3. Historic Preservation

Goals

- Significant historical resources are identified, preserved and celebrated as part of Mid-City's evolving community fabric.
- Educational opportunities and incentives support the ongoing maintenance and preservation of historic resources.

Vision

This Community Plan envisions a quality built environment that celebrates significant and important historical resources and balances historic preservation with new development. The built and natural environment can be enriched by the identification and preservation of significant and important historical resources within the Mid-City communities.

Introduction

The General Plan guides historic preservation for the preservation, protection, restoration, and rehabilitation of historical and cultural resources throughout the city. This chapter provides a summary of the prehistory and history of the Mid-City Communities and establishes policies to support the identification and preservation of their historical, archaeological and tribal cultural resources. More detailed historical narratives are provided within a Historic Context Statement and Focused Reconnaissance Survey, which were prepared to assist property owners, developers, consultants, community members, and City staff in the identification and preservation of historical resources within the Mid-City communities.

Pre-Historic and Historic Context

The prehistoric context briefly describes the known cultural traditions and settlement patterns of the prehistoric and early historic periods. The historic context provides a broad-brush historical overview of the overarching forces that have shaped land use patterns and development of the built environment within the Mid-City communities during the historic period.

Tribal Cultural History (Pre-European Contact)

Tribal cultural history is reflected in the history, beliefs and legends retained in songs and stories passed down through generations within Native American tribes. There is also an ethnohistoric period of events, traditional cultural practices and spiritual beliefs of indigenous peoples recorded from the post-European contact era. The traditional origin belief of the Yuman-speaking peoples in Southern California reflects a cosmology that includes aspects of a mother earth

and father sky, and religious rituals were tied to specific sacred locations. A prehistoric material culture is contained in the archaeological record and reflects subsistence practices and settlement patterns over several prehistoric periods spanning the last 10,000 years. Native American aboriginal lifeways did not cease at European contact. Two indigenous groups are described from the ethnohistoric period as inhabiting San Diego County: the Luiseño and the Kumeyaay.

The present-day boundaries of the City of San Diego, including the Mid-City communities, are part of the ancestral homeland and unceded territory of the Yuman-speaking Kumeyaay, which stretched approximately from the Pacific Ocean to the west, El Centro to the east, Escondido to the north, and the northern part of Baja California, Mexico to the south. The Kumeyaay traditionally lived in small, semi-permanent, politically autonomous seasonal camping spots or villages, often located near local springs and water sources. Larger villages were located in river valleys and along the shoreline of coastal estuaries. Houses were typically made with tule of California bulrush. Subsistence cycles were seasonal and generally focused on an east-west or coast-to-desert route based around the availability of vegetal foods, while hunting and shellfish harvesting added a secondary food source to gathering practices. The Kumeyaay migrated to the mountains during certain seasons of the year to harvest acorns and grain grasses, as well as to trade with neighboring tribes to the east. Within the Mid-City area, prehistoric travel and use corridors followed natural waterways, including routes through Alvarado Canyon that later informed the alignment of present-day Interstate 8 along the northern edge of Normal Heights and Kensington–Talmadge. Chollas Creek also functioned as a significant transportation and settlement corridor, supporting seasonal encampments from inland areas to San Diego Bay, underscoring the creek's long-standing cultural and environmental importance.

Estimates for the population of the Kumeyaay vary substantially: Scholars speculate anywhere from 3,000 to 19,000 people lived in the region prior to the establishment of the Spanish missions in 1769. However, by the mid-nineteenth century, the Kumeyaay population had dwindled to a few thousand, with many living on reservation lands. Today, Kumeyaay tribal members within the United States are divided into twelve federally recognized bands: Barona, Campo, Ewiiaapaayp, Inaja-Cosmit, Jamul, La Posta, Manzanita, Mesa Grande, San Pasqual, Santa Ysabel, Sycuan, and Viejas. An additional San Diego County band, the Kwaaymii Laguna Band of Indians, is not currently federally recognized. Several more Kumeyaay communities are present in Mexico. The Kumeyaay have a continued presence in the San Diego community and advocate for the stewardship, protection, and repatriation of tribal cultural resources, history, and ancestral lands.

Early San Diego History

The division of land, creation of plans and associated settlements in San Diego began with the establishment of the Franciscan mission and the Spanish Presidio of San Diego in 1769. Although Spanish explorer Juan Cabrillo landed in San Diego in 1542, colonization began in 1769 with the onset of European settlement. An expedition led by Gaspar de Portola and Father Junipero Serra established a presidio and the first Mission San Diego de Alcalá, the first in the chain of 21 missions in Alta California. The site was located near the Kumeyaay village of Cosoy on what is known as Presidio Hill in present-day Old Town San Diego. The mission, the presidio, along with the pueblo, encompassed the three major institutions used by Spain to extend its borders and consolidate its colonial territories. The mission settlements were founded to assimilate the indigenous populations into Spanish culture and the Catholic religion and relied on the forced labor of Native Americans. In 1774, the mission was relocated eastward to its present-day location in Mission Valley.

Mission grazing lands extended across more than 58,000 acres, including much of what is now Mid-City, shaping early land use as open range rather than permanent settlement.

Following Mexican independence in 1821, the mission system declined, and church lands were secularized and redistributed as large ranchos. One of the largest, the Ex-Mission Rancho de San Diego de Alcalá, encompassed much of eastern San Diego, including the present-day Mid-City Communities area, and continued to be used primarily for cattle grazing with few permanent structures.

After the United States assumed control of California in 1848, San Diego remained a small frontier settlement for several decades. Development shifted south from Old Town in the late 1860s with the establishment of Horton's Addition, which became the city's new commercial center. The Ex-Mission Rancho lands, located well east of early urban development, remained largely rural and under the ownership of the Argüello family until their title was legally confirmed in 1876. This confirmation enabled the subdivision and sale of rancho lands in the late nineteenth century, marking the beginning of Mid-City's transition from open grazing land to future residential and urban development.

Historic Development Themes

The Mid-City's history is encapsulated by the following development periods and themes.

Beginnings of Mid-City (1885-1915)

Early Development of Streetcar Suburbs (1885-1915)

Between 1885 and 1915, the earliest development of the Mid-City area occurred slowly and unevenly, shaped largely by late-19th century railroad expansion, streetcar speculation, efforts to extend water infrastructure east of downtown San Diego, and speculative real estate investment.

The completion of transcontinental rail connections in 1885 transformed San Diego from a small waterfront town into a rapidly growing city. Population surged dramatically, and speculative land development quickly followed. At the same time, the introduction of streetcar systems in 1886 allowed expansion beyond downtown. Developers relied heavily on streetcar lines to attract buyers to new subdivisions, making transportation access essential to growth. Water infrastructure was equally critical, but less reliable. The San Diego Flume Company attempted to supply water to the eastern areas of San Diego via a 37-mile flume from the Cuyamaca Mountains. While this enabled subdivisions like La Mesa Colony (1887), inconsistent water delivery and drought undermined agricultural success and settlement. Many early developments subsequently failed to thrive due to unreliable water and limited infrastructure. Subdivisions such as Teralta (1887), City Heights (1893), and later Normal Heights (1906) were mapped during land booms but saw little immediate construction. These projects were often speculative, promising future transit and utilities that were delayed or never realized. For example, Teralta was planned along El Cajon Boulevard with proposed streetcar service, but development remained minimal for decades.

Transportation ventures themselves were unstable. Early streetcar and rail systems, including the Electric Rapid Transit Company and the Park Belt Motor Line (1887–1889), struggled and often failed. Still, they established a key pattern: real estate development depended on the promise of transit access. This relationship was later stabilized when John D. Spreckels consolidated failing lines into the San Diego Electric Railway in 1892, expanding electric streetcar service in the early 20th century.

By the 1900s, gradual improvements in both the streetcar and water systems began to support modest growth. Projects like the Chollas Heights Reservoir (completed before 1912) reflected efforts to secure reliable water. Meanwhile, streetcar extensions along Adams Avenue and University Avenue (from 1907 onward) finally connected emerging neighborhoods like Normal Heights and City Heights to the urban core, encouraging settlement.

Even so, development remained slow. In 1910, Normal Heights had only about 810 residents, primarily working-class migrants. City Heights development increased slightly after streetcar expansion, aided by marketing efforts like observation towers to attract buyers.

The 1915 Panama–California Exposition spurred citywide infrastructure improvements and national attention, but the Mid-City communities saw limited immediate impact. Instead, El Cajon Boulevard emerged as an automobile transportation corridor, especially after San Diego won a 1912 route decision for a transcontinental highway. This increased visibility of the eastern mesas and laid the groundwork for future growth.

Kensington Park (1910) marked a shift toward more successful suburban development. Designed as an upscale,

streetcar-connected neighborhood, it attracted middle and upper-class residents and saw significant construction by 1915. Its design also foreshadowed a transition in the 1920s from streetcar suburbs to automobile-oriented communities with more controlled land use.

Early development in Mid-City was characterized by speculative planning, limited infrastructure reliability, and slow population growth. While early efforts often failed or stalled, they established transportation corridors, subdivision patterns, and infrastructure systems that enabled more substantial development in the decades that followed.

Growth of Mid-City (1915-1984)

The Independent City of East San Diego (1912-1923)

The City of East San Diego was incorporated in 1912 in what is now City Heights and parts of Kensington–Talmadge, following modest growth spurred by speculative subdivision and the extension of streetcar lines in 1907. After San Diego declined annexation due to service limitations, residents incorporated under the Municipalities Act. The new city of East San Diego rapidly established municipal services and civic institutions, while the Progress & Prosperity Club promoted development, improved streets, and attracted residents. The paving of El Cajon Boulevard in 1915 strengthened connections to San Diego, and by the early 1920s, East San Diego claimed several thousand residents.

East San Diego's commercial center developed at University and Fairmount Avenues, with small, one-story commercial buildings, civic facilities, and religious institutions. Residential construction increased after incorporation, though agricultural and orchard uses remained common, reflecting the area's transitional character. Subdivision efforts by developers such as the Pacific Building Company expanded platted areas, but development remained uneven and largely concentrated in northern portions of today's City Heights.

Persistent difficulties in funding and maintaining infrastructure, including water, sewers, and street paving, ultimately led residents to support annexation by the City of San Diego in 1923. Municipal functions were absorbed into the City of San Diego, streets were renamed and renumbered, and East San Diego ceased to exist as an independent municipality.

Residence Parks & Speculative Residential Development (1915-1945)

Between 1915 and 1945, development in the Mid-City communities shifted from scattered, infrastructure-dependent growth to more organized suburban expansion, particularly in Normal Heights, Kensington-Talmadge, and northern City Heights. While some eastern areas saw limited progress until the late 1930s, the broader region became part of San Diego's eastward expansion, often referred to as "Greater San Diego," marked by a series of annexations between 1923 and the early 1950s.

Following World War I, national prosperity and returning soldiers created renewed housing demand. The Better Homes Movement of the 1920s promoted homeownership and shaped suburban ideals centered on single-family houses, influencing both public perception and development practices. Subdivisions established during this period, such as Kensington, Talmadge, Oak Park and Islenair, were marketed to middle-class families with promises of healthy living, automobile access, and long-term investment value.

Despite this optimism, development in Mid-City remained gradual through the 1920s and 1930s. In communities like Normal Heights and City Heights, growth occurred primarily through piecemeal infill rather than cohesive planning. Neighborhoods in these communities developed a mixed architectural character, with homes from different decades interspersed. Their grid street patterns and rear alleys allowed incremental densification, including secondary dwelling units, a pattern that began early and continued over time. In contrast, newer subdivisions, especially in Kensington and Talmadge, followed the "residence park" model popular in the 1920s. Neighborhoods in these communities featured curving streets adapted to natural topography, landscaped entrances, and controlled design elements. Homes were typically single-family residences with garages, reflecting the increasing importance of the automobile. These areas also employed deed restrictions and racial covenants that excluded people of color, reflecting broader discriminatory housing practices of the era.

Government policies in the 1930s further shaped development patterns. San Diego's zoning system designated areas for varying residential densities, reinforcing existing trends of both single-family and multi-family housing. At the same time, federal programs such as those of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) and Federal Housing Administration (FHA) influenced where and how development occurred. HOLC's neighborhood grading system, based partly on racial and socioeconomic factors, restricted access to financing in lower-rated areas—a practice known as redlining. As a result, racially diverse and working-class neighborhoods in Mid-City faced disinvestment, while higher-rated areas benefited from easier access to loans and new construction.

FHA standards also shaped housing design, promoting modest, efficient homes that became known as the Minimal Traditional style, common during the Depression and World War II years. Subdivisions that secured FHA approval, such as Rolando Village and El Cerrito Heights, had a significant advantage, even if development initially lagged. By the late 1930s, some of these areas began to build momentum, with rapid increases in home construction just before World War II.

Commercial & Transportation Development (1915-1945)

From 1915 to 1945, commercial development in Mid-City emerged gradually in response to residential growth and changing transportation patterns. Early commercial activity in the 1920s was limited and uneven, with small clusters of businesses along major corridors such as Adams Avenue, University Avenue, and El Cajon Boulevard. Sanborn maps from 1920 show that many parcels along these streets remained vacant or residential.

Zoning regulations adopted in the 1930s reinforced existing development patterns by concentrating commercial uses along established corridors, particularly the east–west routes. Although automobile use increased during this period, streetcars continued to play an important role. The expansion of the streetcar system in the 1930s improved connectivity to downtown and other parts of the city, with service continuing until 1949.

Normal Heights became a key center of early commercial development, largely due to the efforts of developer Bertram Carteri. Beginning in the early 1920s, Carteri established "Carteri Center" along Adams Avenue, creating a mixed-use commercial district that included a theater, bank, retail stores, offices, and automotive services. These provided essential services to a growing residential population and helped define Adams Avenue as the neighborhood's commercial core. Additional developments, such as the Wilkinson Block, reinforced the area's role as a business hub.

Carteri's vision helped catalyze commercial growth, though his reliance on debt led to financial collapse during the Great Depression. Despite this setback, the commercial foundation he established persisted. By 1940, Adams Avenue showed moderate growth, with an increasing number of businesses, including a notable rise in automobile-related services, reflecting broader transportation shifts from streetcars to automobiles.

University Avenue in City Heights developed as another commercial corridor, building on its earlier role as the business center of East San Diego. By 1930, it supported a wide range of businesses, and growth continued steadily through 1940. Notable developments near Euclid Avenue included distinctive architectural landmarks such as the Egyptian Garage, Euclid Tower, and the Silverado Ballroom. These projects contributed to the emergence of a defined commercial node known as "Euclid Center," supported by local business organizations seeking to promote the area.

El Cajon Boulevard became increasingly significant during this period as transportation patterns shifted toward automobile travel. Designated as part of U.S. Highway 80 in 1926, it evolved into a major east–west route and a key corridor into San Diego. This designation encouraged automobile-oriented commercial development, including gas stations, repair shops, and tourist accommodations. However, growth remained uneven, with most early development concentrated in western sections of the Mid-City communities, while eastern portions lagged.

By the late 1930s, improvements such as paving, widening, and renaming El Cajon Boulevard reinforced its role as a major automobile transportation corridor. Commercial activity expanded rapidly during this time, particularly in automobile-related services, which multiplied to serve increasing numbers of travelers. Auto courts and roadside businesses reflected the growing dominance of car travel and marked a clear shift away from the earlier streetcar-based development model.

Post-World War II Commercial & Automobile-Related Development (1945-1984)

Following World War II, Mid-City's commercial corridors evolved gradually as automobile use and suburban growth shaped new development. Existing commercial areas along Adams Avenue, El Cajon Boulevard, and University Avenue were incrementally built out through infill development, while larger-scale developments appeared in areas with more available land, particularly in the eastern portion of the Mid-City communities. Buildings were increasingly set back with surface parking, drive-throughs, and large signs, especially along El Cajon Boulevard, which became known for motels, drive-ins, and automobile-oriented businesses. Newer streets within the Eastern Area, such as 54th Street, College Avenue and the extension of University Avenue, were designed for automobiles. Meanwhile, Adams Avenue changed less, maintaining a fine-grained, neighborhood-focused character.

The rise of shopping centers marked a significant shift in commercial development. With increasing car ownership and suburban expansion, strip malls and large retail complexes became prominent, especially in less developed eastern areas. The opening of College Grove Shopping Center in 1960, the city's first open-air mall, illustrated this trend, offering a large-scale, automobile-accessible retail environment. Additional centers, such as University Square and Campus Plaza, further reflected this shift toward centralized, car-oriented shopping destinations.

At the same time, the expansion of the regional highway system had a profound impact on the development of Mid-City. The construction of major freeways, including Interstate 8, State Route 94, and later Interstate 805 and State Route 15, reinforced neighborhood boundaries but also disrupted existing communities. These freeways often followed canyon topography but created physical barriers between neighborhoods, particularly in City Heights, with the construction of State Route 15.

The rerouting of traffic from El Cajon Boulevard to newer freeways reduced the corridor's role as a regional route. As a result, many businesses, such as motels and repair shops, declined over time. Meanwhile, freeway construction also led to displacement and long-term disinvestment in affected areas. In City Heights, planned highway routes resulted in demolition, vacancy, and population shifts.

Community responses emerged to address these challenges. Local organizations advocated for neighborhood

improvements, created community spaces, and pushed for mitigating benefits tied to infrastructure projects. Efforts to preserve connectivity and community identity included parks, pedestrian infrastructure, and transit improvements, reflecting a growing emphasis on local resilience.

Post-World War II Residential Development (1945-1984)

After World War II, the Mid-City communities experienced rapid residential growth driven by severe housing demand, population growth, and large-scale suburban construction. Development followed two main patterns: large-scale single-family tract housing in the previously undeveloped Eastern Area and southern City Heights, and infill construction in established neighborhoods such as Normal Heights, Kensington-Talmadge, and northern City Heights.

In the immediate postwar years, San Diego experienced intense population growth, fueled in part by returning servicemen. Established neighborhoods quickly filled in, with nearly all remaining vacant lots developed by the early 1950s. Areas that had been subdivided earlier but left largely undeveloped, such as Rolando Heights, were rapidly built out and eventually annexed into the city. This marked the completion of the Mid-City communities' incorporation into San Diego and signaled a shift toward developing more challenging and previously inaccessible Eastern Area and southern City Heights.

To meet overwhelming housing demand, developers adopted new large-scale tract housing models supported by federal programs. Unlike prewar patterns, where individuals purchased lots and built custom homes, postwar developers constructed entire neighborhoods of standardized houses using stock plans. Between 1946 and 1960, subdivision activity surged dramatically, with over 140 new subdivision maps filed in the Mid-City communities, primarily in the Eastern Area.

Infrastructure improvements were essential to this expansion. Street grading, canyon crossings, and new connections, such as those in the Ridgeview area, enabled development in previously inaccessible terrain. In some cases, unconventional housing solutions briefly emerged, such as the conversion of decommissioned streetcars into residences, highlighting the urgency of the housing shortage.

Alongside single-family housing, multi-family residential development grew significantly, particularly from the 1950s onward. By the early 1960s, multi-family units accounted for a large majority of new housing in Mid-City, far exceeding citywide averages.

Patterns of density varied across the area. In established neighborhoods like northern City Heights, densification often involved replacing single-family homes with apartment buildings or adding secondary units on existing lots. In less developed southern areas, multiple smaller dwellings were sometimes built on single parcels rather than large apartment complexes. These patterns reflected both zoning regulations and market conditions, with higher-density

development concentrated near transit and commercial corridors.

By the 1960s through the 1980s, as available land diminished, development shifted toward smaller infill projects and more complex sites, including hillside and edge locations. Examples include gated communities, duplex clusters, and apartment complexes built into challenging terrain. This period also saw continued replacement of older housing with higher-density units, especially in City Heights, reinforcing its role as one of the most densely populated parts of the Mid-City communities.

Civic & Institutional Development (1975-1984)

Civic and institutional development in the Mid-City communities closely followed residential and commercial growth from the early 20th century through the postwar period. As neighborhoods expanded and were annexed into the City of San Diego, essential public services such as schools, libraries, police and fire stations, and post offices were established to meet community needs. Local improvement associations and booster groups, particularly in City Heights and Normal Heights, played a critical role in advocating for these facilities, laying the foundation for later neighborhood organizations and community development corporations.

Schools and libraries expanded steadily in response to population growth, with early facilities established in the 1910s–1930s and significant post-World War II expansion in the Eastern Area to serve growing families. Religious institutions, medical facilities, and recreational amenities also developed alongside housing, often on larger parcels in less-developed areas. Major civic assets such as Colina del Sol Park, Chollas Lake Park, community centers, and later community gardens and Teralta Park reflect both planned investment and grassroots responses to freeway impacts. Together, these civic and institutional resources reflect both top-down planning and sustained community advocacy that shaped the social and physical landscape of the Mid-City communities through 1984.

Immigration to Mid-City (1975-1990s)

Immigration to Mid-City (1975-1900s)

From the 1970s onward, the Mid-City communities, particularly City Heights, became a key settlement area for immigrants due to its dense and affordable housing, strong transit access, and proximity to resettlement and social services. Following the Vietnam War and the Fall of Saigon in 1975, Vietnamese refugees were the first major group to arrive, followed by immigrants from Cambodia and Laos. Although federal policy initially promoted dispersal, local volunteer resettlement agencies helped establish stable communities in City Heights, Talmadge, and nearby neighborhoods.

Disinvestment, suburbanization, and uncertainty related to the construction of State Route 15 lowered housing costs and increased availability, creating opportunities for new

arrivals and leading City Heights to be known as the "Ellis Island of San Diego." Over time, Asian-owned businesses, markets, and restaurants, along with churches and Buddhist temples, formed cultural and commercial corridors along University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard, anchoring these communities and shaping the neighborhood's identity.

In the late 1980s,1990s and continuing into the early twentieth century (outside of the period of study), Mid-City also became home to East African immigrants and refugees from Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, and Sudan, driven by civil conflict in their home countries. Many settled in City Heights, benefiting from established housing patterns and support networks. Alongside growing Central American and Latino populations, these groups reinforced City Heights' role as a diverse, resilient, and welcoming community for immigrants.

In addition to physical spaces, the intangible traditions, cultural practices, celebrations, and recurring cultural events of each group within City Heights reinforce the strength and resilience of its immigrant communities. The Little Saigon Cultural and Commercial District, which encompasses El Cajon Boulevard from Highland Avenue to Euclid Avenue, was established by a resolution of the San Diego City Council in 2013 in recognition of the district's cultural vibrancy and its significance as the heart of the local Asian community. Similarly, the concentration of Somali residents within the Mid-City communities has led to the informal designation "Little Mogadishu," reflected in the area's mosques, community centers, gardens, and cultural traditions. This identity is now supported by many community members who are advocating for its official recognition as a Somali Town Cultural District. Additional information on existing and proposed cultural districts is discussed in greater detail in the Urban Design chapter, specifically in the Cultural Districts section.

Resource Identification and Preservation

A Historic Context Statement, Focused Reconnaissance Survey, and Cultural Resources Report were prepared during the process of updating this Community Plan.

The Historic Context Statement provides information regarding the significant historical themes in the development of the Mid-City communities and the property types associated with those themes. The Historic Context Statement aids City staff, property owners, developers, and community members in the future identification, evaluation, and preservation of significant historical resources in the community.

The 2025 Mid-City Focused Reconnaissance Survey evaluated previously identified and newly emerging areas of shared development history, post-WWII master-planned communities, and key commercial corridor properties to determine potential historic significance and guide future, more intensive preservation efforts.

As of April 2025, Mid-City is home to one National Register historic district, the Talmadge Park Estates Historic District,

and two local historic districts, Islenair and Talmadge Gates, with 130 individual designated historic resources present in the Mid-City communities.

The focused reconnaissance survey identified four new potential historic districts, including two residential districts in the Kensington area (Kensington Manor and Heights, Kensington Park) one residential district in the Talmadge area (Talmadge Park), and one commercial district in Normal Heights on Adams Avenue (Carteri Center).

In addition to potentially significant historic districts, the survey identified areas of shared development history that are recommended for exemption from historic review under the City's potential historic resource review of all properties 45 years old or older.

Fourteen Master Planned Communities developed in the post-World War II period that share development history and design characteristics without notable builders or architects were identified for exemption consideration. Through the public outreach and comment period, a study list was also created for individual properties and areas within the Mid-City communities. These properties were recommended for further study from members of the public or working groups. More detailed information can be found in the technical documents.

The cultural resources report describes the tribal cultural history (pre-contact, protohistoric and pre-history) in the community, identifies significant archaeological resources at a broad level, guides the identification of possible new resources, and includes recommendations for proper treatment. These documents have been used to inform the policies and recommendations of the Community Plan and the associated environmental analysis.

Educational Opportunities and Incentives

Revitalization and adaptive reuse of historic buildings and districts conserves resources, uses existing infrastructure, generates local jobs and purchasing, supports small business development and heritage tourism and enhances quality of life and community character.

The successful implementation of a historic preservation program requires widespread community support. In order to better inform and educate the public on the merits of historic preservation, information on the resources themselves, as well as the purpose and objectives of the preservation program, must be developed and widely distributed.

There are a number of incentives available to owners of historic resources to assist with the revitalization and adaptive reuse of historic buildings and districts.

The California State Historic Building Code provides flexibility in meeting building code requirements for historically designated buildings.

The City of San Diego supports adaptive reuse of historical resources, with most adaptive reuse projects approved with

a simple building permit application. In instances where the proposed use is not allowed by the underlying zoning, Conditional Use Permits are available to allow adaptive reuse of historic structures consistent with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards and public health and safety requirements.

The Mills Act, which is a highly successful incentive, can provide property tax relief to owners to help rehabilitate and maintain designated historical resources. Other incentives to owners of historical resources include State and Federal tax credits for resources listed on the State and/or National Registers.

Additional incentives recommended in the General Plan, including an architectural assistance program, are being developed and may become available in the future.

In addition to direct incentives to owners of designated historical resources, all members of the community enjoy the benefits of historic preservation through reinvestment of individual property tax savings into historical properties, a unique and varied urban landscape that reflects the history and unique qualities of the community, and an increased historic tourism economy.

There is great opportunity to build on the existing local patronage and tourism base drawn to the community's neighborhoods and shopping districts by highlighting and celebrating the rich history of the Mid-City communities. In addition to the General Plan Historic Preservation Element Policies, the following recommendations are specific to the Mid-City communities for implementation of educational opportunities and incentives for preservation of the community's historical resources.

Policies

Archaeological and Tribal Cultural Resources

3.1 Conduct Native American tribal consultation to ensure culturally appropriate and adequate treatment and mitigation for significant archaeological sites with cultural or religious significance to the Native American community in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations and guidelines.

3.2 Conduct project specific investigations in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations to identify potentially significant tribal cultural and archaeological resources.

3.3 Avoid adverse impacts to significant archaeological and tribal cultural resources identified within development project sites and implement measures to protect the resources from future disturbance to the extent feasible.

3.4 Ensure measures are taken to minimize adverse impacts and are performed under the supervision of a qualified archaeologist and a Native American

monitor if archaeological and tribal cultural resources cannot be entirely avoided.

3.5 Consider eligible for listing on the City's Historical Resources Register any significant archaeological or Native American tribal cultural sites that may be identified as part of future development within the Mid-City area and refer sites for designation as appropriate.

Historic Resources

3.6 Identify and evaluate properties and districts within the Mid-City Communities for potential historic significance, and refer resources found to be potentially eligible to the Historical Resources Board for designation, as appropriate. Consideration should be given to the properties identified in the Study List contained in the Mid-City Focused Reconnaissance Survey and Historic Context Statement.

3.7 Highlight and celebrate the diverse stories and lived experiences of Mid-City Communities' residents by emphasizing inclusive narratives that reflect the contributions of immigrant communities, workers, families, and cultural institutions.

3.8 Facilitate outreach to identify and designate cultural and historic sites in marginalized communities, promoting the use of incentives and assistance programs to preserve community and cultural history.

3.9 Provide opportunities for community members to identify properties, both extant and non-extant, that possess significance for social or cultural reasons.

3.10 Promote the adaptive reuse of historic and older buildings, especially along redeveloping commercial corridors and within older neighborhoods.

3.11 Complete an intensive historic survey of the community based upon the Historic Context Statement and Focused Reconnaissance Survey.

3.12 Facilitate context-sensitive infill development within designated historical districts through the implementation of objective design standards based on the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Education and Interpretation

3.13 Promote opportunities for education and interpretation of the Mid-City Communities' diverse history and historic resources through mobile technology; brochures; walking tours; interpretative signage, markers, displays, exhibits; and art.

3.14 Partner with local community organizations to provide opportunities for education and interpretation of the Mid-City communities' diverse history.