

CHAPTER TWELVE: HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

When a community preserves its historic and cultural heritage it is making a statement about itself, and about its citizens: who they are; where they have been; what they have done and are doing; and where they are going. Sequim is a friendly small town with a decidedly rural atmosphere. Its citizens desire to maintain that community character by deliberately preserving its rich and diverse historic and cultural resources that are worthy of that effort for preservation and celebration.

The City of Sequim acknowledges the wealth of historic and cultural resources, which are essential to the natural beauty and rich heritage of the Sequim Dungeness Valley. Preservation of that heritage of the community has been identified as a key component in the *City of Sequim's Comprehensive Plan* update process. The importance of Sequim's agricultural past and its contributions to future tourism-related economic development continues to be recognized through the successes of the numerous annual festivals celebrating that history and that culture.

Historic preservation has many facets. It primarily involves the identification, maintenance, renovation, restoration and re-use of buildings and sites important to the community's history and sense of place, culture and traditions. These buildings and sites may represent significant building styles or development patterns representative of a particular era, or specific periods in the community's past. Or these places could be associated with important personages and historic events.

National and State Historic Registries

During the late 1970s and into the early 1980s, the City planners, consultants and some local area historians inventoried potential properties that had historical and cultural significance. The Sequim Municipal Code currently has regulations that protect these historic buildings and sites that are within the City and its UGA.

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of buildings, districts, sites, structures and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology and culture. Under the National Preservation Act (1966), the states work in partnership with the federal government to expand the list according to specific criteria used for evaluation of the historic significance of the nominated property or place.

There is only one site and building, the Sequim Opera House, within the City and its Urban Growth Area that is listed on the National Register; and there is an additional building (Sequim Town Hall –1914) that is listed on the Washington State Heritage Register.

An additional thirteen sites in the Sequim-Dungeness Valley areas are currently registered Washington State Heritage Register or in the National Register of Historic Places. The majority of the sites reflect the pioneer and agricultural activities that occurred throughout the Sequim Dungeness Valley.

Several sites have antecedents as pre-historic Native American sites dating as far back as 12,000 years. The dry prairie climate has proven to be a valuable source for information about the first peoples on the Olympic Peninsula. On-going archeological research indicates the presence of important archeological resources throughout the Sequim region. The potential for uncovering additional archeological resources should be considered before site planning and development occur.

Resources of Local Significance

This update to the *City of Sequim's Comprehensive Plan* recognizes the need to identify those historical and cultural resources that are unique and important to the Sequim Dungeness region. Examples of these resources may include irrigation ditches, or unique views and vistas, which define Sequim, those places where the valley is framed by the water and mountains, territorial views, special landmarks (such as the old barns and farmsteads), and the traditional agricultural land use patterns as well as other historical structures associated with the agricultural heritage and coastal history of our community.

Native American sites as old as 12,000 years show continuous occupation by the Peninsulas tribal communities, which are irreplaceable resources of human history. This Comprehensive Plan acknowledges and values that historical and cultural tradition and recommends that the City endeavor to create regulations that require extraordinary effort to preserve any such site that may become known as the City develops.

Incentives for Historic Preservation

The City of Sequim, with other private organizations, county and state agencies, may assist in the preservation of historic and cultural resources by providing special programs and incentives. These may include property tax credits; relief from strict application of building code requirements; and the use of conditional use permits. The City could also establish its own "Sequim Heritage Registry" honoring buildings, sites, places, and peoples with plaques and markers that briefly describe the historic and cultural significance.

The City of Sequim will continue to support historically significant commercial agriculture within the City and its UGA by developing ordinances allowing associated uses with its farm production that may otherwise be considered "commercial" and [normally] not allowed in its underlying zone.

Education

Educational programs and publications about the City's historic resources should increase awareness of Sequim's history and cultural resources. Additionally, the City should provide tips and guidelines for careful, cost-efficient, and authentic remodeling, rehabilitation, and restoration of particular buildings within the City and its UGA; and hands-

on expertise and guidance on how to restore residential and commercial structures to meet current needs while preserving historic qualities and integrity. It could also provide a list of professional resource people who could help during the restoration/renovation phase of the site or building re-use/redevelopment.

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HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT GOALS

“Goals” are measurable and observable outcomes that the *Comprehensive Plan* anticipates in conformance with the Growth Management Act.

HCRG – 1

Preserve the history of Sequim, and that of the Sequim-Dungeness Valley, by protecting the features and artifacts that help to identify 12,000 years of culture and heritage.

HCRG – 2

Identify and encourage the preservation of sites and structures, in the City and its Urban Growth Area, that have archeological, cultural or historic significance, while accommodating the requirements for growth as mandated by the Growth Management Act.

HCRG – 3

Celebrate the City of Sequim’s heritage by continuing to promote and support the City’s and region’s festivals and community events.

HCRG - 4

Promote a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly downtown core that offers cultural activities such as theater, music, art and sculptures, as well as historical artifacts for the City’s residents, guests and regions visitors to see and experience.

HCRG – 5

Support historically significant commercial agriculture within the City and its UGA allowing associated uses with its farm production that may otherwise be considered commercial and [normally] not allowed in its underlying zone.

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HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT POLICIES

“Policies” are the guidelines as to how the staff and the readers of the *Comprehensive Plan* shall achieve the goals of the Housing Element of this *Comprehensive Plan*.

HCRP-1

Support the preservation of significant historical structures and locations, and or cultural resources that contribute to the community, and the region’s identity and its character.

HCRP-2

Encourage revitalization strategies and preservation efforts for the restoration of buildings, walkways and features of the downtown core, which recognize, emphasize and capitalize on the historic traditions of Sequim and the Sequim-Dungeness Valley region.

HCRP-3

Encourage all efforts by private, academic and professional groups during the research, evaluation and subsequent cataloging of the historic and cultural resources of the region that helps to preserve the traditions and history of the community.

HCRP-4

Cooperate with the Museum, Arts and Culture organization to encourage more interactive displays, exhibits and culturally-significant building development that inform the public of the importance of the community’s relationship with the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe.

HCRP-5

Encourage private funding efforts and support for local historic preservation.

HCRP-6

Cooperate with the County Heritage Advisory Board to review and update information on the historical sites within the City and its Urban Growth Areas.

HCRP-7

Support the ongoing Citizen’s Historical Advisory Board and a Sequim Heritage Register as a means for periodically identifying and updating the historical and cultural resources that are the precursors to our community, and its quality of life.

HCRP-8

Support those local non-profit organizations that are dedicated to preserving and emphasizing the history and cultural resources of the City and its environs.

HCRP-9

Continue to promote the location and uses of our City Hall, Library, Olympic Theater Arts, Museum, Sequim Open Aire Market and other civic buildings throughout the community.

HCRP-10

Encourage the development and redevelopment of the existing buildings in the downtown core to preserve/retain and promote the historical facades and cultural resources that are representative of the City's *Vision Statement*.

HCRP-11

Support the promotion and preservation of the history of Sequim and the Sequim-Dungeness Valley, and its multi-cultural heritage.

HCRP-12

Emphasize the importance of preserving any Native site, and related cultural artifacts and resources that may be discovered, as an integral part of the heritage of this community.