

SACRAMENTO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CONSERVATION ELEMENT

SECTION VI

CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Promote the inventory, protection and interpretation of the cultural heritage of Sacramento County, including historical and archaeological settings, sites, buildings, features, artifacts and/or areas of ethnic historical, religious or socio-economical importance.

INTRODUCTION

The foundation of a cultural community rests upon the attributes and artifacts of its predecessors. Preserving and understanding these cultural resources needs to be an element of consideration when planning for future growth.

Sacramento County is fortunate to have a rich and varied collection of historic and prehistoric features which record significant, as well as routine, events in the county's long history of human habitation. Exemplary archaeological sites of Nisenan-Maidu and Plains Miwok Indians have been identified along river terraces. Their location are fiercely protected by researchers who feel, without protection, the sites would be disturbed if the locations were disclosed. The history of the county is seen in sites and structures which covers time from prehistory to our recent past. History represents a variety of ethnic and cultural groups and ranges broadly through social, economic, military and political subjects.

The artifacts left by our prehistoric predecessors include hand implements, middens rich in an array of discarded objects, isolated field houses, and mud, stone, and stick structural remains of entire villages. Trained and locally experienced archaeologists decipher the relationship these artifacts have to one another in hopes of understanding, among other things, food gathering practices, societal structuring, and trading networks.

The historic imprints of more recent settlers are found in a diminished number of sites and standing structures. The events that occurred on these sites or in these structures may have local significance, or the architectural style may lay claim to an era important to the county's past.

Preserving and stabilizing remnants of our past require that we address problems leading to the rapid deterioration of our cultural resources. Problems include inadequate data regarding site locations, insufficient monitoring of development proximal to sensitive areas, poor cultural resource training for County staff charged with construction monitoring, no consensus on what constitutes a significant site and what are appropriate mitigation measures, and the lack of a County cultural resource professional to coordinate preservation efforts. Additional problems

include insufficient funding to protect sites through public purchase, private conservancies, and easements; inadequate access limitations and regulation enforcement; and poor methods of preserving, cataloging, and storing artifacts. The County needs to demonstrate an organized and method driven commitment to preserving and protecting sites. The term site refers to sites, buildings, structures, and human alterations to the natural environment as well as the artifacts contained on or within a site. Preservation of such sites representing the county's rich and historic past ensures that future residents will have the opportunity to learn about the important contributions past inhabitants have had on the area's development. The need to establish policies protecting cultural resources is all the more urgent as unprecedented urbanization and population growth expands into the 21st century.

This section describes policies and programs under six objectives:

1. Attention and care during project review and construction to ensure that cultural resource sites, either previously known or discovered on the project site, are properly protected with sensitivity to Native American values.
2. Structures with architectural or historical importance preserved to maintain exterior design elements.
3. Known archaeological and historic sites protected from vandalism unauthorized excavation, or accidental destruction.
4. Comprehensive knowledge of archeologic and historic site locations.
5. Properly stored and classified artifacts for ongoing study.
6. Public awareness and appreciation of both visible and intangible historic and cultural resources.

ARCHEOLOGIC SITE PROTECTION DURING DEVELOPMENT

Objective: Attention and care during project review and construction to ensure that cultural resource sites, either previously known or discovered on the project site, are properly protected with sensitivity to cultural and ethnic values of all affected.

Intent: The intent of these policies is not to lessen the value or deemphasize the importance of CEQA to ensure that archaeological surveys and appropriate mitigation measures are instituted during project review. On the contrary, CEQA has proven, to varying degrees, to be an effective shield for preserving remnants of our cultural heritage. However, certain inadequacies exist in the ad hoc nature of CEQA implementation that can degrade local resources. To correct inadequacies at the local level an overall policy framework is necessary.

A consistent methodology utilizing local cultural resource agencies and county staff needs to be formulated to integrate mitigation measures and protection efforts into county development guidelines. Criteria for survey, protection, and mitigation methodologies should be developed through consensus by a committee of cultural resource professionals. Past inconsistent application of protection and mitigation measures have caused uncertainties among developers over calculating costs and scheduling construction. In turn, this has led to costly delays and, possibly, poorly thought out mitigation and protection measures. Questionable measures elsewhere in the state have incited Native Americans to strongly protest the disrespectful and improper destruction of their heritage and to seek regulations protecting remnants of their past. To avoid situations that inadequately protect the resource, confuse applicants, and antagonize concerned parties, the County must formulate, with the assistance of knowledgeable agencies, mitigation and protection measures that protect the resource from destruction and pertain to all development.

Policies:

- CO-155. Utilize the California Archeological and the Sacramento History and Science Division to assist in determining need for survey.
- CO-156. Refer projects with identified archeological and cultural resources to the Cultural Resources Committee to determine significance of resource and recommend appropriate means of protection and mitigation. The Committee shall coordinate with the Native American Heritage Commission in developing recommendations.
- CO-157. Significant archeologic, prehistoric, or historic sites shall be protected as open space for potential future excavation.
- CO-158. Native American burial sites encountered during preapproved survey or during construction shall, whenever possible, remain in situ. Excavation and reburial shall occur when in situ preservation is not possible or when the archeologic significance of the site merits excavation and recording procedure. On-site reinterment shall have priority. The project developer shall provide the burden of proof that off site reinterment is the only feasible alternative. Reinterment shall be the responsibility of local tribal representatives.
- CO-159. The cost of all excavation conducted prior to completion of the project shall be the responsibility of the project developer.
- CO-160. Monitor projects during construction to ensure crews follow proper reporting, safeguards, and procedures.
- CO-161. As a condition of approval of discretionary permits, a procedure shall be included to cover the potential discovery of archaeological resources during development or construction.

CO-162. As a condition of approval for discretionary projects which are in areas of cultural resource sensitivity, the following procedure shall be included to cover the potential discovery of archeological resource during development or construction:

Should any cultural resources, such as structural features, unusual amounts of bone or shell, artifacts, human remains, or architectural remains be encountered during any development activities, work shall be suspended and the Sacramento County Department of Environmental Review and Assessment shall be immediately notified. At that time, the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment will coordinate any necessary investigation of the site with appropriate specialists, as needed. The project proponent shall be required to implement any mitigation deemed necessary for the protection of the cultural resources. In addition, pursuant to Section 5097.98 of the State Public Resources Code and Section 7050.5 of the State Health and Safety Code, in the event of the discovery of human remains, all work is to stop and the County Coroner shall be immediately notified. If the remains are determined to be Native American, guidelines of the Native American Heritage Commission shall be adhered to in the treatment and disposition of the remains.

Implementation Measures:

- A. Report on recommended structure and representation of Cultural Resources Committee and appointment by Board. (SACRAMENTO COMMISSION of HISTORY and SCIENCE)
- B. Develop Committee procedures and criteria for preservation and mitigation. (PLANNING)
- C. Conduct periodic training programs for County Planning Staff, Public Works Inspectors, and County Parks and Water Resources maintenance personnel to facilitate their awareness of archeologic site indicators and proper procedures. (PLANNING).
- D. Utilize implementation monitoring program to provide for on-site monitoring during construction adjacent to known sites. (PLANNING)
- E. Investigate the opportunity to develop a County Cultural resource ordinance in order to provide protection for archeological, historical, and cultural resources. (PLANNING)

HISTORIC STRUCTURE PRESERVATION

Objective: Structures such as buildings, bridges, or other permanent structures with architectural or historical importance preserved to maintain exterior design elements.

Intent: Too often, development destroys buildings that can identify a neighborhood or link the past to the present. This objective seeks to cement architectural importance and historical significance with design elements of future development. Such buildings or areas, when preserved, help to define community character. Sacramento County's noteworthy but limited

array of historically significant structures, and diverse structural styles, lend themselves well to promoting development that recognizes the value of historic and archeological preservation.

Policies:

CO-163. Conduct surveys and designate structures with architectural or historical importance on community plan maps. Where appropriate, plans shall designate significant historical architectural districts.

CO-164. Develop local architectural preservation standards drawing from state and Federal guidelines.

CO-165. Refer projects involving structures or within districts having historical or architectural importance to the Cultural Resources Committee to recommend appropriate means of protection and mitigation.

CO-166. Development surrounding areas of historic significance shall have compatible design in order to protect and enhance the historic quality of the areas.

Implementation Measures:

A. Develop design guidelines for areas adjacent to or within historic sites. (SACRAMENTO COMMISSION of HISTORY and SCIENCE)

B. Promote the use of the State Historic Building Code to protect historic resources. PUBLIC WORKS, SACRAMENTO COMMISSION of HISTORY and SCIENCE)

C. Encourage owners of eligible historic properties to apply for State and federal registration and to participate in tax incentive programs for historic restoration. (SACRAMENTO COMMISSION of HISTORY and SCIENCES)

D. Identify funding mechanisms to support programs to preserve, restore, and enhance unique historic sites. (PLANNING)

E. Acquire and preserve sites, and/or acquire easements over sites and building facades. (PARKS, SACRAMENTO HISTORY and SCIENCE DIVISION)

DESTRUCTION OF CULTURAL RESOURCE SITES

Objective: Protect any known cultural resources from vandalism, unauthorized excavation, or accidental destruction.

Intent: This objective seeks is to prevent wanton or accidental destruction of archeological sites and, when desirable, to preserve artifacts in situ. The science of archeology attempts to understand and interpret human behavior and cultural traits through reconstruction of prehistoric and historic sites. Disturbance of sites and illegal removal of artifacts compromise a site's integrity and severely limit the interpretation of cultural attributes, especially within the historical context of the area. Protection of archeological sites is provided under state and local law, but local patrol and enforcement is vital. Contrary to popular belief, federal legislation such as the federal Antiquities Act does not protect archeological, historic, or cultural resources except on federal land. Protection of resources on other public or private land is dependent largely upon state and local legislation.

Policies:

- CO-167. Restrict the circulation of cultural resource locational information to prevent potential site vandalism. This information is exempt from the "Freedom of Information Act".
- CO-168. Cooperate with other agencies to enforce laws and aggressively prosecute illegal collection of artifacts.
- CO-169. Design and implement interpretive programs about known archeological or historical sites on public lands or in public facilities. Interpretation near or upon known sites should be undertaken only when adequate security is available to protect the site and its resources.

Implementation Measures:

- A. Develop plan in conjunction with Archeological Conservancy to secure easements, agreements, or other appropriate mechanisms to protect known cultural sites from disturbance or erosion. (PLANNING)
- B. Conduct periodic aerial overflights and conduct aerial photo analysis of archeologic site corridors to identify disturbance or illegal excavation. (SHERIFF and PLANNING)
- C. Periodic patrol of publicly owned archeologic sites by park rangers. (PARKS)
- D. Implement a program within County departments which manage or patrol properties with known cultural resources to facilitate their awareness of archaeological site indicators and proper procedures in handling cultural resources. (PLANNING)

CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEYS

Objective: Comprehensive knowledge of archeologic and historic site locations.

Intent: A survey and inventory cataloging historic structures, old farmsteads, and recorded Native American sites would assist the county in protecting areas of cultural significance while planning for development. The Sacramento Museum and History Center tried unsuccessfully in 1989 to obtain grant monies from the State Office of Historic Preservation to initiate a survey of the entire County. This effort should continue.

Implementation Measures:

- A. Comprehensive survey to record location of archeologic and historic sites. Study design. Conduct survey. (PLANNING, SACRAMENTO COMMISSION of HISTORY and SCIENCE)
- B. Comprehensive survey to identify historically and architecturally important structures. Criteria and study design conduct surveys in conjunction with community plan updates. (PLANNING, SACRAMENTO COMMISSION of HISTORY and SCIENCE)

ARTIFACT STUDY AND STORAGE

Objective: Properly stored and classified artifacts for ongoing study.

Intent: Existing facilities for artifact storage are insufficient. Because of this, local universities and museums are no longer accepting new artifacts for their anthropology collections. Materials collected for scientific research during project mitigation are now being stored uncataloged in unspecified locations. Yet, mitigation measures undertaken during redevelopment to satisfy CEQA provision continue to yield an even increasing inventory of artifacts. There is a demonstrated and critical need to establish a storage facility. Funding for such a facility should be provided from developer mitigation fees and agreements should be reached with local postsecondary educational institutions to preserve and protect remnants of past cultures.

Implementation Measures:

- A. Initiate discussions regarding the preparation of a comprehensive regional study design for the excavation, cataloging and analysis of cultural resource artifacts and the synthesis of available information. (PLANNING)
- B. Identify the Sacramento History and Science Division as the County repository for cataloging and storage of the County's historical collection including excavated cultural artifacts. (SACRAMENTO HISTORY and SCIENCE DIVISION)

PUBLIC AWARENESS OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

Objective: Increase public education, awareness and appreciation of both visible and intangible cultural resources.

Intent: If preservation efforts are to be successful, the County will need to make a unified effort to protect critical sites as public parks and to educate residents on the value of preserving remnants of our collective past. A park highlighting the county's ethnic diversity is under development. Park planning efforts should expand further to preserve and interpret significant archeologic sites. For example, such an opportunity exists at Indian Stone Corral, a Native American village site that is worthy of park designation and is suited for interpretive facilities and educational activities. Providing on-site interpretive and education outreach programs to adult visitors and school age children is a sound conduit for instilling appreciation for and preservation of cultural resources. The County will continue to support the exhibits, public education programs and curation facilities of the Sacramento History Museum and Sacramento Science Center and continue to support the expansion of collections on local history and archaeology housed by the County/City library system and the History and Science Division at the Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center.

Policies:

- CO-170. Provide historic and cultural interpretive displays, trails, programs, living history presentations, and public access to the preserved artifacts recovered from excavations.
- CO-171. Interpretive elements involving Native American cultural resources shall be located at village sites (provided any unexcavated resources are properly protected) representative of different physical environments found in the County.

Implementation Measures:

- A. Prepare historical resource plans for incorporation into the recreational element of this plan. (PARKS, SACRAMENTO HISTORY and SCIENCE DIVISION)
- B. Present educational programs to school age children. (PARKS, SACRAMENTO HISTORY and SCIENCE DIVISION)
- C. Design educational criteria guidelines and study units for incorporation in county school curricula. (PARKS, SACRAMENTO HISTORY and SCIENCE DIVISION, COUNTY OFFICE of EDUCATION)