.

Education and outreach is often a function of a non-profit partner organization that promotes preservation. See the Advocacy section for more information on the role of Tacoma's preservation partners.

### GOAL: THE PUBLIC APPRECIATES TACOMA'S DIVERSE HISTORY AND ITS HISTORIC RESOURCES.

Promote the understanding of diverse historical perspectives and embrace Tacoma's rich cultural history.

#### Policy HP-35

*Provide tools to educate the public regarding Tacoma's history and resources.*

##### Action HP-35A

*Prepare educational publications on the City's history and the benefits of historic preservation.*

Publications should be available in both hard copy and on the City's web site.

Such publications should address:

- Historic background of Tacoma
- The environmental benefits of historic preservation
- The economic benefits of historic preservation
- Case studies on successful preservation projects in Tacoma

Exposure should also be increased through TV Tacoma, neighborhood councils, the Chamber of Commerce, trade and tourism organizations and the mainstream media.

##### Action HP-35B

*Apply uniform criteria for installing monuments and commemorative markers on city-owned properties and rights-of-way.*

The purpose of the program is to increase public awareness of the cultural heritage of the city and enhance the enjoyment of its historic sites. See *Historic Markers* on page 3-52 for more information.



The City of Tacoma produced an educational brochure on historic storefronts in 1997.

## KEY EDUCATION ACTIONS

- Action HP-35B  
Apply uniform criteria for installing monuments and commemorative markers on city-owned properties and rights-of-way.
- Action HP-35A  
Prepare educational publications on the City's history and the benefits of historic preservation.
- Action HP-36A  
Provide training programs for preservation partners and the general public.
- Action HP-37A  
Publish all essential preservation-related information on the web.

## HISTORIC MARKERS

### Types of Historic Markers

A basic historic marker is made of cast metal or a similar durable material. It is primarily text-only but may include a simple line drawing or embossed image.

An interpretive marker provides additional information about a site, building or area. A photograph, drawing or other graphic may be embedded in the surface of the marker using photo-sensitized metals or synthetic products.

A boundary or district marker may also be part of a plaque program. These are often affixed to sign poles, street lights or monuments in the public right of way.

### Criteria for Historic Markers

Markers should be compatible with the character of the site and its historic significance. The marker design, including its form and materials, should be consistent with others at the site or in the district, in order to convey a distinct identity for the area.

Key criteria for historic markers are:

#### 1. Location shall be appropriate.

- The marker should be positioned to be reasonably accessible to the public on a regular basis.
- Position it to aid in interpretation, and not obscure or damage key features of the property.
- Mounting techniques should not damage historically significant materials.

#### 2. Material and medium shall be appropriate.

- The material of the maker should be compatible with the historic context and with any historically significant structures on the site.
- The material of the marker should have proven durability in Tacoma's climate.

#### 3. Marker design shall be appropriate to the site.

- The character, form and shape of the marker should be in keeping with the character of the site and the historic association that is to be interpreted.

#### 4. Message content shall be appropriate.

- The subject of the marker must be recognized as having historic significance, using the criteria for designation of resources in the preservation section of the City code.
- The marker must have an association with the site where it is to be located.
- The narrative must reflect an accurate, well-rounded account of the subject being interpreted or commemorated, and meet standards of historical accuracy recognized by professional historians.
- The information must be grammatically correct, historically accurate, and supported by documentation.
- The content must be appropriate for the general public to view.

#### 5. Design shall be compatible with other markers on site.

- Similarity in material, form and placement are preferred.

#### 6. New technologies should be planned to link with other information systems.

- Markers should link with the City's GIS system, and other potential telecommunication systems.
- Where a GPS link is to be used, clear views to the sky should be considered.

## GOAL: PRACTICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS SUPPORT HISTORIC PRESERVATION

While building a general appreciation of cultural resources is important, a special initiative to build practical skills among property owners, construction trades and City departments is essential.

### Policy HP-36

*Establish preservation training programs.*

Training that helps program administrators, preservation partners and individuals be better stewards is critical.



#### Action HP-36A

*Provide training programs for preservation partners and the general public.*

Workshops that provide helpful information about rehabilitation techniques and publications that build an understanding of historic significance are examples of education and outreach strategies. Workshops should include:

- Hands-on training for historic property owners
- Workshops for construction and trade professionals to provide a better understanding of preservation such that they can advise clients on appropriate options.

#### Action HP-36B

*Establish a preservation planning and review training program for City staff.*

All planning staff, and key staff in other departments should receive a basic orientation to the preservation system and the principles involved, such that they can better understand the program and advise applicants on their options. Similarly, preservation staff should be engaged in an orientation program directed at how they can participate in other areas of planning effectively and how to take other planning objectives into consideration when developing policies.

#### Action HP-36C

*Provide training to the Landmarks Preservation Commission.*

Establish an on-going program to train the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Topics should include the City's preservation policies and review system as well as best practices in preservation planning.



*Education programs for owners of historic properties such as Historic Tacoma's This Old House lecture series illustrated on page 3-21 can encourage compatible rehabilitation projects.*

**GOAL: PRACTICAL EDUCATION  
PROGRAMS SUPPORT HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION (CONTINUED)**

**Policy HP-37**

*Expand the use of web-based preservation tools.*

The primary education tool for property owners and contractors will be the web. Relevant preservation information and policies should be available on the preservation web site. This should include on-line resources for basic building repair and maintenance.

Action HP-37A

*Publish all essential preservation-related information on the web.*

Make all preservation information available on the City’s web site.

- This should include surveys of individual properties, historic contexts, maps and design guidelines.
- Educational materials such as brochures should be made available.
- Case studies illustrating successful solutions should also be provided.

Action HP-37B

*Establish a “Self-Test” for historic significance.*

Create a “self test” tool that property owners can use on line to determine if a building is potentially significant.

- Include a check-list of questions, and links to data bases that will provide relevant information.

**Policy HP-38**

*Incorporate preservation education into local school programs.*

Examples exist of successful programs, including some very successful ones in Tacoma. These may include study modules in formal class programs as well as extracurricular activities.

Action HP-38A

*Preservation partners should encourage the integration of cultural heritage and historic preservation in formal curricula.*

Promote education programs in schools, colleges, and other civic organizations.

- Establish a central coordinator to promote curriculum development.
- Provide for continuing operations such that programs are sustained for many years.

# ADVOCACY COMPONENT

## GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Advocacy programs are essential to promote historic preservation efforts. They work to expand the base of preservation and engage partners in collaborative preservation programs. While the City's historic preservation office will act as coordinator, advocacy efforts should be shared across a broad base of independent community organizations and City departments. Community organizations should be the primary advocates for historic preservation in Tacoma with the City's preservation office providing support.

### GOAL: COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ARE STRONG ADVOCATES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION.

Community organizations should be the primary advocates for historic preservation in Tacoma. Historic Tacoma, the Tacoma Historical Society, Pierce County Heritage League, and other interest groups are well equipped to play advocacy roles, with the City providing support. Leveraging the capabilities of these organizations supports broad community involvement and facilitates efficient use of City resources in other elements of the preservation program.



#### Policy HP-39

*Support existing partnerships for historic preservation.*

##### Action HP-39A

*Provide a forum to clarify the roles of groups and organizations that promote historic preservation.*

Work with existing groups and organizations to clarify and document the specific role that each will play in preservation advocacy efforts. Advocacy roles should be incorporated into mission statements for each organization and published on the City's web site.

*Community organizations should be the primary advocates for historic preservation in Tacoma.*

### KEY ADVOCACY ACTIONS

- Action HP-39A  
Provide a forum to clarify the roles of groups and organizations that promote historic preservation.
- Action HP-40A  
Stage regular outreach events with community organizations that may become future partners in historic preservation.
- Action HP-41A  
Assist in the City's efforts to promote sustainability.

**GOAL: COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ARE STRONG ADVOCATES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION. (CONTINUED)**

**Action HP-39B**

*Establish a framework for collaboration among community organizations.*

Regularly scheduled City-sponsored work sessions and funding for organization members to attend meetings and educational seminars related to preservation will support more effective collaboration.

Also see:

- Action HP-36A  
Provide training programs for preservation partners and the general public.

**Action HP-39C**

*Improve coordination between Pierce County and the City's preservation programs.*

Include county preservationists in a "round table" that meets regularly to share information.

**Policy HP-40**

*Foster new partnerships in historic preservation.*

Goals for historic preservation often overlap with other groups. Where this occurs, the opportunity exists to create new partnerships with groups that have not in the past been active.

**Action HP-40A**

*Stage regular outreach events with community organizations that may become future partners in historic preservation.*

Identify community organizations whose goals coincide with those for historic preservation. Such organizations could become valuable advocacy partners if provided with appropriate education and support.

**Action HP-40B**

*Expand partnerships with other Certified Local Governments in Pierce County.*

Conduct regular meetings to share information and explore opportunities for cooperation.

**Action HP-40C**

*Work with the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department to promote historic preservation objectives.*

Promote the health benefits of historic or traditional neighborhoods. Areas built before the dominance of the automobile are pedestrian-friendly and include a mix of uses that promote walking and social interaction. Often, such neighborhoods also provide accessible services that facilitate aging in place.

**Action HP-40D**

*Work with economic development partners to include historic resources in redevelopment policies and economic development plans.*

Collaborate with economic development partners to promote the use of historic resources within redevelopment projects and in neighborhood plans for economic development. Historic buildings have been shown to work as successful incubators for a wide range of development types, from places for entry-level rents to high prestige addresses in historic downtowns.

Also see:

- Action HP-7B  
Coordinate preservation efforts with support for local businesses.

**GOAL: COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ARE STRONG ADVOCATES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION. (CONTINUED)**

## OTHER CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN PIERCE COUNTY

- Gig Harbor
- Lakewood
- Pierce County
- Puyallup
- Steilacoom

**GOAL: COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ARE STRONG ADVOCATES FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION. (CONTINUED)**

**Action HP-40E**

*Work with affordable housing organizations to use historic resources in their work.*

Collaborate with affordable housing partners, including the Tacoma Housing Authority, to promote the benefits of historic preservation. Most older neighborhoods have a diversity of housing types and costs that are difficult to replicate because of the substantial cost of new construction. In many cases, such neighborhoods also provide opportunities for accessory dwelling units or carriage houses that provide additional options for market-rate affordable housing.

Also see:

- Action HP-11A  
Promote urban development strategies that are compatible with historic preservation.

**Action HP-40F**

*Expand partnerships with sustainability organizations and programs.*

Create relationships with sustainability organizations and programs to promote the benefits of historic preservation including conservation of embodied energy and reduction of construction waste. As sustainability programs develop, it will be important to emphasize the overlap with preservation objectives. See the *Environmental Component of Sustainability* on page IN-6 for more information.

Also see:

- Action HP-3A  
Provide tools to encourage cooperation between advocates for historic preservation and sustainability.
- Action HP-3B  
Provide information about the environmental benefits of preservation of existing buildings as part of the citywide sustainability program.
- Action HP-41A  
Assist in the City’s efforts to promote sustainability.



## GOAL: CITY DEPARTMENTS COLLABORATE TO PROMOTE HISTORIC PRESERVATION.

City departments and agencies should work with the historic preservation office to promote preservation efforts and assist with implementation of the Preservation Plan. A range of City departments share an interest in historic preservation, from Community and Economic Development and Public Works to Public Utilities. In some cases, shared interests are based on geographic overlap such as when a Public Works project is undertaken within a designated historic district. In other cases, shared interests exist at the policy level such as when the rehabilitation of historic resources supports goals for economic development. Collaboration among City departments will ensure that historic preservation is an integral part of the culture of the city.

### Policy HP-41

*Collaborate with other City departments to promote the benefits of historic preservation*

Building partnerships with a range of City agencies and departments to achieve shared goals and policies is important.

#### Action HP-41A

*Assist in the City's efforts to promote sustainability.*

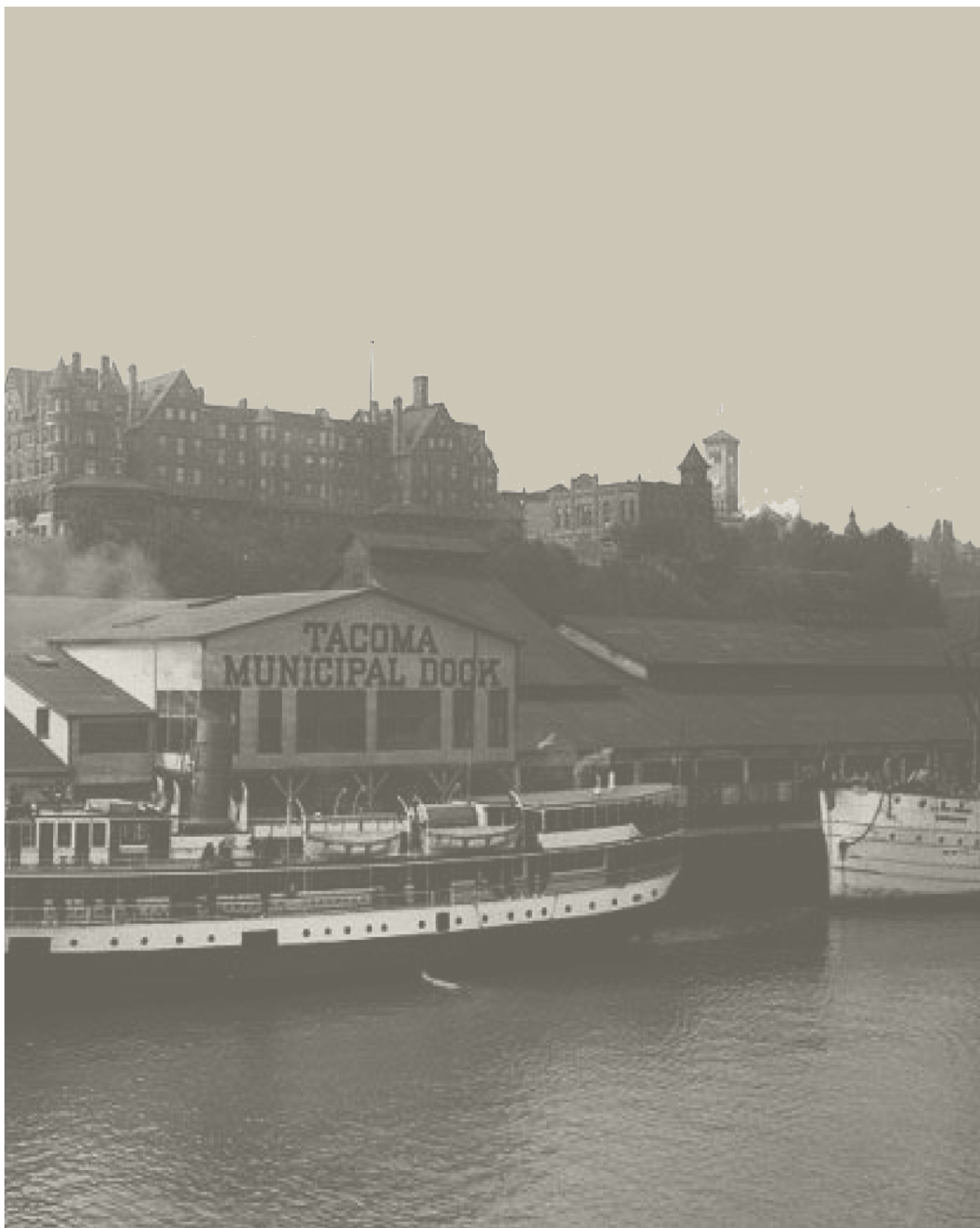
A range of City departments, including the preservation office, should cooperate to promote goals for community sustainability. The City historic preservation officer should meet regularly with the City's Office of Sustainability manager. In addition, the relationship between historic preservation and community sustainability should be clearly referenced on the City web site and in City publications.

Also see:

- Action HP-3A  
Provide tools to encourage cooperation between advocates for historic preservation and sustainability.
- Action HP-40F  
Expand partnerships with sustainability organizations and programs.



*The Pierce County Chamber of Commerce offices are located in the 1920 Rust Building at 950 Pacific Street in downtown Tacoma. The Chamber is a key economic development partner.*



*The Tacoma waterfront in 1912 (Source: University of Washington, Digital Collection)*



## CHAPTER 4

# IMPLEMENTATION

The preservation element is far-reaching and requires strategic phasing of its actions. While many actions should be accomplished in the near-term, others will take more time to achieve. Some of these are ones that require a substantial allocation of resources to execute, which may mean phasing them in stages. Others require collaborative efforts of many preservation partners. Still others fall later in a sequence of planned activities, and therefore cannot be accomplished until preceding tasks are completed.

This chapter presents the recommended timing for each of the actions set forth in Chapter 3. It reflects priorities held by preservation advocates in Tacoma, as well as a consideration of the interaction of the actions with other potential work efforts. The specific implementation schedule is provided in a separate spreadsheet that indicates the preferred timing, and key players for each action.



## PHASING CRITERIA

Implementing the Preservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan will be an ongoing process. Because of limited financial and human resources, priorities must be carefully established. The list of criteria that follows should be used in determining priorities for implementation. Priority should be given to those projects that meet a significant number of these criteria.

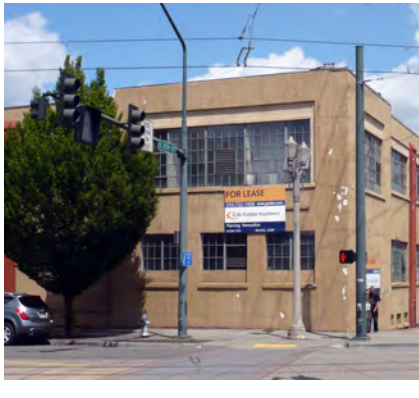
### IN THIS CHAPTER

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### 1. Cost-effectiveness

The project can be implemented for minimum cost, may be coordinated with other projects within the organization to share costs, or costs can be shared with other organizations and individuals.

For example, if Public Works has scheduled street improvements in an area, then joining that work with repair of historic streetscape features, or perhaps installing interpretive markers, would be cost-effective. Projects that engage other groups and agencies to accomplish mutually-shared objectives would also receive high priority.



*Phased implementation of the Historic Preservation Plan should give priority to actions that meet a range of criteria.*

## 2. Broad benefits

The project will serve a mix of user groups and will benefit the most people.

For example, enhancing technical assistance programs to serve a broader number of people would have broad benefits. Similarly, developing design guidelines that clarify the permitting and review process for all affected property owners would yield broad benefits. On-going education and training programs often will have broad benefits as well.

## 3. Connection with other projects

The project will help to complete a work item that is already well established and may be easily completed as a part of it, and it is in the appropriate sequence of related projects.

Conducting a survey of historic resources that completes previous work of a related nature is an example. Or when a neighborhood is advocating to be designated a historic district, then completing a survey of the area would be a connection that merits priority. Many actions in the plan are linked to other projects, and each should be executed in the appropriate sequence.

## 4. Exceptional project

The project will provide an exceptional educational, aesthetic, or cultural experience.

Working to preserve a noteworthy building that is considered of special value to the community is an example.

## 5. Emergency response

The project will prevent imminent loss of character or demolition of a cultural resource.

Developing the tools to be able to respond to such emergencies would be a high priority for this reason.

## IMPLEMENTATION TABLE

A separate implementation table establishes a ten-year, prioritized strategy for the development and implementation of the preservation plan. As an interactive review and monitoring tool, it is designed to be easily updated as needed throughout plan implementation.

### Implementation Actions

The first column in the table lists the actions previously described in Chapter 2. The actions are organized by category, goal and policy with overall categories distinguished by different colors. Where an action relates to additional policies, they are listed in the “related policies” column.

### Implementation Phasing

The table columns to the right of Actions and Related Policies outline the ten-year implementation period for the plan and indicate the suggested timing for each action. While some actions may be implemented during a one-year period, most will take several years. Some actions will be ongoing over the full ten-year implementation period.

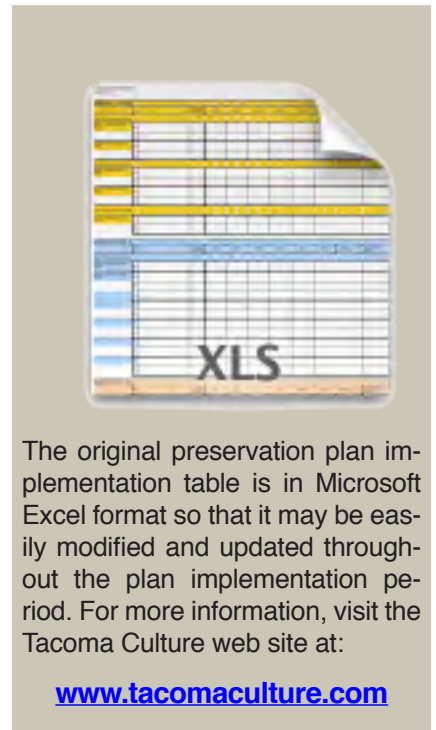
### Key Players and Supporting Partners

The columns at the right of the table indicate the key players responsible for implementation of each action. In many cases, supporting partners are also identified.



*The actions listed in the implementation table promote goals and objectives for historic preservation in Tacoma.*

## IMPLEMENTATION TABLE STATUS



The original preservation plan implementation table is in Microsoft Excel format so that it may be easily modified and updated throughout the plan implementation period. For more information, visit the Tacoma Culture web site at:

[www.tacomaculture.com](http://www.tacomaculture.com)



*The Tacoma Hotel in 1891 (Source: Tacoma Public Library)*