



## 7. Historic Resources Element

### Introduction

The purpose of incorporating a Historic Resources Element into the General Plan is to provide the basis for enabling legislation and policy guidance that will allow the City of Yorba Linda to effectively preserve, enhance and maintain buildings, sites and areas which have been deemed architecturally and/or historically significant. This is important in Yorba Linda because the city contains many individual properties and several neighborhoods that are associated with the city's cultural and architectural values and which cannot be replaced if demolished, altered, or neglected.



### Authority and Scope

The authorization to prepare a Historic Resources Element and the scope of such an element are contained in Section 65303 of the California Government Code which states:

*The general plan may include any other elements or address any other subjects which, in the judgment of the legislative body, relate to the physical development of the county or city.*

In many cities throughout the State, communities have turned to historic preservation, adaptive reuse, and compatible design controls to strengthen their economies and enhance their city's attraction to residents, tourists and visitors. The benefits associated with including historic preservation as an integral element of the City's General Plan include social, aesthetic, and economic benefits.

The social benefits of historic preservation are expressed as increased awareness in the physical and cultural heritage of Yorba Linda and increased community pride in the city's early built environment. Enthusiasm and popular interest in the community's past can sustain a recognizable identity for Yorba Linda as a source of civic pride and identity, as well as reinforce the city's historic character as a "small town" amidst modern development.

The aesthetic benefits of historic preservation are realized by the protection of architecturally significant buildings and neighborhoods which provide unique visual interest within the community. The retention, rehabilitation, and enhancement of architectural landmarks and districts can ensure that Yorba Linda remains an aesthetically attractive place to live, work, and visit as it continues to grow and develop. The aesthetic benefits of historic preservation are the most tangible of all its benefits.



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The economic benefits of historic preservation may occur at the community level and at the level of individual property owners. Recognition and promotion of landmarks and districts by the community can have the effect of stimulating economic growth in a previously stagnant area. General increases in property values and tax revenues can result. Financial incentives that can be realized by individual property owners include tax savings, rehabilitation grants, and building code alternatives for historic properties. Other economic benefits are realized by construction and related work that is involved in rehabilitating and adapting older buildings to newer uses, rather than demolishing and rebuilding with new construction. Rehabilitation generally requires fewer materials and it employs more labor than new construction. In an era of diminishing material resources and rising building costs, the rehabilitation and restoration of older buildings is a practical alternative to demolition and new construction. Historic preservation inherently promotes sustainable development and economic well-being.

A Historic Resources Element outlines goals, objectives, and implementation measures that are adopted by the community as priorities within the broader context of community planning and development. A Historic Resources Element lays the groundwork for a comprehensive historic preservation ordinance. This ordinance will ensure the City's commitment to an enforceable preservation program.

### Background

The following section is a very brief history of the physical development of the City of Yorba Linda. This section provides a general overview of the historical themes, periods, and patterns of development that occurred in Yorba Linda. This section is not a comprehensive overview of the history of the city, nor is it intended to be used as a framework for conducting research or identifying and evaluating historical properties located within the city. Rather, it is intended to convey a broad sense of the historical character of Yorba Linda.



### *Historical Overview of Yorba Linda*

Yorba Linda is a postwar residential community of suburban character that originated as a small farm town in the early 1900s. The land that was to become Yorba Linda was occupied by Gabrielino Indians, who were named for their later association with the San Gabriel Arcángel Mission. Following arrival of Europeans, the area was lightly settled by Spanish and Mexican settlers in the late eighteenth century and nineteenth century. The earliest efforts to urbanize the area for rural agricultural development occurred under U.S. governance in the late 1800s, but failed largely due to a lack of potable water.



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In 1909, a tract map of the new town of Yorba Linda was completed. That same year, the Yorba Linda Water Company was formed in order to create a new irrigation system. This increased agricultural productivity in the area and it also attracted new settlers. Furthermore, a Pacific Electric Railway line was extended from Los Angeles to Yorba Linda in 1911; the establishment of a passenger and freight depot in 1912 solidified the new town's identity as a growing urban center within a farming region. The core of the town was created by the late 1910s, with a small commercial downtown concentrated primarily along Main Street and residential development found in small tracts around downtown. The young community was enhanced by social and cultural institutions located in downtown such as the Yorba Linda School, the Friends Church, the Masonic Lodge, and a library.

In the 1910s, with available water and relatively inexpensive land, residents of Yorba Linda and its surrounding area became great producers of citrus and avocados. These flourishing agricultural industries sustained the small farming town throughout the first half of the twentieth century, despite setbacks during the Great Depression and World War II. Urban development was slow during this period of time as the town's population increased gradually and residential neighborhoods expanded house-by-house around the downtown core. In the late 1930s, the Imperial Highway was constructed between Hawthorne/Inglewood and Yorba Linda, which essentially opened up Yorba Linda to Los Angeles County. This set the stage for increased commercial and residential development in Yorba Linda following the end of World War II in 1945.

During the postwar period, a construction boom occurred in California due to a statewide housing shortage. This boom transformed a number of farming towns into suburbs, including Yorba Linda. Beginning in the 1950s, the orchards began to give way to residential and commercial developments leading to the town's incorporation in 1967. A year prior to incorporation in 1967, the Yorba Linda Citrus Association packing house closed after over 50 years of operation; this essentially signaled the end of the citrus industry in Yorba Linda. Between 1957 and the mid-1960s, nearly 2,000 homes were constructed. Thus the town transitioned from a rural farming town into a suburban residential community. The postwar development of Yorba Linda also reflected the growing popularity of automobiles. Construction of new highways coincided with creation of automobile-friendly shopping centers in outlying areas and a gradual shift of businesses away from the traditional downtown core.

During the 1970s, continued population growth prompted the city to extend its boundaries. By 1980, the city had annexed over 10,000 acres. The city of Yorba Linda also made efforts to revitalize its downtown by physically improving its streetscapes during the late 1970s. In 1990, the Richard Nixon Library was established at the birthplace of the former president at the northeast corner of Yorba Linda Boulevard and Eureka Avenue. During the early twenty-first century, Yorba Linda continued to grow through the development of single-family residences along the northern border of the city.

Despite changes that occurred over time, Yorba Linda has retained a "small town" character in its historic downtown core and in its older residential neighborhoods. This historic character can be observed in the architecture of older buildings and in the ways that groupings of properties relate to



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each other. The City of Yorba Linda has adopted the following goals, policies, and implementation measures to preserve the historic character of the community and protect its significant historic and architectural resources.



## Historic Resources Element Policy Program

### Goal HR-1

**Enhance the historic Town Center as a focal point for activity and civic identity in Yorba Linda.**

- Policy HR-1.1 Protect existing buildings and their features that contribute to the unique historic character and architectural styles of the Town Center.
- Policy HR-1.2 Ensure that new development within the Town Center complements the area's unique historic and architectural character.
- Policy HR-1.3 Facilitate the rehabilitation of older buildings in the Town Center for highest and best uses.
- Policy HR-1.4 Promote programs that create, enhance, and strengthen connections between historic/ architectural character and community image.

### Goal HR-2

**Protect Yorba Linda's significant historic and cultural resources.**

- Policy HR-2.1 Identify individual buildings and districts that qualify as historic resources.
- Policy HR-2.2 Provide tools that facilitate preservation of unique historic/architectural character of buildings and districts.
- Policy HR-2.3 Review and make informed decisions regarding proposed changes to historic resources.
- Policy HR-2.4 Ensure that the City is a leader in preservation and a good steward of its historic properties.
- Policy HR-2.5 Avoid adversely affecting significant archeological and paleontological resources.

### Goal HR-3

**Foster economic growth and safeguard property values of historic buildings and neighborhoods.**

- Policy HR-3.1 Make available economic incentives to homeowners to promote preservation and maintenance of historic residences.
- Policy HR-3.2 Offer financial incentives to owners of historic properties within commercial districts to carry out compatible improvements.



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Policy HR-3.3 Assist all property owners in applying for and obtaining economic incentives for historic preservation.

### Goal HR-4

#### Uphold the rights of the owners of historic properties and those located within historic districts.

- Policy HR-4.1 Inform property owners of the locations of historic buildings and districts.
- Policy HR-4.2 Advise owners of historic properties of preservation goals and policies
- Policy HR-4.3 Consider information and comments received from property owners when making decisions regarding historic resources.
- Policy HR-4.4 Ensure that City decisions regarding public and private property are based on sound understandings of historic preservation principles and planning.
- Policy HR-4.5 Consider special economic hardship where it exists as a factor in City decisions regarding historic properties.

### Goal HR-5

#### Conserve energy and materials by rehabilitating and reusing existing historic properties.

Policy HR-5.1 Promote adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of existing historic buildings as a more sustainable activity than demolition and new construction.

Policy HR-5.2 Encourage improvements to historic buildings that increase energy efficiency while retaining historic features, materials, and character.

Policy HR-5.3 Consider preservation alternatives that preserve existing buildings, structure, and materials to the greatest extent feasible.

### Goal HR-6

#### Increase public awareness of Yorba Linda's historic and cultural character.

Policy HR-6.1 Provide information to the general public regarding Yorba Linda's historic character, buildings, and architecture.

Policy HR-6.2 Support efforts to expand and augment the knowledge that has been gathered regarding the history of Yorba Linda and the surrounding region.

Policy HR-6.3 Work with the community to conduct events and



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activities that educate the general public about Yorba Linda's historical and cultural development.



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## Historic Resources Element Implementation Measures

Implementation Measure	Policies Addressed	Timeframe to Start
<b>Goal HR-1 Enhance the historic Town Center as a focal point for activity and civic identity in Yorba Linda.</b>		
<b>HR-1a</b> Adopt and implement design standards specifically for the Town Center that address appropriate alterations to existing historic buildings and buildings in historic districts, as well as appropriate new construction located nearby to existing historic buildings and/or districts.	HR-1.1, HR-1.2	1-2 years
<b>HR-1b</b> Work with property owners, business owners, and real estate professionals to identify rehabilitation opportunities in Town Center and target prospective parties who may implement and/or benefit from rehabilitation.	HR-1.3	Ongoing
<b>HR-1c</b> Develop a historic façade improvement program for commercial properties in the Town Center that provides technical guidance, design assistance, and illustrated examples of successful storefront rehabilitation, restoration, and reuse.	HR-1.3	2-5 years
<b>HR-1d</b> Coordinate with public and private parties to develop an image-making program for the Town Center that incorporates historic/ architectural character.	HR-1.4	Ongoing
<b>HR-1e</b> Participate in and support the efforts of existing civic organizations and business groups to bolster Town Center’s image as a historic commercial core.	HR-1.4	Ongoing
<b>Goal HR-2 Protect Yorba Linda’s significant historic and cultural resources.</b>		
<b>HR-2a</b> Maintain lists and maps of all identified historic properties and districts in Yorba Linda, including: officially designated/ listed properties; properties determined eligible based on professional evaluation; and properties determined by the City Council to be significant according to locally established criteria and standards.	HR-2.1	Less than 1 year



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Implementation Measure	Policies Addressed	Timeframe to Start
<p><b><u>HR-2b</u></b> Update public information regarding historic resources on a regular basis by incorporating the results of newly completed property evaluations, updates to surveys, and historic context research which may provide greater understanding of historical/ architectural significance.</p>	HR-2.1	Ongoing (at least every 5 years)
<p><b><u>HR-2c</u></b> Adopt zoning code provisions that allow for exceptions to development standards such as required setbacks, lot coverage, lot density, building height, site layout, off-street parking, and allowable uses, where it would avoid and/or reduce effects to historic resources.</p>	HR-2.2	1-2 years
<p><b><u>HR-2d</u></b> Adopt and implement design guidelines that address appropriate alterations to individual historic resources, district contributors, altered district contributors, non-contributors, as well as new construction nearby to existing historic buildings and/or districts.</p>	HR-2.2	1-2 years
<p><b><u>HR-2e</u></b> Establish codes and/or ordinances that require discretionary review to be conducted in cases of proposed alterations to historic properties and/or properties located within historic districts.</p>	HR-2.3	1-2 years
<p><b><u>HR-2f</u></b> Review development proposals pursuant to the historic resource provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and integrate the findings of CEQA review into decision-making.</p>	HR-2.3	Ongoing
<p><b><u>HR-2g</u></b> Require that a qualified professional in architectural history and/or historical architecture analyze the appropriateness of proposed changes to historic properties and/or historic districts and make recommendations to the City.</p>	HR-2.3	Ongoing
<p><b><u>HR-2h</u></b> Apply to become a Certified Local Government (CLG) through the State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) in order for the City to gain access to additional knowledge, expertise, and grant funding for its preservation program.</p>	HR-2.4	2-5 years



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Implementation Measure	Policies Addressed	Timeframe to Start
<p><b>HR-2i</b> Preserve and maintain all City-owned properties in a manner that is compatible with the historic and architectural character of existing properties and their surroundings.</p>	HR-2.4	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-2j</b> Allow for the City to acquire and preserve significant historic properties that are at risk of demolition or destruction, in cases where City acquisition is feasible and where it would result in a substantial public benefit.</p>	HR-2.4	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-2k</b> Comply with federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and codes related to archeological and paleontological properties, by ensuring that protocols are followed that protect and mitigate potential impacts, including consultation with Native American groups as appropriate.</p>	HR-2.5	Ongoing
<p><b>Goal HR-3 Foster economic growth and safeguard property values of historic buildings and neighborhoods.</b></p>		
<p><b>HR-3a</b> Facilitate use of the State Historic Building Code during the development process which provides for alternatives to standard codes that may result in cost-effective preservation of historic materials, features, and character.</p>	HR-3.1, HR-3.2, HR-3.3	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-3b</b> Establish and implement a Mills Act Property Tax Abatement Program which provides for reassessment and potential reductions of property taxes for owners who agree to long-term preservation and maintenance of their historic properties.</p>	HR-3.1, HR-3.2, HR-3.3	2-5 years
<p><b>HR-3c</b> Provide for waivers and/or reductions of building permit fees for projects that qualify as historic rehabilitation projects.</p>	HR-3.1, HR-3.2, HR-3.3	2-5 years
<p><b>HR-3d</b> Work with public and private parties to develop a program that provides grants, low interest loans, and/or design assistance for rehabilitative façade improvements to historic properties.</p>	HR-3.1, HR-3.2, HR-3.3	2-5 years



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Implementation Measure	Policies Addressed	Timeframe to Start
<p><b><u>HR-3e</u></b>            Promote the potential availability of federal tax credits for federally certified rehabilitation projects, and facilitate the application/ certification process for qualifying property owners.</p>	HR-3.3	Ongoing
<p><b><u>HR-3f</u></b>            Maintain a public information center in City offices that contains fact sheets, application materials, and contact information for preservation incentive programs at the federal, State, and local levels.</p>	HR-3.3	Ongoing
<p><b><u>HR-3h</u></b>            Meet periodically with local real estate professionals to provide information regarding preservation incentives programs that can substantially benefit new homebuyers.</p>	HR-3.3	2-5 years
<p><b><i>Goal HR-4 Uphold the rights of the owners of historic properties and those located within historic districts.</i></b></p>		
<p><b><u>HR-4a</u></b>            On a regular basis, mail to all owners of historic properties and those located within districts information that explains the historic evaluations, including background materials that pertain to their properties, and solicit any new information that may pertain to the conditions or backgrounds of properties.</p>	HR-4.1, HR-4.3	Ongoing (at least every 5 years)
<p><b><u>HR-4b</u></b>            On a regular basis, conduct events for the owners of historic properties and those located within districts, in order to provide education and guidance regarding general preservation goals, City policies and procedures, and programs that could benefit owners.</p>	HR-4.2, HR-4.3	Ongoing (at least every 5 years)
<p><b><u>HR-4c</u></b>            When making decisions regarding the historic status of properties or proposed changes that could affect historic resources, request and allow for property owners to submit information, including technical reports, background data, and/or firsthand knowledge, to the City for consideration before decisions are made.</p>	HR-4.3	Ongoing



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Implementation Measure	Policies Addressed	Timeframe to Start
<p><b>HR-4d</b> For City officials who review and make decisions regarding proposed changes to historic properties, provide training on historic preservation principles, practices, and planning, to be conducted by qualified professionals in the field of historic preservation and architecture.</p>	HR-4.4	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-4e</b> In cases where preferred preservation alternatives would be prohibitively expensive to the majority of similar property owners in the community (thereby making them infeasible alternatives), the City may consider less preferred alternatives.</p>	HR-4.5	Ongoing
<p><b>Goal HR-5 Conserve energy and materials by rehabilitating and reusing existing historic properties.</b></p>		
<p><b>HR-5a</b> Provide advice to property owners regarding ways to improve existing historic buildings that meet owners' goals of conservation, efficiency, and expanded or new uses.</p>	HR-5.1, HR-5.2, HR-5.3	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-5b</b> Allow for compatible repair and replacement of historic features such as windows and doors in order to improve energy efficiency, provided that overall integrity of buildings is not diminished.</p>	HR-5.1, HR-5.2, HR-5.3	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-5c</b> Develop and make available technical bulletins and illustrated examples of historically compatible repairs/ replacement of windows, doors, siding and roofing, as well as additions to buildings.</p>	HR-5.1, HR-5.2, HR-5.3	2-5 years
<p><b>HR-5d</b> In cases where on-site rehabilitation is not feasible due to the nature of the property, allow for relocation of existing historic buildings to new sites that are compatible in setting and character.</p>	HR-5.3	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-5e</b> Provide for salvage of reusable historic building materials that are removed from existing historic buildings as a result of approved work.</p>	HR-5.3	Ongoing
<p><b>Goal HR-6 Increase public awareness of Yorba Linda's historic and cultural character.</b></p>		
<p><b>HR-6a</b> Maintain and publish through City information portals, materials such as lists, maps, and photographs that promote Yorba Linda's historic buildings and districts.</p>	HR-6.1	1-2 years



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Implementation Measure	Policies Addressed	Timeframe to Start
<p><b>HR-6b</b> Update and publish self-guided tours of Yorba Linda's historic and architectural landmarks and districts.</p>	HR-6.1	1-2 years
<p><b>HR-6c</b> Partner with community members and organizations to conduct organized historical/architectural tours on a regular basis, as well as events such as history fairs.</p>	HR-6.1, HR-6.2, HR-6.3	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-6d</b> Coordinate with City agencies such as the public library to create archives and exhibits that promote, recognize, and celebrate the historical and cultural development of Yorba Linda.</p>	HR-6.1, HR-6.2, HR-6.3	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-6e</b> Work with local schools and organizations to conduct oral history projects, research of local history and culture, and studies of historical architecture in Yorba Linda.</p>	HR-6.2, HR-6.3	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-6f</b> Appreciate and recognize important historical sites in the surrounding region that relate to the history of Yorba Linda, such as cemeteries, early rural settlements, and Native American cultural sites (without disclosing information that may allow intrusion on sensitive cultural sites).</p>	HR-6.2, HR-6.3	Ongoing
<p><b>HR-6g</b> Work with public and private parties, including property owners, to develop a program that installs special signage at appropriate locations to identify and call attention to Yorba Linda's landmarks and historic districts.</p>	HR-6.3	Ongoing