

CHAPTER 6: HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT

I.	Required Elements	107
	<i>GMA Planning Goal</i>	
	<i>Countywide Planning Policies</i>	
II.	Relationship To Other Plans	108
III.	Introduction	108
IV.	Philosophy And Strategies	108
V.	Benefits Of Preservation	110
VI.	Historic Preservation Goals And Policies	110

I. REQUIRED ELEMENTS

GMA PLANNING GOALS (RCW 36.70A.020)

The Growth Management Act does not require a Historic Preservation Element, but the Act contains a goal which calls for jurisdictions to “identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.”

Historic preservation supports other goals of the Act as well, including preservation of the existing housing stock, reduction of sprawl and achievement of GMA goals within the fiscal and natural resource capabilities of the community.

COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES

The Lewis County Planned Growth Committee adopted the updated planning policies in December 2006 relating to historic preservation. The Lewis County Countywide Planning Policies pertaining to Historic Preservation are:

Goal 13 Historic Preservation.

Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance to Lewis County.

- Policy 13.0 All jurisdictions are encouraged to work cooperatively towards identifying, evaluating, and protecting historic resources and encouraging land use patterns that protect and enhance such historic resources.
- Policy 13.1 All jurisdictions should cooperate with local historic preservation groups to ensure coordination of plans and policies by the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.
- Policy 13.2 All jurisdictions should cooperate with local historic preservation groups to acknowledge and recognize historic sites, structures, and

areas in their comprehensive plans, which have local importance, but may not formally be listed in the state and federal registers.

II. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

The following plans and documents relate to the development and implementation of historic preservation within Centralia.

- **Lewis County Comprehensive Plan.** The Lewis County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in April, 2002.
- **City of Centralia Water Plan.** The Water Plan was adopted in December 2005
- **Surface/Storm Water Management Plan.** The Storm Water Management Plan should be adopted in winter of 2007 or spring of 2008.
- **General Sewer Plan and Wastewater Treatment Plant Facilities Plan.** The Plan was approved and adopted in the Spring of 2000.
- **City Light and the Yelm Project Comprehensive Plan.** The City Light Plan was approved in December 2002.
- **Parks and Recreation Plan.** The Parks and Recreation Plan (Element)
- **Transportation Plan.** The Transportation Plan (Element)
- **Downtown Centralia Revitalization Plan, Phase I.** The Phase I Revitalization Plan was approved in June 2003.
- **Downtown Centralia Revitalization Plan, Phase II.** The Phase II Revitalization Plan was approved in October 12, 2004
- **Centralia School District Capital Facilities Plan.** The Capital Facilities Plan for the Centralia School District should be approved in the summer/fall of 2007.
- **Centralia College Master Plan.** The Centralia College Master Plan was approved on September 2002.

III. INTRODUCTION

Historic structures contribute substantially to a city's quality of life and its residents' sense of community. In a very practical way, older housing and commercial buildings represent an investment by previous generations upon which today's generations can capitalize. Costly new construction is not required when an existing structure can be adapted to a new use. Further, the use of existing older structures lends a sense of stability and character to its surroundings. Centralia has many wonderful structures that, if restored and preserved, would be a great asset to the community.

IV. PHILOSOPHY AND STRATEGIES

Historic preservation is an approach to conserving structures, sites, and objects which represent a physical connection with people and events from our past. Historic preservation utilizes various land use planning strategies, governmental programs, and financial

incentives to protect historic resources. The preservation of historic structures and sites helps to create a unique environment and sense of place. This cultural richness strengthens the local economy by promoting tourism and encouraging investment.

The preservation philosophy behind a successful historic preservation program rests upon four basic assumptions:

1. Historic properties are a scarce, non-renewable community resources. The preservation, protection, and use of which are critical to the public welfare. When historical and archaeological resources are destroyed, they are gone forever.
2. Historic preservation is an important public service and a legitimate responsibility of city government. Historic buildings and sites give Centralia much of its special character and community identity, yet some of the leading causes of historic property loss are institutional actions, such as residential and commercial development, that are governed by city laws, regulations, and procedures.
3. Not everything that is old is worth preserving, nor is historic preservation concerned primarily with the creation of museums or other public attractions. To be considered for preservation, a property must be demonstrably significant in history, architecture, or archeology, and it must also be adaptable to modern needs and uses.
4. Historic preservation is entirely compatible with economic development and growth. Everyone profits by recycling historically significant buildings and adapting them to new, economically viable uses.

An important function of a successful historic preservation program is education. Historic buildings and sites offer a valuable supplement to the written record and provide a unique three-dimensional learning experience. The preservation and interpretation of Centralia's historic resources will unquestionably contribute to the overall education and cultural development of our fellow citizens. As such, the City supports community education programs which focus on historical events and structures.

In addition to education, Centralia promotes historic preservation through the development of historic districts which encourage community pride in historic areas. Further, the City encourages the use of historic buildings to meet potential and existing needs experienced by the community such as affordable housing, business diversification, and walkability. Further, the City seeks to identify and match uses that are compatible with the historic structures. Centralia's downtown area provides an example of appropriate use of historic structures. The downtown area contains restaurants, shops and services in historic buildings. The owners and developers of these buildings are encouraged to maintain the historic feel of the buildings. For specific information regarding the downtown historic preservation efforts, please see the Economic Development element of this document.

V. BENEFITS OF PRESERVATION

Historic Preservation refers to the conservation of Centralia's cultural resources: the historic buildings, structures, and sites. Preservation plays a vital role, not only in commemorating our past, but also in creating our future. Through the preservation of historic elements, a community will maintain the things it values while accommodating growth. Preservation of history does not obstruct development nor is it indulgent nostalgia. It allows us to strengthen and revitalize our community. A few of the benefits of historic preservation include:

- Increased property values in historic districts are typically greater than increases in the community at large.
- Historic building rehabilitation, which is more labor intensive and requires greater specialization and higher skill levels, creates more jobs and results in more local business than does new construction.
- Heritage tourism provides substantial economic benefits. Tourists drawn by a community (or region's) historic character typically stay longer and spend more during their visit than other tourists attractions.
- Historic rehabilitation encourages additional neighborhood investment and produces a high return of municipal dollars spent.
- Use of a city or town's existing, historic building stock can support growth management policies by increasing the availability of centrally located housing.
- Continued use of existing buildings for residential or commercial purposes is an efficient use of resources due to the fact that infrastructure is already present in the historic areas.

VI. HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal HP 1

To develop a greater understanding of our heritage and our ongoing relationship with our past by preserving historic sites where our legacy will be preserved, interpreted and shared.

Policies

HP 1.1 Create a sense of respect and importance for history and heritage among Centralia residents through community education programs, school curriculum and oral history programs.

HP 1.2 Strengthen the sense of community and pride within our historic neighborhoods through the development of historic districts.

HP 1.3 Adopt guidelines that will identify and preserve historic and cultural resources through items such as design standards, zoning classifications and/or building codes.

- HP 1.4** Cultivate partnerships among organizations and those interested in Historic Preservation such as museums, historical organizations, tribes and/or libraries.
- HP 1.5** Identify and preserve new historic homes, businesses and archaeologically significant sites.

Goal HP 2

To support the economic health and vitality of Centralia by preserving the historic nature of the City through seeking creative solutions and using existing resources.

Policies

- HP 2.1** Identify and implement funding sources that accommodate the use and preservation of residential and commercial Historic Preservation.
- HP 2.2** Develop partnerships that facilitate the financial stability and broaden the funding base for Historic Preservation.
- HP 2.3** Use Historic Preservation to meet potential and existing needs experienced by the community such as affordable housing, business diversification, walkability and/or bikes.
- HP 2.4** Develop and implement strategies that promote historic tourism and its compatible uses.
- HP 2.5** Develop and implement strategies for identifying and matching uses that are compatible with the historic structures.

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