

iii. Infill Opportunity: Vacant Lot Adjacent to 400 Third Street

Combining the open spaces and the undeveloped lot, this site has the potential of serving as a midblock green environment and possibly also include provisions for small retail, outdoor dining, or even a beer garden.



Vacant lot adjacent to 400 Third Street

iv. Infill Opportunity: Muckelemi & Third Street Vacant Lot

This prime vacant site is prominently located at the corner of Muckelemi and Third Street, in the heart of historic downtown. Recommended at this site would be a two-story mixed use structure set back from the street to allow for a public courtyard or plaza adjacent to the sidewalk. A major attraction, whether it be retail, restaurant, or other public use, at this site could increase pedestrian traffic between the Mission, Third Street, and new mixed-use development along Muckelemi.

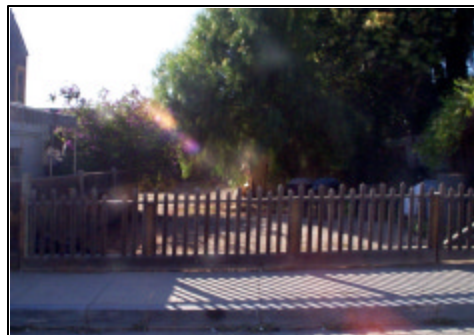
v. Infill Opportunity: Fourth Street

A few important businesses exist along this stretch of the Fourth Street, including the historic Mariposa House Restaurant, JT's Branding Iron, and the Casa Medina Gallery. These buildings portray similar characteristics of bright colors and Queen Anne vernacular architecture. Adding a new office or specialty retail building, also in Queen Anne vernacular, to the underdeveloped site in this area could create a "sub-district" of sorts, adding interest and strengthening the existing businesses along Fourth Street as well as their connection to Third.



JT's Branding Iron – Fourth Street

vi. Additional Infill Opportunities

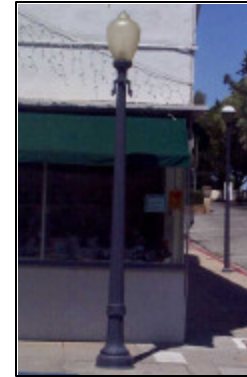


Additional infill site along Third

A number of other vacant or underdeveloped lots exist in the Third Street commercial core area. Most of these sites lend themselves to small one to two-story mixed-use projects. These sites represent opportunities to provide such commercial services as a pharmacy, hardware store, etc. or specialty retail in addition to new housing, all of which add to the economic and social vitality of downtown.

d. Protect Dark Rural Skies

Another important element that can help distinguish small, rural communities from their larger urban counterparts is the protection of the darker skies of the country. The *Zoning Ordinance Recommendations Report* – under separate cover – provides a draft dark skies ordinance for San Juan Bautista. The City should review this document and allow the community, Commission, and Council to revise as necessary for San Juan Bautista.



Pedestrian lighting on Third Street

STEP II: PRESERVE AND PROTECT HISTORY

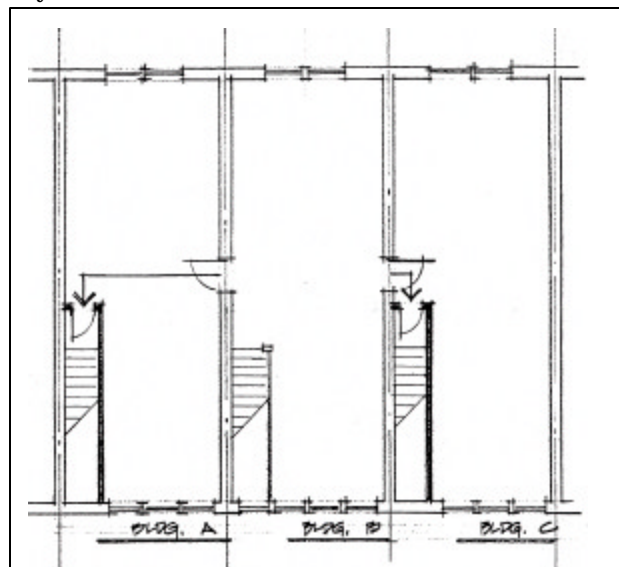
Effective preservation of San Juan Bautista's many historic treasures and cultural resources will only result from a combination of policies and programs that foster historic protection, and of physical preservation projects themselves. This section outlines a series of such recommendations:

a. Clarify Historic Preservation and Design Review Policies

As pointed out by residents, elected and appointed City officials, and developers, City policies pertaining to historic preservation and design review are unclear. This process must be made more transparent and understandable if San Juan Bautista is to preserve its resources and encourage development that enhances, rather than detracts from, the City's character.

i. Formally Adopt the State Historical Building Code

While the Uniform Building Code (UBC) is an effective code for contemporary structures, it does not provide adequate alternatives for addressing the unique attributes and circumstances of older historic buildings. Given San Juan Bautista's abundant historical resources, it is strongly recommended that the State



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Scenario: No existing, approved exits in building

Intent of code: To provide safe egress in case of fire

Example: Building B has an existing stair from the second floor, but it is not of appropriate width nor materials. Buildings A and C each has existing, approved exit. The same person owns all three buildings.

Current building codes requirement: Two approved exits must be contained in each building.

Historical Building Code be formally adopted and regularly used by the City when processing applications for renovation, repair, or reconstruction of historic structures. In 1976, California passed the State Historical Building Code – this code allows all state, county, and city building authorities to apply alternative building regulations to the restoration, rehabilitation, preservation, or relocation of any historic building eligible for inclusion in national, state, or local registers of historic properties. The scenario at right is one example of how the Historical Code assists restoration efforts.

ii. Revise the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments Ordinance

The City’s Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments Ordinance (Title V, Chapter 19), while an important tool in the City’s preservation efforts, lacks some clarity in its application and in its provision of guidance to the Planning Commission. The following recommendations are intended to strengthen the existing ordinance. Refer to the *Zoning Ordinance Recommendations Report*, under separate cover, for more information on these and other recommended changes to the City’s existing ordinance. The recommendations should be reviewed, revised as necessary, and adopted by the City in a timely manner.

1. Define “officially designated cultural resource”

When the city’s Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments Ordinance was modified by the Council in 1994, one of the major changes was that the ordinance’s area of application was limited to “officially designated” resources rather than “all” cultural resources (Chapter 5-19-100). One of the struggles of implementing this new mandate is that the intent of “officially-designated” is not defined in the ordinance, making it unclear which resources are subject to its provisions. While it is assumed that all Federally or State listings would be considered “officially designated cultural resources”, it is not clear what factors determine when local resources are deemed to be “officially designated”. To clarify, a precise definition and list of criteria for determining when a local resource is “officially designated” should be added to the existing preservation ordinance. In drafting the definition and criteria, a number of different references and guidelines are available. For instance, the City’s ordinance provides a definition and standards for “landmark” classification that may have been intended for interpretation as an “official designation”. Also, the criteria used to develop the *1981 Historic Resources Inventory* (see a.ii.5 on page 2-33) should be referenced, as should the various standards used for state and federal designations. Additionally, resources included on official local registers are generally placed there at the request of property owners.

2. Prepare and Adopt “Official List” or “Official Local Register”

As part of the Historic San Juan Bautista Plan process, a document, under separate cover, was completed which summarizes and illustrates the City’s

existing resource inventory information: *1981 Completion Report on the San Juan Bautista Historic Resources Inventory* and *1998 – 2015 San Juan Bautista General Plan Historic Preservation Element*. This summary document, the San Juan Bautista Cultural Resource Inventory Summary & Pictorial (SJBCRISP) and the definition of “officially designated cultural resource” determined above should be closely reviewed. If the application of that definition does not include all currently inventoried resources, a separate “official list” or “official local register” of designated cultural resources (or such other name as the Council deems appropriate) should be formally adopted. This list or register, along with the criteria upon which it is based (as determined above) and designation process, should be clearly indicated in the City’s preservation ordinance. This official list or local register should be maintained and updated regularly as new sites and buildings receive “official” resource standing.

3. *Establish Cultural Resource Advisory Committee to Assist Planning Commission*

A Cultural Resources Board was established in the City’s original preservation ordinance to serve in an advisory role to the City Council on matters of historic preservation and protection, including design review. In 1994, the Board was disbanded and its duties and responsibilities were passed on to the San Juan Bautista Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has thoughtfully taken on the responsibilities of design review for historic resources, but with the other demands already placed on the Commission, it is difficult for them to effectively carry out the additional cultural resource preservation responsibilities, such as maintaining the local register, investigating funding sources for preservation activities, or conducting public educational and interpretive programs. Therefore, it is recommended that a Cultural Resources Committee be established to assist and advise the Planning Commission with these historic preservation efforts. Specific make-up of the committee could be determined by the City, but it is recommended that the committee include several members with backgrounds in such areas as historic preservation, local history, grant writing and research, architecture, the arts, etc. Ideally, if a San Juan Bautista Main Street program is established as laid out earlier in this chapter, a sub-committee of the Main Street Board could be the appropriate body to serve in the capacity of a Cultural Resource Committee.

The Planning Commission should retain purview over design review and other preservation-related final decisions, but many of the important duties and responsibilities related to cultural resource preservation could be taken on by the Committee (educational programs, etc.). At its discretion, the Commission could also call upon the Committee to conduct targeted research or provide an opinion on a complex preservation or design issue before them. In the future, as (or if) development increases, it may be advisable to re-create a formal Cultural Resources Board to officially take on

design review and approval of official historic resources, as well as the other responsibilities under the City's preservation ordinance.

4. Establish Incentives for Preservation, Restoration, & Rehabilitation

It is often difficult for individual property owners to obtain grants or loans to conduct work on their buildings, especially more expensive preservation-focused work. The City's preservation ordinance should include provisions intended to ease the financial burden on owners of historic structures and encourage reward preservation. Such incentives may include the reduction



Maintenance on historic structures can be costly

or elimination of application fees for property owners who make minor repairs and maintenance consistent with the Secretary Standards for preservation; reduced parking requirements, application of the Mills Act to grant property tax relief, and official

recognition of preservation projects through City awards. Substantial Federal tax credits are available for rehabilitation costs of historic income-producing property. The City should also provide and maintain a list of contractors experienced in historic preservation to share with property owners to help ensure quality work and care of historic structures. Refer to the *Zoning Ordinance Recommendations Report* for more detail on specific incentives.

Efforts should also be made in the coming years to establish a rehabilitation loan program to encourage and assist property owners to repair and improve their property. Work with local or regional banks to assist in this effort. As part of this program, design assistance might also be provided free of charge to ensure that modifications to buildings are consistent with the original architecture and with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Preservation (see the *San Juan Bautista Design Guidelines* for more information on these standards).

iii. Update and Recognize the San Juan Bautista Cultural Resource Inventory

Adopting an official list or register, as noted above is an important step, but does not invalidate the need for or importance of the City's comprehensive cultural resource inventory. The *San Juan Bautista Cultural Resource Inventory Summary & Pictorial (CRISP)*, as currently prepared, should not be viewed as an official update of the original inventories because additional research and detailed documentation is required to reflect a formal update of the inventory. The document should, however, be used as an interim guide and resource until such time as a complete update is prepared. As previously noted, the *SJBCRISP* summarizes data from both

the 1981 Inventory and the 1998 General Plan. The *SJBCRISP* combines the two lists and adds current land use designation, photos, and location within the community.

The original 1981 Inventory considered both physical and contextual significance of local resources, selecting structures or sites typical or illustrative of local form, material, construction, style or use, or having an association with important historical events, trends, or persons. The 1981 Inventory included 115 structures and sites and classified them as either “Landmark” (buildings and sites with identifiable or historic significance, either by architectural style, features, or craftsmanship) or “Contributing” (buildings and sites with less architectural or historic significance, but because of scale, design, use of materials, or location make a positive contribution to the historic fabric of San Juan Bautista). The 1998 General Plan cultural resources list presents a considerably smaller version of the inventory with slightly more detail on state and federal designations of those resources included on its list, but did not identify the criteria used. An official update to the *SJBCRISP* should clearly articulate the criteria upon which the new inventory list is based, many of which may be the same as those used official register. The formal update to the *SJBCRISP* may result in additional structures and sites eligible for the City’s official list or register. Listing on the Inventory would not require property owner approval, as the Inventory illustrates only eligibility for the local register and does not subject the property to ordinance provisions. Property would be included on the *official* list or register (and afforded extra protection, flexibility, and incentives as a result) only at the owners request. Refer to the suggested modifications to the City’s historic preservation ordinance in the *Zoning Ordinance Recommendations Report* for additional information.

An official update should be undertaken with the assistance of the San Juan Bautista Historical Society, recognized historic preservation experts, local universities, appropriate State or Federal agencies, and the Cultural Resources Committee (if established). Some additional guidance on updating the inventory is found in the *SJBCRISP* itself.

iv. Adopt Site Plan and Design Review Ordinance

An unclear process and applicability of design review in San Juan Bautista often results in controversy and discourages residents from preserving or repairing their property. References to design review are located at various points in the City’s ordinance, but no centralized design review process is laid out. Design review-based permits referred are “S” District permits, Historic District Permits, and Sign Permits. Complications with “S” District and Historic District applicability and overlap often confuse the process; and a lack of administrative approval for even minor repairs can compound the confusion and inefficiency of the process.

A comprehensive site plan and design review ordinance that clearly articulates all areas and levels of applicability and establishes exemptions in the process is needed in San Juan Bautista to establish a more predictable and understandable design

review process. This ordinance should replace the “S” Permit¹, Historic District Permit, and Sign Permit under the auspices of one permit – a Site Plan and Design Review Permit. In addition to establishing clear standards as to which projects require design review by the Planning Commission, the new ordinance should include provisions for staff level approval for minor improvement projects to encourage property owners to improve their buildings and to improve the efficiency of the permit process.

v. Adopt San Juan Bautista Design Guidelines

The design review process in San Juan Bautista is often controversial. This is in part because the appropriate tools and guidance are not in place to assist City officials, property owners, prospective developers and the general public. Adopting design guidelines communicates the desired qualities and characteristics of development and community values in the City and are intended to: 1) help make developers aware of the design elements to be considered to protect aesthetic values; 2) suggest preferred solutions for design-related questions for all projects; and 3) standardize development review guidelines to ensure the consistent evaluation of development projects subject to the site plan and design review ordinance.



Design guidelines illustrate community design values and assist in the design review process

As part of the Historic San Juan Bautista Plan process, a set of design guidelines has been prepared for the City with a great degree of community input that provide this design guidance for new commercial and residential development, as well repair or construction work on existing buildings. The *San Juan Bautista Design Guidelines*, under separate cover, should be adopted soon to support the design review process and encourage appropriate design in the City. Ideally, the Design Guidelines should be adopted after the adoption of a Site Plan and Design Review ordinance. Copies of the adopted design guidelines should be made available for public review or purchase at City Hall.

b. Establish Ongoing Support from a Historic Preservation Specialist

Because of some of the important and often complex historic preservation issues that arise in San Juan Bautista, it is recommended that the City establish ongoing professional consulting from a historic preservation expert(s). This specialist(s) should be available on an as needed basis to provide recommendations, advice, and general expertise with the City on

¹ It is advised that all references to Special District Overlay Zone (“S”) be removed from the Zoning Ordinance. The standards for parking and landscaping should remain in the zoning ordinance, but be placed in a separate section specifically for parking.

matters of historical and cultural resource protection. If available, general funds should be budgeted for this service. The City might also explore sharing this service with another community to reduce costs. Alternatively, avenues to capitalize upon the unique expertise in the California State Parks should be explored, as should various opportunities for free technical assistance through government agencies and non-profit organizations.

c. Secure Funds and Grants for Preservation

It is strongly recommended that potential resources for funding, including those noted in Chapter 3, are studied in order to not only implement the specific preservation projects and programs discussed in the Plan, but also to assist in additional preservation work. Investigate grant funding and loan opportunities available for individual property owners to maintain their historic buildings and keep informational pamphlets and applications at City Hall.

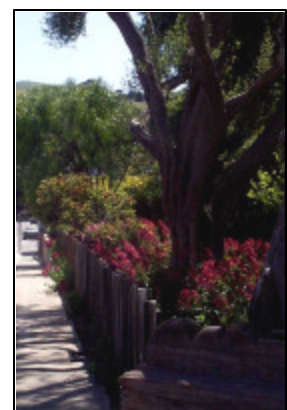
Partnerships are very important in obtaining grants and technical assistance. Mutually beneficial partnership opportunities between the City, the San Juan Bautista Mission and State Parks are important avenues to fully explore. The San Juan Bautista Historical Society's 501(c)3 status and historical expertise will also prove beneficial in pursuing certain types of grants and should be involved in partnering for preservation. Additionally, the San Juan Bautista Library has been very successful in securing and identifying grants and that expertise and experience should be tapped. Likewise, other community groups and local organizations, possess unique talents and resources that should be considered when pursuing grants. Involve the Cultural Resources Committee and other groups in identifying and securing different sources of funding and technical assistance for individual property owners, as well as organizations involved in cultural resource protection.

d. Protect San Juan Bautista's Trees and Other Natural Features

In addition to San Juan Bautista's built environment, its natural environment also represents a significant cultural resource. This fact is exemplified in the open space protection section earlier in this chapter. However, many of San Juan Bautista's mature trees and other natural features also warrant preservation and protection.

i. Conduct a Survey of Natural Features

Conduct a field survey to identify significant trees, plants, flowers, and other natural features including historical trees that may be reintroduced. Enlist local expertise as well as area colleges and history books to assist in this effort and in helping determine what is "significant". The public-at-large and local youth should be a part of this effort to the degree possible. A survey presents an excellent opportunity to also develop environmental awareness and education programs, including interpretive trails and nature markers. A tree list for the City could be developed. Restoration of historic trees on The Alameda could be an outcome of this project.



Natural features are also important