

**SMART GROWTH FOCUS AREA:
HISTORIC PRESERVATION POLICY WORKING GROUP**

**Draft Goals and Policies
September 19, 2011**

Purpose

The following Historic Preservation goals and policies are Tucson's guide for the preservation and rehabilitation of heritage resources to maintain and enhance Tucson's history and identity for generations to come, and to make use of them as tools for economic development, smart growth, and sustainable practices. Plan Tucson ensures that Tucson's heritage resources will be considered as part of the development of our community.

Historic Preservation is the process of identifying, evaluating, protecting, interpreting, and using resources from the past that represent a community's shared heritage. "*Heritage resources*" is a broad term that encompasses non-material culture (e.g., folklore, traditions, language, music, and knowledge), material culture (e.g., buildings, artifacts, structures, districts, and archaeological sites), and natural resources (e.g., culturally-significant landscapes, biodiversity). Heritage resources can provide a community with three-dimensional connections to the people and events that shaped its past, creating a unique sense of place and inspiring community pride, ownership and stewardship. The field of historic preservation focuses primarily on material *cultural resources*, which also referred to as *historic resources*.

GOAL 1: Leverage Tucson's heritage assets for economic development.

Our community's heritage resources distinguish it from other places, which is a major driver of Tucson's tourism economy. Preservation and promotion of local heritage assets can grow the local economy through *heritage-based* economic development, creating more jobs, increasing tax revenue, raising property values, and encouraging community reinvestment. The following policies help guide and determine present and future decisions to reach this goal:

1. a) Preserve Tucson's historic fabric and other heritage resources to distinguish our community from other places, increase quality of life for residents, and attract visitors and a highly skilled workforce.
1. b) Pursue heritage designations to boost heritage tourism in the region.
1. c) Support heritage businesses, heritage destinations, and annual heritage events, which reflect the multi-cultural history and distinctive living traditions of our community, and provide authentic experiences for heritage travelers.
1. d) Provide incentives for rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings, in order to stimulate private investment, create high-wage jobs, raise property values, increase City revenues, support tourism, spur revitalization of economically depressed areas, and stabilize the local economy during downturns.
1. e) Develop clear design guidelines and streamlined permitting processes for rehabilitations of historic buildings and compatible new developments in historic districts.
1. f) Prepare guidelines and incentives for preservation and enhancement of historic streetscapes.

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GOAL 2: Use historic preservation as a strategy in planning and decisions for Smart Growth and sustainability.

Preservation and “green” retrofitting of historic buildings can be a driver for sustainable development and smart growth because they inherently reduce waste, save energy, conserve materials, utilize existing infrastructure, and compliment density. Historic neighborhoods are often more walkable, are in close proximity to transit and bike routes, and use space efficiently. The following policies help guide and determine present and future decisions to reach this goal:

2. a) Identify and reduce any impediments in the Land Use Code, Building Code, and permitting processes that discourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
2. b) Develop tools in the Land Use Code, code-compliance options, and permit fee reductions to encourage investments in rehabilitation and compatible infill in historic districts, and to retrofit and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
2. c) Develop a demolition fee structure that increases fee according to the age and embodied energies of building to encourage retrofitting and reuse of existing building stock, reduce waste, and reinvest in existing neighborhoods and infrastructure.
2. d) Treat urban parks and community gardens as heritage resources and preserve them within and near historic districts.
2. e) Preserve and develop infrastructure for a variety of transportation modes within and near historic districts.
2. f) Prioritize retrofitting and adaptive reuse of existing City-owned buildings over new construction to preserve historic buildings and increase sustainability of City facilities.

GOAL 3: Use historic preservation as a strategy for neighborhood stabilization.

Preservation can create and maintain affordable housing, generate jobs, retain existing businesses and attract new ones. Historic designations can increase civic participation, lengthen duration of residence by owners and renters, stabilize property values, and strengthen a unique sense of place and identity. The following policies help guide and determine present and future decisions to reach this goal:

3. a) Assist low- to moderate-income neighborhoods and depressed commercial districts in their efforts to obtain historic designation from the National Register of Historic Places.
3. b) Create incentives for owner-occupants to invest in maintenance and retrofitting of historic dwellings.
3. c) Explore voluntary options to address adverse effects of gentrification in Tucson’s low- to moderate-income historic neighborhoods, such as displacement of long-time residents due to rising property values. Examples of existing options include reductions in mortgage costs through the Pima County Community Land Trust Program, and reductions in annual property taxes through the State Historic Property Tax Reclassification Program.
3. d) Increase awareness of historic property tax credits for owners of residential and commercial properties.
3. e) Include historic properties in the City’s programs and partnerships to develop affordable housing stock.

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GOAL 4: Proactively plan for preserving Tucson's historic and cultural resources.

A proactive approach to preservation planning can: increase the effectiveness of preservation activities; achieve fiscal efficiencies by ensuring compliance with regulations and improved management and maintenance of City-owned historic properties; and, ensure preservation is an integral element to smart growth and efforts to increase sustainability. The following policies help guide and determine present and future decisions to reach this goal:

4. a) Maintain City of Tucson's Certified Local Government (CLG) status to ensure continued eligibility for federal and state historic preservation funding, and local authority to make determinations of eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
4. b) Prepare a city-wide preservation plan for both privately- and publicly-owned historic and cultural resources, and update the plan on a regular basis.
4. c) Inventory publicly-owned historic, archaeological, and traditional cultural resources, develop maintenance schedules and protocols for them, and allocate funding for their preservation.
4. d) Develop resources, integrate new technologies and conduct public outreach to increase awareness of Tucson's heritage resources and their value to the community.
4. e) Identify revenue streams to support the City's historic preservation program and funding matches for private-sector historic preservation activities.
4. f) Simplify the process for owners of historic properties to voluntarily obtain City historic landmark designations.
4. g) Identify general areas of archaeological sensitivity to streamline required mitigation of impacts to archaeological resources.
4. h) Require other parties to mitigate impacts on historic, cultural, and archaeological resources in City Right-of-Ways.
4. i) Require owners to maintain their historic properties.
4. j) Allow use of the International Existing Building Code to allow rehabilitation of older buildings without losing character-defining historic features. *[NOTE: To be consulted with the Planning and Development Services Department].*

GOAL 5: Establish partnerships for preservation in the region.

Partnerships with other jurisdictions and community stakeholders with help identify common goals and develop balanced approaches for preservation. The following policies help guide and determine present and future decisions to reach this goal:

5. a) Work with other local jurisdictions to better align preservation policies within the region.
5. b) Work with non-government organizations, neighborhoods, developers, businesses, and other stakeholder groups to develop shared understandings and goals for historic preservation.
5. c) Find a balance between development and preservation in zoning changes and other decisions, to allow urban development and economic growth without losing the City's historic character and the community's visible connections with its past.
5. d) Identify areas in the city where the historic built environment should be preserved, as well as areas where redevelopment should be encouraged.