



Taking Care of Your Older House

THE OLD HOUSE GUIDE FOR THE NEW HOMEOWNER



Congratulations on owning an older house!

About Save Our Heritage Organisation

Since 1969, SOHO has worked to save the buildings that define the San Diego region.

SOHO is San Diego's only countywide organization dedicated to the preservation of architecturally and historically significant structures, sites and cultural landscapes.

SOHO is a powerful catalyst for preservation of our nation's heritage by raising awareness and appreciation of the San Diego region's architectural and cultural heritage. Through education, advocacy and stewardship our mission is to preserve, promote and support preservation of the historical links and landmarks that contribute to the community identity, depth and character of our region.

Just as the loss of historic buildings affects our community on a regional basis, we are affected by losses in our neighborhoods. Old homes are being torn down to make way for poorly-designed and poorly-integrated apartment buildings or for oversized, property-line-to-property-line mansions that destroy the spirit of our community. We cannot idly watch our established neighborhoods suffer the erosion created by the recent development boom.

Because buying a house is one of the most important investments you will make, we invite you to protect that investment by becoming a member of Save Our Heritage Organisation. Your membership will help SOHO increase awareness of preservation issues in the community, provide a unified voice to protect historic resources and help SOHO negotiate positive solutions for both property owners and preservationists to save what remains of San Diego's endangered heritage.

SOHO membership benefits include access to historic preservation resources, a subscription to the quarterly *Reflections* newsletter, invitations to special receptions and events, and advance notice and discounts for lectures, special events and tours. Members also receive free admission to the Whaley House Museum and Adobe Chapel in Old Town and a 10% discount on SOHO Museum Shop purchases.

Save Our Heritage Organisation
2476 San Diego Avenue
San Diego, CA 92110
Phone: (619) 297-9327
Fax: (619) 291-3576
www.sohosandiego.org

Save Our Heritage Organisation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.

M E M B E R S H I P A P P L I C A T I O N

I want to help preserve the historical resources of San Diego by joining SOHO at the following Membership level.

- \$15 Student \$30 Individual or Family \$50 Professional
 \$100 Executive \$250 Benefactor \$1000 Lifetime

Please complete this form and send it with your payment to SOHO, 2476 San Diego Avenue, San Diego CA 92110

Please charge my Visa MasterCard

Card Number _____ Exp. date _____

Name as it appears on card: _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Please extend my membership for another year.

In addition, I am making a tax deductible contribution of \$_____ to the Preservation Revolving Fund, to be used to purchase and preserve endangered historic properties.

What SOHO events would you like to help with? Special Events Tours Docent Work

Remember Someone Special with a SOHO Membership

Please send a one-year gift membership to the person named below. A gift card will be sent to your recipient.

Recipient: _____

Address: _____

City, State Zip _____

Membership Includes

- ◆ Free admission to Whaley House Museum
- ◆ Free admission to Adobe Chapel
- ◆ *Reflections* Newsletter Quarterly subscription
- ◆ 10% discount on Museum Shop items
- ◆ Advance notice & discounts to lectures, special events, & tours
- ◆ Invitations to special receptions & events
- ◆ Participation in volunteer programs

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What gives a building historic significance?



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The National Register of Historic Places has set these criteria for determining if a building has historic significance:

1. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
2. Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
3. Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, represents the work of a master, possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
4. Yielded, or potential to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

If your house fulfills **just one** of these criteria, it may be eligible for historic designation.

Why should you pursue historic designation?

The Mills Act, named for former State Senator and San Diegan James Mills, provides a significant monetary incentive for the owners of designated historic properties that is designed to encourage the preservation, maintenance and restoration of these properties.

The Mills Act provides that property that is subject to a historical property contract has its assessed value determined using the rental income that could be expected from that property rather than comparable sales, resulting in a lower assessment value. The city offers a property tax reduction of 40-70% in the majority of Mills Act applications received. Under a 10-year contract between the owner and the city that is reviewed annually, the owner must commit to maintaining the historic property for at least 10 years. Homes designated under the Mills Act are not required to be open to the public.

Not all communities in San Diego County qualify for the Mills Act. San Diego, Chula Vista, Coronado, Escondido, La Mesa, National City and unincorporated areas in the county are eligible for Mills Act protection.

National Register of Historic Places

Details. Visit them at www.blahblah.com.

Mills Act forms

Mills Act forms are available on-line at www.blahblah.com

How to research your house

Where you'll find information

San Diego County Recorders Office

County Administration Center
1600 Pacific Highway,
Room 103
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 236-3771
www.sdcountry.ca.gov/arcc/arcc_home.html

San Diego City Water Department

123 Fake St.
San Diego, CA 92XXX
(619) 555-XXXX
www.blahblahblah.blahblah.gov

San Diego Public Library: Downtown Branch

123 Fake St..
San Diego, CA 92XXX
(619) 555-XXXX
www.blahblahblah.blahblah.gov

San Diego Historical Society

123 Fake St..
San Diego, CA 92XXX
(619) 555-XXXX
www.blahblahblah.blahblah.gov

San Diego County Assessor's Office

123 Fake St..
San Diego, CA 92XXX
(619) 555-XXXX
www.blahblahblah.blahblah.gov

San Diego Historical Resources Board

123 Fake St..
San Diego, CA 92XXX
(619) 555-XXXX
www.blahblahblah.blahblah.gov

If you plan to apply for historic designation, note the requirements for the Primary Record and Building, Structure and Object (DPR) form. DPR forms can be obtained from the secretary for the San Diego Historical Resources Board.

1. Do a title search at the San Diego County Recorder's Office or hire a mortgage company or architectural historian to do this search for you. When you know the original owner, check for the Notice of Completion to determine builder and architect.

DPR form: Include a list of owners and the Notice of Completion.

2. To further document or to establish the construction date of your house, call the San Diego City Water Department records archives and request information regarding the water and sewer hook-up at your address. You may need to provide them with the assessor's parcel number and the subdivision, block and lot. If they find documents relating to your property, you can get a free copy at 2797 Caminito Chollas, San Diego.

DPR form: Include this data in your report.

3. Check the San Diego City & County Directories 1872-1980 at the San Diego Public Library California Room or the San Diego Historical Society to learn about the people associated with your house such as the owners, occupants, architect and builder. Make note of the professions of the owners and occupants.

DPR form: Include a chronological list starting with the earliest owners/occupants of your house and their professions.

4. When you know the names of owners, occupants, architect and builder, check the San Diego Historical Society biographical files and computer index for further information. Search for these people in local biographical histories compiled by Smythe, Black, McGrew, Heilbron and Who's Who in San Diego (1936). Check the San Diego Union index at the San Diego Public Library California Room for references.

DPR form: Mount copies of important biographies and obituaries, etc. on separate pages with sources identified for inclusion in your report.

5. If you know approximately when your house was built but don't know the architect or builder, search those years of the *San Diego Union* on microfilm at the San Diego Public Library. Development sections were included in the Sunday editions commencing

in the 1920s. If your house was built after 1927, you can search through the *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, which you can obtain at the periodical section of the downtown library branch. The *San Diego Daily Transcript* also lists building permits and Notices of Completion.

DPR form: Include all relevant articles.

6. Check the historical photograph collection at the San Diego Historical Society to locate photo documentation of your house. You may order photographs for approximately \$20 or a photocopy for \$1. Search the photos for owners' names, your neighborhood, architectural files, family scrapbooks or aerial photographs.

DPR form: Include historic photos and credit the San Diego Historical Society.

7. If your house was designed by a prominent local architect, check the architectural drawing files at the San Diego Historical Society. Copies of the drawings are available for purchase. Obtain biographical information about your house's architect from *San Diego Architects 1868-1930*, a book compiled by the University of San Diego.

DPR form: Include copies of architectural drawings and credit the San Diego Historical Society. Include a copy of the biographical information and credit USD.

8. Check the Sanborn Fire Maps, which date back to the late 1800s and may show your house with potential later additions. The Sanborn Fire Maps are available on microfilm at the downtown library branch and the San Diego Historical Society.

DPR form: Include a copy of the fire map.

9. Conduct interviews with previous owners and the architect or builder, if possible. The San Diego Historical Society has archives of many interviews with prominent San Diegans.

10. Obtain a copy of the Residential Building Record for your home from the San Diego County Assessor's Office. This record shows a configuration of your house with changes over time as well as assessor notations. The cost is \$2 per page.

Making changes to your house

Do:

- Keep detailed records of changes made to your house beginning when you purchase your home. Include photographs of interiors and exteriors and detailed documentation of alterations.
- Live in your new house for four seasons before making changes. Because a house evolves throughout the year, features such as light exposure, heating and cooling patterns and outside access will change from season to season.
- Identify your house's architectural style and familiarize yourself with its principles, features and common applications.
- Identify the features of your house that are essential to its character and architectural style. Second, identify what existed during the most significant period of your house. These features are the most important items to preserve.
- Make changes that match the architectural style and context of your house.
- Repair instead of replace.
- Match replacement items to original items.
- Keep new items in the same scale as your house.
- Take care before deciding to remodel the kitchen or bathroom. If original, they are very special because few kitchens and bathrooms are original in older homes.
- When working on kitchens and bathrooms, remember that classic materials are always better than newer-style materials and classic designs are preferred over nouveau interpretations of what older kitchens and bathrooms looked like. For example, the new trend of furniture-grade kitchen cabinets is expensive and unnecessary because simple paint-grade cabinets were used in the past.
- Use reconditioned vintage appliances or new ones made to look old. For example, in kitchens, aluminum appliances are beautiful but in 30 years will look as dated as 1970s appliances do to us today.
- Match new chimney caps to the original.
- Keep original doors.
- Take care when adding a deck to your house. Decks are usually not a feature of older homes but can be added appropriately and in the context of the house.
- Plan additions that are subordinate to the original house and on non-public facades.
- Before painting the outside of your house, research the house's original paint scheme. Usually the house's original paint colors were the best fit with the architecture.
- Repair stucco whenever possible instead of covering or replacing it. Original stucco, even if obviously patched, is preferred over any other option.
- Get advice from a consultant if you need guidance or are unsure if your potential modifications are in the context of your house. SOHO's Resource Guide is an excellent way to find local professionals that have experience working with historic and older houses. The guide is published each January in *Reflections*, SOHO's membership newsletter.
- Think and research before making changes. Remember that it is more time-consuming and expensive to fix incorrect remodeling than it is to do a correct job the first time.
- Remember that you can make your house feel new without altering what is old and valuable.

DON'T:

- Don't modify character-defining features, such as doors or windows.
- Don't feel the need to make your mark on the house.
- Don't impose your personality on the structure of the house – instead, express yourself with interior decoration.
- Don't add motifs or mix-and-match styles.
- Don't create a false sense of history by adding items that look old but are not in the context of the house.
- Don't install vinyl windows or siding.
- Don't re-coat original stucco with newer style finishes. Have your contractor match the original finish.

Common San Diego architectural styles



SPANISH REVIVAL

The Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego's Balboa Park in 1915, helped to popularize this style especially in the American Southwest. Buildings in Balboa Park in this style are _____ and _____.

- Low-pitched roof with little or no eave overhang
- Usually one or more prominent arches above door or main window
- Exposed or stucco-covered exterior walls of stone or brick
- Red-tiled roofs and ornate low-relief carvings that feature arches, columns, windows, cornices and parapets.



Common San Diego architectural styles

MISSION

The Mission style is derived from the Spanish Revival style.

- Low-pitched roofs
- Mission-shaped dormer/roof parapet (often with red tile or mission or Spanish tile roof)
- Widely overhanging eaves
- Smooth stucco walls
- Often with large front and wrapped porches

Common San Diego architectural styles

MONTEREY

Similar to the Spanish Revival style with these differences:

Common San Diego architectural styles

Common San Diego architectural styles

CRAFTSMAN & BUNGALOW

The Craftsman style originated in Southern California with the work of Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene, who practiced architecture in Pasadena from 1893 to 1914. The one-story Craftsman/Bungalow house was the most popular smaller house in the country in the early part of the 20th century due to magazine publicity and building pattern books.

- One- or two-story house
- Compact floor plan with limited hallways
- The gently-pitched, broad-gabled roof often has a larger gable over the main part of the house and a smaller gable over the porch.
- Decorative beams or braces often underneath gables.
- Roof is supported by tapered square columns.
- Columns or pedestals often extend to ground level.
- Rafter, ridge beams and purlins extend beyond the wall and roof.
- Wood shingles are often used as an exterior finish in the bungalow style with stucco and brick as other common options. Shingles are left in natural state or treated with earth-tone stains.
- Double-hung windows often have a multi-paned upper sash and a single-pane lower sash.
- Subject to variations such as California, Swiss, Colonial and Tudor



Common San Diego architectural styles



COLONIAL REVIVAL

style intro

- Accentuated front door, often with a decorative crown supported by pilasters or extended forward into a porch with slender columns
- Symmetrical with balanced windows and centered door
- Double-hung windows, windows often in pairs
- Doors often have overhead fanlights or sidelights



Common San Diego architectural styles

QUEEN ANNE

A varied and decoratively rich Victorian style that was named and popularized by a group of 19th-century English architects. The name of the style has little to do with the English monarch or the architectural style popular during her reign. The Queen Anne style instead borrows from the Medieval-based architecture of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras.

- Asymmetrical and irregular
- Steeply-pitched roof
- Juxtaposition of wall treatments of different textures, materials and colors. Exterior walls are brick, clapboard, decorative wood shingles or a mixture of all three
- A smooth-walled appearance is avoided through projections such as bays, towers and overhangs
- Double-hung windows often with stained or colored glass
- Full or partial-width porch



Common San Diego architectural styles



WESTERN STICK

style intro

- Gently pitched gable roof that spreads out beyond the walls
- Projecting balconies, porches, recessed entries and attached loggias
- Stick-like roof rafters and purlins project beyond the ends of the roof
- Window lintels, railings and beams protrude through vertical posts
- Exterior finish on wood shingles or siding is earth-toned stain

Common San Diego architectural styles

PRAIRIE

The Prairie style originated in the early 20th century with a group of Chicago architects. Frank Lloyd Wright developed the Prairie style with his early work.

- One- or two-story house with a low-pitched roof and widely overhanging eaves.
- Details emphasize horizontal lines
- Built with brick or timber with walls of stucco
- Large and very low chimney.
- Often has massive, square porch supports
- Open floor plan
- Prominent central fireplace
- Casement windows grouped in horizontal bands

TUDOR

The Tudor style is loosely based on early English building traditions and was used for many early 20th century suburban houses. It was most popular during the 1920s and early '30s.

- Wood half-timbered and stucco walls
- Large decorative gable end or side chimneys
- Slate or asphalt shingle roof designed to look like thatch
- Narrow multi-paned casement windows
- Interior wood wall paneling
- Wood box beams on plaster ceilings

Common San Diego architectural styles



RANCH

Style intro

- Built post-WWII
- One story with a very low-pitched roof
- Broad, low, front-facing gables

Common San Diego architectural styles

INTERNATIONAL

Influenced by functionalism. Elements that were merely decorative rather than functional were discarded.

- Asymmetrical facade
- Flat roof, smooth and uniform wall surface
- Large expanse of windows
- Projecting or cantilevered balconies and upper floor
- Absence of ornamentation
- Wood or metal casement windows are set flush to the wall.

Common San Diego architectural styles



MODERN

Style intro

- Clean, simple exterior with a bold, geometric building shape.
- Smooth wall surfaces with little or no ornamentation
- Landscaping often integrated into the building plan
- Expansive glass panels and sliding glass doors promote a closeness between indoors and outdoors.
- Common exterior finishes include flat stucco, exposed brick, stone and wood.



Glossary of preservation terms

Adaptive re-use: The method of preservation where a building retains its signature visual elements, but the structure is used for a purpose other than originally intended. The term implies that certain structural or design changes have been made to the building in order for it to function in its new use. Examples might include a factory building now used for loft apartments.

CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act): A statute that requires state and local agencies to identify the significant environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, if feasible.

Character-defining/distinctive feature: Features particular to a historic structure that distinguish and/or typify its character in terms of its original visual and structural design (and engineering) and in terms of its historic function or use.

CLG (Certified Local Governments): A local government, certified or approved by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), which has an appointed commission to oversee the survey and inventory of historic resources, to review areas for historically significant structures, and to develop and maintain community planning and education programs.

Cultural landscape preservation: Preservation of cultural landscapes, or areas “where the interaction between man and nature created a unique whole” or “places in nature that have acquired significant associations with human activities and human events. Examples of cultural landscapes include the Oregon Trail, San Pasqual Valley, Balboa Park, Presidio Park, Camp Pendleton, the Coronado Railroad or a landscape made famous by a work of art.

Cultural resource surveys: Inventories of sites, buildings, structures, or objects deemed to have local, regional, national, or international cultural significance. The purpose of such surveys is to have a record of what is significant in order to protect such resources from development or encroachment or to document the current appearance or condition for the record.

Cultural tourism: Includes the artistic, cultural and historical offerings of an area that attract and/or extend the stay of visitors.

Demolition by neglect: The destruction of a building through abandonment or lack of maintenance.

DPR form: Primary Record and Building, Structure and Object form.



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Easement: Legal protection (recorded in a property deed) for distinguishing features of the interior or exterior of a property or in the space surrounding a property because such features are deemed important to be preserved. For example, a new property owner may be prevented from making changes or additions to a building, structure, or landscape by an easement in the property deed itself. These are sometimes specified as preservation easements or conservation easements.

EIR (Environmental Impact Report): A document required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). It describes a particular project location in its existing setting, describes the impacts which a project will have on the environment both on and adjacent to the property, and proposes mitigation measures.

Geotourism: Focuses on preserving a destination’s geographic character, which is the combination of natural and human attributes that make one place distinct from another. Geotourism encompasses cultural and environmental concerns as well as the local impact tourism has upon communities and their individual economies and lifestyles.

Historic district: A defined geographical area which may be as small as a few contiguous buildings or as large as an entire neighborhood, central business district, or community, within which historic properties associated with a particular time or theme in a community’s history predominate. Often the collective significance of the district may be greater than that of any one building or archaeological site. As a planning tool, historic district designation is often used

Glossary of preservation terms

to ensure the preservation of historic properties within the defined boundary or to encourage reinvestment of the buildings.

Historic fabric: Any important components of the building such as doors and windows as well as the apparently mundane and hidden areas that are original to the building.

- Formless materials such as rubble or flint wall construction;
- Structure within voids such as floor joists and roof timbers;
- Redundant parts of a building such as unused door openings or machinery.

Historic integrity (per National Register criteria): The authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's period of significance. Including integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The ability of a resource to convey its historical significance.

Historic overlay zone: A special zone placed over an existing zoning district, part of a district, or a combination of districts. An overlay zone includes a set of regulations that is applied to property within the overlay zone in addition to the requirements of the underlying or base-zoning district. A historic district design review is established through a zoning ordinance rather than an independent process such as establishing a Local Historic District (LHD). The Historic Overlay tier is applied to an area considered worthy of preservation because of its architectural, cultural or historic significance.

Historic registers: Refers to any local, state, national, or international list of significant sites, districts, buildings, or objects.

Historic significance (per National Register criteria): The importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of a community, state, or nation. Historic significance is achieved in meeting one or more of the following criteria:

1. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
2. Association with the lives of persons significant in our past;
3. Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

4. Yielded, or potential to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

HSR (Historic Structures Report): Comprehensive reference documents providing long-term preservation guidance for historic property. Survey work involves both documentary research and in depth on-site inspection. Reports typically include narratives on the property's history and construction; descriptions and photographs showing its original appearance and current conditions; original paint colors; materials conservation analysis; and other specifications for restoration work.

Infill: The use of vacant land and property within a built-up area for further construction or development, especially as part of a neighborhood preservation or limited growth program.

Mills Act: A California state law allowing cities to enter into agreements with the owners of historic structures. Such agreements require a reduction of property taxes in exchange for the continued preservation of the property. Property taxes are recalculated using a formula in the Mills Act and Revenue and Taxation Code.

Mitigation: The reduction of adverse effects of a proposed project by considering, in the following order:

1. Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action
2. Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation
3. Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating or restoring the effected environment
4. Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action by monitoring and taking appropriate measures
5. Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing comparable substitute.

MOU (Memorandum of Understanding): A document which when signed by cooperating parties will set the stage for project review early in the planning stages to assure the least impacts to historic and cultural resources.



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Glossary of preservation terms

National Historic Landmark: National Historic Landmarks “possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating and interpreting the heritage of the United States.” This is a national designation and only a small fraction of all sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places bear this designation.

National Historic Preservation Act: Enacted in 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act established a federal program aimed at preserving historically significant resources. Section 106 of the Act requires federal agencies to consider the impacts of their actions on sites that are listed in or eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This includes examining alternatives that would reduce or avoid harm to these resources.

National Register of Historic Places: Established by the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Register of Historic Places is “the Nation’s official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation.”

Reconstruction: The recreation of a historic building or feature that has been demolished or destroyed based on documentation or research. The product resembles its historic predecessor, but is not historic.

Rehabilitation: The process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.

Renovation: Modernization of an old or historic building or structure that may produce inappropriate alterations or eliminate important features and details of Historic Places.

Restoration: The act of returning a historic property as closely as possible to its exact appearance at a particular point in time, based on careful research. This often involves removing modern systems, technological improvements and additions.

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation: A broad set of guidelines for the rehabilitation of historic properties designated to encourage work which is in keeping with the historic character of the building and which does not do damage to the building’s historic fabric.

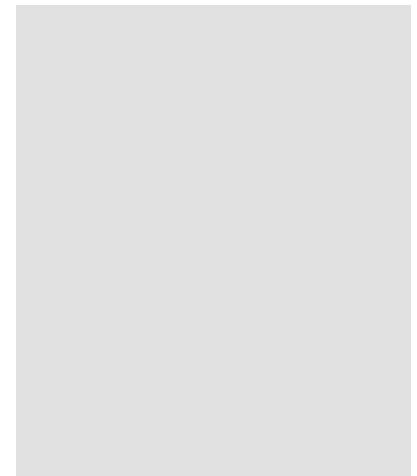
Section 106: A portion of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 directing agencies of the federal government and peoples using federal funds, permits or licenses to consider the effects of their proposed projects on properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places during the planning stage of their project, and to allow the State Historic Preservation Officer and the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to comment on their findings. A Section 106 Review is a routine part of the planning phase that is federally assisted and is meant to ensure that federal funds are being spent in a way which is consistent with the policy of preserving historic properties whenever possible set forth by Congress in the National Historic Preservation Act.

Sustainable tourism: The primary concern of sustainable tourism is to support balance within the ecological environment and minimize the impact upon it by mass market tourism. The use of this term is evolving as it is also used to describe the impact of mass-tourism on cultural and historic resources.

(Sub) urban sprawl: A pattern and pace of land development in which the rate of land consumed for (sub) urban purposes exceeds the rate of population growth using the developed land. Sprawl results in an inefficient and consumptive use of land and its associated resources.

Sympathetic additions: Additions to structures, which follow or complement the architectural style or scale of the original building.

Transfer of development rights: Historic sites are often located where zoning would permit much larger buildings should they be replaced. The owner of a landmark may transfer unused development rights from his lot to an adjacent site where a new building is to be constructed. This transaction, allowing the new building to be larger, enables the landmark owner to realize some of the present day value of his land without destroying the historic building.



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