

MEMORANDUM



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To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

Date: December 6, 2022

From: Historic Resources Commission

Subject: **HISTORIC PRESERVATION WORK PROGRAM 2022-2023**

On April 7, 2020, planning staff presented a memorandum outlining a list of historic resources recommendations for City Council consideration. The City Council held a discussion and directed staff to return within 90 days and present a course of action for each Historic Resources Commission (HRC) recommendation based on Council's input.

On July 7, 2020, planning staff returned to the City Council and presented the implementation recommendations. After consideration, the City Council authorized staff to implement several of the recommendations, as outlined below:

Item	Status
<i>Immediate Measures</i>	
Amend Santa Ana Municipal Code (SAMC) to provide the HRC the authority to impose reasonable project approval conditions	Completed; Amendment to SAMC Chapter 30-6
Historically Sensitive Area (HSA) additions and/or demolitions to be flagged by staff	Completed
HRC Meeting Frequency from quarterly to six meetings a year	Completed
HRC Application fees, reduce to \$500 (historic listing) and \$2,500 (Mills Act)	Completed
<i>Mid-Term Measures</i>	
Adopt Historic Preservation Element	Completed (adopted April 2022)
Tree Preservation Ordinance	To be completed
Comprehensive Update to Existing Design Guidelines Affecting Historic Properties	To be completed
<i>Long-Term Measures</i>	
Establishing a local district designation program	To be completed as part of comprehensive Chapter 30 update

The above-listed actions from 2020 established a formal process for communication between the HRC and City Council through the memorandum. With that in mind, the HRC conducted follow up workshops with PBA staff in March and May 2022 to discuss a subsequent

memorandum to make recommendations to the City Council regarding establishing a formal Historic Preservation Work Program for 2022-2023.

During the 2022 workshops, the HRC discussed the existing work program and accomplishments, key staff initiatives, and HRC's work program recommendations. In addition, PBA staff outlined additional work program recommendations. Below is a summary of these items:

HRC RECOMMENDATIONS

- Expand historic program reach to recognize and identify importance of African American history and impacts in the City
- Create partnerships with Santa Ana History Room for the creation of digital archives to commemorate resident history
- Create partnerships with neighborhood associations to facilitate better community participation and engagement
- Create a specific website or "portal" that connects the general public with various historic resources (e.g., Heritage Museum of Orange County, Santa Ana Historic Preservation Society, Preserve Orange County, etc.)
- Use of plaques, monuments, and/or QR codes so residents can explore their own communities (e.g., maps of significant mural or public art locations, and significant points of historic)
- Presenting the City's history as a narrative at local parks
- Continued exploratory/history research on parts of South Main Street
- Clarify the Historic Preservation Awards process
- Historic preservation awards – begin to engage developer community to highlight historic significant projects
- Establish strategy for the creation of locally designated historic districts, as many neighborhoods have expressed strong interest
- Mills Act Program – strategize on how City can comply with State requirements (e.g., send letters to homeowners, reduce number of inspections, etc.)

PBA RECOMMENDATIONS

- Update Mills Act program to be in compliance with State requirements and to include new rehabilitation plan requirements
- Survey the total cost and time for updating Chapter 30 (Historic Ordinance), which was implemented in 1980 and last amended in 2003
- Develop roadmap of updates to historic ordinance, including identifying consultants that the City may want to consider to update the ordinance and program
- Hire additional full-time historic preservation staff
- Maintain conformance with Certified Local Government (CLG) requirements by establishing minimum qualifications for Historic Resources Commission. Requirements for all members include having demonstrated interest, competence, or knowledge in

historic preservation. At least two Commission members to be encouraged to be appointed from among professionals in the disciplines of history, architecture, architectural. Inclusion efforts should be undertaken to maintain a diverse Commission that is reflective of the City of Santa Ana.

As part of this memorandum, PBA staff is also highlighting implementation measures from the City's first standalone Historic Preservation Element. The element was adopted as part of the City's General Plan, which became effective May 2022. The purpose of the element is to provide guidance in developing and implementing City actions that ensure that identification, designation, and protection of architectural, historical, cultural, and archaeological City resources. PBA staff notes several overlaps between the HRC's and PBA's work program recommendations, listed below:

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

- **Development standards update.** Amend Specific Development No. 19 and Specific Development No. 40 zoning districts to streamline development processes, incorporate best practices, and make documents user friendly. – *Goal HP-1.1; PBA/2022-2027*
- **Design Guidelines update.** Comprehensively update Citywide Design Guidelines to reflect current best practices for sections related to Historic Structures and Downtown Santa Ana. – *Goal HP-1.4; PBA 2022-2027*
- **Historic resources survey.** Survey all City-owned historic resources to identify condition, maintenance and repair needs, and sources of funding for upgrades. – *Goal HP-1.6; PRCSA/PWA 2022*
- **Signage improvement.** Seek funding and create incentives program for Downtown Santa Ana façade and signage improvement program. – *Goal HP-1.8; CDA/2023*
- **Public awareness.** Promote awareness of the city's historic resources and their importance in the development of Orange County. – *Goal HP-2.4; PBA/ongoing*
- **City branding.** Include historic resources and cultural imagery in future City branding and marketing campaigns. – *Goal HP-2.2; CMO/2025 ongoing*
- **Historic properties.** Update and expand citywide Historic Properties Survey Program to identify potential historic resources for placement on local Register and those that are at risk of losing their historic value, with the first phase to include resource evaluation of the Focus Areas. – *Goal HP-3.2; PBA/2022 and ongoing*
- **Historical places.** Proactively nominate all properties that potentially qualify for placement on the Santa Ana Register of Historical Places. – *Goal HP-3.3; PBA/2024*
- **Community engagement.** Prepare a community engagement plan that targets communities with historic resources that have low participation rates in historic preservation programs including hard to reach communities and affiliated tribes listed with the California Native American Heritage Commission. – *Goal HP-3.4; PBA/2023*
- **Historic Resources Commission.** Establish minimum qualifications for participation on the Historic Resources Commission – *Goal HP-3.6; PBA/2023*
- **Equitable access.** Establish a fee reduction or waiver program for low-income applicants to ensure equitable access and participation in the Mills Act Program. – *Goal HP-3.8; PBA/2023*

The above-mentioned program recommendations provided by the HRC and PBA staff are consistent with the City's established goals and policies as part of the Historic Preservation Element. The work program recommendations can be organized into three historic preservation goals listed in Historic Preservation Element and below:

HP-1: Historic Areas and Resources

Preserve and enhance Santa Ana's historic areas and resources to maintain a unique sense of place.

HP-2: Cultural and Historic Resources

Promote the City's cultural and historic resources to advance Santa Ana's role in Southern California history.

HP-3: Historic Preservation

Develop, implement, and maintain a nationally recognized historic preservation program.

In establishing measurable work program actions and timelines, PBA staff will look to the established goals, policies, and implementation measures in the Historic Preservation Element, as well as the HRC's goals and recommendations. Some of the work programs discussed are procedural and administrative in nature and can be addressed by the HRC and staff. However, other work program items/topics require direction and feedback from the City Council.

RECOMMENDATION

The HRC is requesting the City Council to consider and provide directions to staff to proceed with initiating the process to implement the Historic Preservation Work Program for 2022-2023, and implement the above work program recommendations.



Tim Rush, Chairperson